

Pamphlet

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NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

London Women and the L.C.C.

BY

Miss NETTIE ADLER, J.P., L.C.C.

WITH A

Preface by the Rt. Hon. EARL BUXTON,
G.C.M.G.

Price ONE PENNY

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PREFACE

Miss Nettie Adler has written a pamphlet which, in itself, is a brilliant justification of the policy of admitting women to equal co-operation with men in public administration. She shows that a woman's interest in the L.C.C. is not limited to matters which are particularly feminine. She proves also that the L.C.C. touches at many points the health, welfare and happiness of every man, woman and child in London.

Nearly one-half of the L.C.C. electors in London are women, and they can, if they choose, decide the municipal destiny of London. There are many matters connected with Public Health, Sanitation, Child Welfare, the Schools, Parks, Slum Clearance and Housing upon which the man who is a voter will be glad to be advised by his wife, mother, or women folk.

The Progressive Party offers London a programme the chief features of which are Care for Public Health, the Provision of Houses for Homes, and the Uplifting and Education of the Children. Miss Adler has worked for these objects on the County Council. She asks her fellow-women to join with her in educating public opinion in favour of the Progressive policy, in supporting women Progressive candidates and, above all, securing the return of a Progressive majority upon the Council.

BUXTON.

LONDON WOMEN AND THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

WOMEN'S SHARE IN ADMINISTRATION.

In March, 1925, the term of office of the present members of the London County Council will cease and London voters will be called upon to elect a new London County Council in whose hands will be placed the control of the great Municipal Services of the Metropolis for the next three years. On the electors themselves rests a grave responsibility. They have to ensure that capable and energetic men and women shall assume the direction of affairs and that the work of London shall be carried on with due regard to economy and efficiency. When it is remembered that the population of the County of London comprises nearly FIVE MILLION INHABITANTS, or as many people as are contained in Scotland or in the whole Dominion of Australia, and that the annual expenditure on London's services is nearly TWENTY MILLIONS of money, it will be realised that the task to be undertaken is no light matter.

The total number of members of the London County Council to be elected in March is 124, two for each of the 61 parliamentary electoral divisions of the Metropolis, with the exception of the City of London, which sends four members to County Hall. Twenty aldermen also have seats upon the Council, ten of whom retire at each triennial election, thus making a total number of 144 Councillors. Women have been eligible for election as members of the Council and as Aldermen since the passing of the Qualification of Women Act in 1907, one of the first measures passed by the Liberal Government of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. At the first contest after the Bill became law, two women were elected. Since 1919 the number of women members and Aldermen on the Council has much increased, and at the present time there are fifteen women Councillors, three of whom have at different periods attained the office of Vice-Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Council. A woman Alderman holds the important position of Chairman of the Education Committee.

THE SPECIAL INTERESTS OF LONDON WOMEN.

While the good government of London is equally the concern of men and of women, there are certain services which have for women a special interest and which make a more direct appeal to them. For women are not only citizens and voters, but they

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are also, whether married or single, *home makers*, and they therefore look closely at the organisation which touches at many points the lives of children, of women workers, of old people and of the sick and disabled. They examine with care such matters as the protection of mothers and infants, the health and education of school children, the opportunities for recreation in the parks and open spaces, the standard of taste permitted in public amusements, the care taken to ensure the effective administration of the Shops Act, the proper control of employment agencies, security from fire in public buildings and factories, the adequacy of the main drainage system, the prevention of the flooding of dwellings, proper means of transit from home to work, and, above all, THE PRODUCTION OF HEALTHY AND CONVENIENT HOUSES. All these important matters are regulated and administered by the London County Council.

THE FAILURE OF MUNICIPAL REFORM.

For nearly eighteen years the policy which has guided such administration has been that of the Municipal Reform or Moderate party which changed its name but not its policy in 1907.

