Please to return F.N.

Longton

15 Jan. 1893

B.68

Dear Aunt Florence,

Mr. Asquith intends to appoint women factory inspectors, not especially for sanitary arrangements, but, to begin with for certain trades in which women only are employed. He intends to make only a small beginning until watch the experiment - no doubt make such arrangements as experience justifies. The probability is that they will be attached to a trade, rather than to a district & will work under a Chief Inspectress. Mr. Asquith told Vaughan this

the other day in conversation I
it is of course strictly confidential.
His plan will I think answer
some of your questions as to the
best methods.

I suppose those who are
going on the deputation know
that the ~~sanitary~~ supervision of
sanitary arrangements in
workshops is now under the
local sanitary authority. The
factory inspector is supposed to
notify the sanitary authority of the
bad things wrong, whilst in the
case of factories he himself takes
action.

If the deputation want women
inspectors for workshops they would

therefore have to approach the local authorities or the Local Government Board, whilst if they want sanitary inspection in factories the only course is to ask for women factory inspectors, who would have the opportunity of seeing how things were in the workshops whilst discharging their non-sanitary duties in workshops.

I should hardly think it advisable that the deputation should go in for advising Mr. Asquith as to the methods of appointment, or dismissal or the status of the women inspectors. But perhaps that is not what was intended. Any one in touch with

him might perhaps suggest privately that those who are selected should be given to understand that in, say, a years time they should be expected to pass an examination to bring them up at any rate to the inspectors' standard. As to selection I believe Mr. Asquith has for some time past been giving very careful attention to the matter & he has no doubt consulted freely those who would be likely to know, as to the best people. I am afraid that the system of selection adopted in the future will depend so much upon the Home Secretary that it will be very difficult to form any self-acting scheme for the selection of good people on their

own merits, apart from examination. The Home Office to any one knows has no doctor, or sanitarian in connexion with its Factory Department & no standard of efficiency, worth speaking of, is required of its officials. If we had our experts, there would be an examining board who might be trusted. But there doesn't seem to be the least chance of getting them whilst the present person is Chancellor of the Exchequer.

I see no reason why women inspectors should not ultimately

act in places where both women & men are employed, though there would be a little official friction at first. But I think it is wise to begin with such trades as dressmaking & those departments of textile industry in which women only are employed.

Personally I quite agree that it would be a mistake & draw the inspectors from any one class only. Some suitable women could surely be found in any.

Mr. Asquith deserves some credit as every official in the Factory Dept.

whom he has assaulted is dead against women inspectors.

I have been writing this with the assistance of my private secretary, whose handwriting I hope you will be able to read, whilst I have been resting.

We shall be coming in to London for an evening function at South Kensington on the 26th I wonder whether it would suit you to see me that afternoon.

With our love

Ever yours

Rosalind Nash