Many of the members have no genuine belief in the value of municipal undertakings. Conservative in opinion and timorous in action, progress in the development of the great services of London has been slow and halting. Much-needed London improvements have been postponed or abandoned. Land which should have been held for the benefit of the people has often been sold. The Works Department, which was a much-needed bulwark against exploitation by contractors, was destroyed, and the steam-boat service on the river, which gave a valuable alternative means of transit, was abolished. Now there is a universal demand for the reinstatement of a river service. Municipal Reformers endeavoured to withdraw cheap midday fares at the bidding of the Bus and Underground Railway Combine, but Progressive members rushed back from their holidays on August 24th, 1920, AND SAVED CHEAP FARES BY ONE VOTE.

SHIRKING RESPONSIBILITY.

New powers conferred upon the Council by the Government have been accepted grudgingly and unwillingly, in some cases refused, and in other instances "farmed out" to other public bodies or to private societies. Institutional treatment for tuberculous patients, for instance, is not undertaken by the Council itself, but is left in the hands of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Further accommodation and better classification are needed both for the 18,000 mental hospital patients and the 5,000 mental deficiency cases for whom the Council is responsible. No provision, except by taking a few beds in private institutions, is made for epileptic children or for those suffering from infantile paralysis* who

* Some further accommodation is to be secured, but not in institutions carried on by the Council.—(September, 1924.)

need both education and treatment. Quite recently the Council, owing to the policy of the Municipal Reform party, refused to exercise its option of assuming responsibility for giving advice and help under the Choice of Employment Act to young people leaving school, although such work is essentially educational and should be regarded as the crowning effort of the schools. London alone of the greater education authorities in the Home Counties is refusing to exercise its rights and powers and is leaving them to the Ministry of Labour.

LONDON AND THE PROGRESSIVE RECORD.

Until the middle of the last century, there was, except in the square mile of the City, no centralised form of government for London. A beginning was made by the setting up of the Metropolitan Board of Works in 1855, but with the passing of the Local Government Act in 1888 and the establishment of the London County Council a new era began for the Metropolis. The great services common to the whole of the area of 116 square miles were transferred to the Council and many functions which had previously been exercised by Justices, such as the licensing of places of amusement, the carrying out of statutory duties relating to weights and measures, the provision and maintenance of mental hospitals, were placed in the hands of the new authority. The men who came to the work of London government were kindled by enthusiasm and a belief in the high destinies of London as the centre of the Empire. They were determined that better housing, the gradual abolition of slums, the provision of open spaces, cheap transit, wide streets and efficient drainage should mark their administration. London, as we now know it, owes much to these men, who brought to their labours, qualities of vision and of initiative which would have borne a rich harvest if they had been permitted to carry out their full programme. But in 1907, eighteen years after the election of the first Council, London returned a majority pledged to a policy of reaction. They could not destroy entirely the great services established by the Progressive party, although they did succeed in destroying the works department and banishing the steam boats from the river after a campaign of misrepresentation probably unequalled in the history of local government.

MAIN DRAINAGE—THE PROGRESSIVE RECORD.

But glaring posters and disingenuous statements could not hide the substantial benefits conferred on London by the Progressive administration. When the London County Council succeeded the Metropolitan Board of Works as the central authority for the public health of London, a beginning had only been made with the main drainage system which now, under the control of the Council, not only serves the 4½ million inhabitants of London, but takes in 32 square miles outside the county with an additional population

of 813,046. Up to the middle eighties of the last century the Thames was being polluted by great quantities of sewage deposited in its crude state in the river, while floodings were common in many parts. Within the fifteen years of Progressive administration work was completed on new sewers, pumping stations and relief sewers at a cost of over four-and-a-half millions. Sewage is now chemically treated at the outfall works at Barking and Crossness, the liquid portion being clarified and drawn off, and the solid matter known as the sludge being carried away in six sludge vessels and cast away into the sea. Each year nearly 2 million tons of sewage is disposed of in this way, while over 112,000,000 gallons of sewage are dealt with through the Council's pumping stations after flowing through some part of the great system of 370 miles of sewers.

HOUSING.

But it was in the clearance of slums and the provision of new houses that the Progressives set up a new standard of civic efficiency. Although the Metropolitan Board of Works had cleared a number of plague spots between 1876 and 1884, amounting in extent to forty-one acres, they did not themselves rehouse upon these sites, but sold them—usually to philanthropic bodies—for this purpose. But as soon as the London County Council came into office in 1889, its members saw that the new authority must set a great example both in clearing slums and in building dwellings for working people. The Housing Act of 1890 which consolidated previous measures and conferred upon the Council additional powers for this purpose gave the necessary impulse and opportunity. This measure has been the basis of all succeeding housing legislation. Part I of the Act laid upon the Council the duty of dealing with unhealthy areas which are sufficiently large to be of general importance to the whole county. Between 1890 and 1907 a number of schemes, including the famous Boundary Street area, once known as the Old Jago, covering over thirty-five acres, and the network of slums which lay around Clare Market were demolished and over 34,000 persons rehoused. On what were once some of the blackest districts in the county area, Kingsway and Aldwych were planned which now form two of the finest streets in the kingdom. The increased value of the ground rents from this and similar improvements served to relieve the rates, after paying debt charges, to the extent of over £21,000 in the current year. Another great clearance scheme of seventeen acres at Tabard Street was under consideration when the Progressive term of office came to an end.

HOMES IN FRESH AIR.

The Progressives had recognised at an early stage in their administration that no solution of the housing problem was possible by building on the limited amount of land available within the

boundaries of London. Advantage was therefore taken of Part III of the Housing Act of 1890 to build not only inside but outside the County. In addition to the Millbank estate, Westminster, and the Totterdown Fields estate, Tooting, estates were bought at Norbury, near Croydon, at White Hart Lane, Tottenham, and at Old Oak Common, Hammersmith. During the fifteen years of Progressive activity nearly 44,000 persons were provided with accommodation.

MODERATE MIS-RULE.

But under Moderate rule much of the good work begun under the Progressive majority was slowed down or suspended. Endeavours were made by the new members in 1909 to induce the Council to sell 180 acres of the White Hart Lane housing estate at Tottenham, and twelve acres of the Norbury estate, but this design was frustrated by the Local Government Board under the Liberal administration of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the necessary permission for such sale being refused. Practically no effort was made for many years to develop the Old Oak Common estate bought by the Progressives in 1905. The first section of the houses was not opened until 1912-13. White Hart Lane, also purchased by the Progressives in 1901, is still incomplete. Norbury, also bought under Progressive rule in 1901, has only been finished since the war. In fact while more than 20,000 persons were housed by Progressive efforts between 1904 and 1908, only 14,000 persons were provided for between 1908 and 1912, although land, men and materials were easily available. The shortage of houses which became so acute after the war was partially induced by the failure of the Municipal Reformers to meet the needs of London year by year between 1907 and 1914.

THE HOUSING SHORTAGE.

Building was practically suspended during the war. The house famine induced by this situation led to the passage of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919, which enabled the Council to project a vast programme of 29,000 houses at an annual charge of only 1d. in the £ on the rates, the balance being borne by the National Exchequer. New estates were acquired at Roehampton, Bellingham, Becontree and Grove Park. Progress was slow, due partly to difficulties in obtaining labour and materials, and by the end of 1920 only 270 houses had been completed, while 1,500 were in hand. By 1921 the position had changed and government help was limited to the erection of 8,800 houses excluding dwellings to be erected under clearance schemes for which a sum of £50,000 was allocated to London to meet the annual loss involved in buying sites and erecting houses. Few clearance schemes, however, have yet materialised.

The old insanitary property in the Brady Street area in Bethnal Green which had been under consideration for demolition for twelve years is at last being cleared, and a beginning is to be made shortly with the derelict houses in Ware Street, Hoxton. Other areas are to be cleared in Wapping, Whitechapel and Southwark, but owing partly to the difficulties involved in finding alternative accommodation for the persons displaced, progress is much hampered. Work on the new estate at Grove Park, Lewisham, bought in 1920, is proceeding much too slowly. No houses have yet been begun. An excellent site in West London scheduled in 1920 has not yet been acquired though it is much needed, but a move has been made at last in this direction. The only new site bought recently is at Wandsworth and it is only large enough to touch the fringe of the problem. Last year only about half the amount provided for 1921-22 was included in the year's estimates and the amount put in this year, £3,489,900, is probably insufficient for a comprehensive scheme.

THE PROBLEM TO BE FACED.

When it is remembered that an official report of the Council published in 1919 on "Housing after the War" estimated that 184,000 persons in London were living in areas classed as "insanitary," that 365,000 persons were occupying houses which, on account of their defective construction, decay, dampness, dilapidated and verminous condition were very undesirable, it will be seen how urgent it is that an adequate building programme should be pressed forward without delay. Progressives if returned next March will see to it that this is done.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES—THE PROGRESSIVE RECORD.

The importance of acquiring and maintaining parks and open spaces was recognised thoroughly by the Progressives throughout the period of their administration. They continued to add to the parks secured by the Metropolitan Board of Works. Of the large total of 5,057 acres of parks and open spaces under the control of the London County Council, *nearly half were acquired under Progressive rule.* Facilities for games, for boating and bathing were all introduced by the Progressives and their interest in the children of London is seen in the sandpits, the swings and the gymnastic apparatus which were provided in playground spaces, placed at the disposal of the children in all the great parks. Music of a high order was also provided.

THE NEED FOR MORE PLAYING FIELDS.

Although the present majority on the Council have recently extended the facilities for games, the provision made does not

nearly meet the demand. In view of the fact that the open country near London is being taken up rapidly for building purposes, it is essential that the Council should use its powers to secure additional open spaces and playing fields before the whole of outer London is covered with houses. Even on its own estates, instead of placing the open spaces available for tennis and other games in the hands of the Parks Committee, the Council has leased these sports grounds to private contractors to lay out and to let to tenants for profit. A fine open space at Becontree, called Parslows Park, which should be planned for sports without delay is still being used for grazing purposes.

TRAMWAYS—THE PROGRESSIVE RECORD.

But neither housing estates nor parks would have proved their value if steps had not been taken in the early days of the Council to ensure adequate transport facilities in the London area. When the London County Council assumed responsibility for London's Government in 1889, there were *ten* tramway companies operating horse tramways in different parts of the Metropolis. Between 1895 and 1906, during the Progressive administration, these undertakings were purchased and their electrification begun. Over 688 million passengers are carried each year over the 59½ millions of car miles run. The existence of this important source of competition to the Omnibus and Underground railway undertakings has served to prevent the exploitation of the public in many directions. The cheap mid-day fares now in operation on the tramways, 2d. all the way even for such distances as Southwark to Highgate or Bloomsbury to Blackwall Tunnel, have been copied by the Combine to the advantage of the people of London. Mothers are able to send their children during the holidays for cheap outings in the parks and to places of interest. They are able to get to the cheaper marketing centres at a very small cost. Consistent pressure by Progressive members has led to the reintroduction of return tickets and longer fare stages. The advantages of the tramcar over the omnibus was proved conclusively a short time ago on the result of an inquiry made into the experience of the larger provincial cities. It was found: (1) that the tramcar has nearly 50 per cent. more seating capacity than the motor or trolley bus. (2) In wet weather it has the advantage of all seats being under cover, raising this advantage to 200 per cent. over the motor bus. (3) Being confined to the rails, the tramway is least liable to accidents and is not liable to skidding sideways. (4) It can continue running in foggy or snowy weather when omnibus services are suspended. (5) It does practically no damage to the roadway, whilst the motor bus inflicts damage out of all proportion to its contribution through the petrol tax to the Road Fund. (6) The tramcar costs least to run per car mile.

PROGRESSIVES HELP TO SECURE IMPROVEMENT IN PUBLIC HEALTH.

Better housing, the clearance of slums, a good main drainage system, parks and open spaces and cheap transit to places of business and recreation have all been indirect means of increasing the health efficiency of London's population. The influence of the Progressive policy in these directions may be seen in watching the decrease in the general death and infant mortality rates between 1891 and 1910. Between 1891 and 1900 the death rate per 1,000 of the population fell from 19.2 to 15.6. The infant mortality rate which had shown little fluctuation for the previous half century fell from 159 per 1,000 in the previous decennium to 127 per 1,000 in 1901-10.

SAFEGUARDING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN.

Since the beginning of this century a number of important Acts of Parliament have improved greatly the general conditions of maternity and infant life. Until 1902 there was neither public control of midwives nor any compulsion to ensure their training. Consequently there was grave loss of life and health and permanent injury to mothers and children through unskilled treatment. The Midwives Act of 1902, which was strengthened in 1918, prohibits women other than those certified under the Act from practising as Midwives. It set up a central examining and disciplinary body—the Central Midwives Board—as well as local supervising authorities. The London County Council is the local supervising authority for London. The number of duly certified Midwives in London is over 5,000 and of this number 905 notified their intention of practising during the past year. Four women medical inspectors ensure that a proper standard of efficiency is maintained and 2,549 visits were paid by these officers to Midwives or to Institutions employing Midwives during 1922. Of the 109 cases of infringement of the Council's rules, only five *prima facie* cases of negligence or misconduct had to be reported to the Central Midwives Board. A satisfactory feature of the Council's work for maternity cases is the stress laid upon the importance of all cases of inflammation of the eyes of infants being reported immediately so as to prevent supervening blindness through *ophthalmia neonatorum*. Of 1,394 cases reported, 753 proved to be this serious disease. The Council's Inspectors investigated all cases in midwives' practice, and owing to the rapidity of action 420 out of 449 were reported as completely cured.

The London County Council under its general powers acts of 1915 and 1921 is able to require the compulsory registration and inspection of premises used for maternity cases except hospitals, infirmaries and lying-in homes carried on by registered medical practitioners. The Council has power to refuse to register premises

which are unsuitable. The Council's Medical Inspectors made 601 visits of inspection in 1922. The important Notification of Births Act of 1907 (due to the Liberal administration of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman), which was extended in 1915, is a valuable means of securing general oversight in this matter, as the Medical Officers of Health of each Metropolitan borough and the City of London are required to send weekly to the Council a list of births notified.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.

The Children Act, 1908 (another beneficent Liberal measure) provides in Part I that any person undertaking for hire the nursing or maintenance of a child under seven years must give notice of such reception within 48 hours. If an infant dies, the coroner must be notified in 24 and the Council in 48 hours. All the homes accepting children are carefully inspected by officers appointed by the Council, two men and fifteen women being employed in this work. During 1922, 2,411 foster mothers and 2,921 nurse infants were notified. Infringements of the Council's regulations were discovered in 279 cases, and cautions were imposed in 266 instances. In only 13 cases were prosecutions instituted, a conviction being secured each time. Fourteen children had to be removed from the homes of foster mothers.

The quickening of the public conscience in regard to these matters with the passing of the Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918 has resulted in a remarkable fall in the death rate of infants under one year of age. In 1918 the mortality of children under twelve months was 107 per 1,000. In 1922 it had fallen to 75, and the provisional rate for 1923 is 61.

MUCH STILL TO BE DONE.

Two areas, Bermondsey and Shoreditch, suffering greatly from appalling housing conditions and overcrowding had, however, the sad distinction of losing one infant out of every eleven born in their areas, 99 and 98 per 1,000 respectively, in 1922. Such figures show that the fight for child life is not yet over and that Progressives must continue to urge, with unabated energy, the need of clearing slums and the building of more houses.

THE HEALTH OF THE SCHOOL CHILD.

To the practical wisdom of the Liberal Government of 1906 is due the (Administrative Provisions) Act of 1907 which laid upon Education Authorities the duty of organising the medical inspection of all children, whether ailing or healthy at certain periods during school life and also conferred upon them the power to make arrangements for attending to the health of the children in elementary schools. This power became a duty under the Education Act of 1918 and is reaffirmed in the Consolidating Act of 1921.

Arrangements for inspecting all children at the age of entry, at eight years and at twelve were put in hand by the London County Council after the passing of the Act of 1907, but the Moderate majority which had secured control of London's destinies in that year hesitated much before using the powers of the Council to provide treatment. It decided in 1909 not to set up its own system of clinics, but to enter into agreement with a number of hospitals and to give financial help to them for the treatment of defective vision, ear ailments, dental caries and ringworm. It was soon found that many districts were outside the areas of hospitals, but again, instead of organising its own clinics, the Council entered into agreements with Committees of local medical practitioners, the Council defraying the cost. The agreements provided that the centres should be open to inspection by the Council and the qualifications of the medical men engaged in the work approved by it.

Since 1913, when Mr. Asquith's Government initiated grants for medical treatment, the Council's scheme (largely owing to Progressive pressure) has developed steadily each year. The number of children in the age groups examined in 1913 were 197,158, of whom 72,437 or 37 per cent. were referred for medical treatment. In 1923, the figures of the children examined were almost identical, 197,327 and 72,329 or 36.7 per cent. found to have defects. But whereas the number of children treated in 1913 was about 73,000 cases provided for at 28 centres including hospitals, the figure in 1923 included 12 hospitals and 57 centres and a centre at a camp school, or 70 in all. At these centres 218,794 children, the highest total yet recorded, received treatment, 31,986 for eye defects, 11,936 for ear, nose and throat trouble, 1,591 for ringworm, 77,949 for minor ailments, and 95,332 for defective teeth.

WHERE THE SYSTEM FAILS.

Many of these defects ought to have been remedied before the child's entry into school, but as Sir George Newman pointed out in his Report on the "Health of the School Child for 1922," supervision by the local health authorities over the young child extends but little beyond the first year, and he estimates that out of an infant population, 80-90 per cent. of whom are born healthy, 35 to 40 per cent. when admitted to school "bear with them physical defects which could either have been prevented or cured." For instance, over 11 per cent. of the boys and girls who come into the infant schools have defective teeth, sometimes developing at the age of eight into serious aural disease. The incidence of bronchitis among infants entering the schools is also high. The age of onset for crippling diseases such as tubercular affections of the spine, hip and knee and for infant paralysis occurs largely between the ages of two and five years. Mr. Elmslie, F.R.C.S., the well-known surgeon, in a survey of Physically Defective children undertaken

during 1921 and 1922 for the Council, showed that 321 out of 515 tuberculous bone cases, and 331 out of 559 children affected with infantile paralysis in the Council's cripple schools were attacked by these diseases at the nursery school age.

NURSERY SCHOOLS NEEDED.

THE ABSENCE OF ADEQUATE NURSERY SCHOOL PROVISION prevents the recognition of disablement at a time when effective steps could be taken to deal with the matter. Sir George Newman considers that 80-90 per cent. of these children could be cured, or at any rate improved sufficiently to enable them to take a share in industry if the disability were dealt with early and efficiently and suitable and adequate educational training given. Mr. Elmslie estimated that an institution for 300 children to serve London could be kept continuously full.

MUNICIPAL REFORM DELAY.

Unfortunately the Council has as yet taken no effective steps to make such provision and the same lack of accommodation is seen in the provision for epileptic children. As is well known children suffering from this trying malady are often a source of great anxiety and difficulty in poor homes. Yet of the 1,236 children certified, 644 are attending ordinary elementary schools and 274 are at no school or institution at all.*

OPEN AIR SCHOOLS NECESSARY.

More open air schools are needed. There are three in South London and one in East London, but none to serve the huge district extending from Hammersmith to Hackney. More camp schools are needed. The camp at Bushy Park takes in 3,000 boys annually, but the provision for girls is not much more than a tenth of this amount. Grants to school journeys on a more generous scale than the £5,000 put aside for the purpose by the Council this year should be pressed for urgently. More day schools for tuberculous children are required, more especially where sunlight treatment can be carried out under good conditions. But especially is there NEED FOR PLAYING FIELDS FOR THE CHILDREN attending the elementary schools. Compared with the seven or eight to ten acres secured for secondary schools, the opportunities for games for the boys and girls in the congested central districts of London is lamentably inadequate.

MORE NEW SCHOOLS REQUIRED.

When the Council became the authority in charge of London education in 1904, the Progressives who were then responsible for London administration set to work actively to provide new schools

* Some additional accommodation is to be secured next year, but not in institutions provided by the Council.

to take the place of old and unsuitable buildings so that all the 700,000 primary school children of London might be well housed. A total of 28,000 places were projected in the first two years of their rule and in February, 1907, they decided that no class-rooms with more than 40 or 48 in average attendance should be provided. But with the advent of the Municipal Reformers the whole work was slowed down to such a degree that in July, 1910, the BOARD OF EDUCATION FOUND THAT THE COUNCIL WAS CONTRAVENING THE CODE BY PERMITTING 2,407 CLASSES WITH MORE THAN 60 ON THE ROLL. A FINE OF £10,000 WAS IMPOSED upon the Council in the following December. Impressed at last by the imperative demand for the reduction in the size of classes and urged by the leader of the Progressive party on the Education Committee, Dr. Scott Lidgett, an agreement was entered into with the Board to reduce gradually the size of classes to 40 in senior schools and 48 in infants departments within a period of 15 years. A total of 120,000 school places were required and 32,000 of these were provided before the war. The restrictions on capital expenditure imposed by the late Government prevented progress. The Council has now decided to go on with the scheme and it is high time that the matter should be taken in hand, for there are still nearly 3,000 classes with 60 children on the roll.

PROGRESSIVE AIMS.

Moreover 75 old and inconvenient schools, 53 built in the eighteen seventies, need rebuilding or remodelling. Progressives feel too that the ideals of 24 years ago embodied in the 40 and 48 scheme should be expanded and that classes of 40, 35 and 30 should be the objective of the future. They set their faces strongly against the employment of unqualified young women to teach in infants schools, for they consider that the best teaching is needed at this formative age.

THE NEED FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Secondary school accommodation is gravely deficient. The present provision fails by 9,000 places to reach even the low standard of one per 100 of the population put forward as long ago as 1909. The Report on Scholarships and Free Places held the view that at least 25 per cent. and probably half the children in the elementary schools were able to profit by some form of higher education.*

AFTER SCHOOL DAYS.

The welfare of the boy and girl leaving school must always be of paramount importance to parents, and many women will regret that the Council shirked its responsibilities in the matter of placing children in work by refusing to administer the Choice of Employment Act. The Council's close knowledge of industry through

* The recent adoption by the L.C.C. of an "education programme" for the years 1925-28 will, if carried out, remedy in part the deficiencies criticised above.

the work of trades schools and technical institutes and perhaps, too, through its wide knowledge of London shop conditions (60,342 inspections took place in 1922) seemed to fit the authority particularly well to undertake this work. Moreover an excellent system of "following up" had been instituted through the School Care Committees, the Members of which reach a total of 5,000.

PUBLIC PROTECTION.

Fortunately the Council's services for the help and protection of young people in other directions have been set up and administered as a rule without any party differences. The powers of control over employment agencies, over theatrical and cinema training schools, and over massage establishments have proved of great value in safeguarding young men and women. But Progressives have still to be watchful. The Council has not adhered to the Progressive policy of extinguishing liquor licences on housing estates. Moreover on more than one occasion Progressive members have had to make a determined effort to prevent any falling away from the well recognised principle that no intoxicating liquor shall be sold in any of the music halls established since the Council became the licensing authority for London. Women electors will recognise how greatly this restriction has helped to raise the general standard of entertainment and of taste in the social life of the Metropolis.

PROGRESSIVE PAMPHLETS.

The following are the titles of a new series of popular pamphlets issued by the London Progressive Association. The writers are leading Progressives, and while they may express their own views on points of detail, the pamphlets will be found to embody the general principles and policy of the London Progressive Party.

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VOTE PROGRESSIVE NEXT TIME.

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