THE

WOMAN'S LEADER

IN POLITICS IN INDUSTRY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN THE HOME IN LITERATURE AND ART IN THE PROFESSIONS

AND

THE COMMON CAUSE

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Contents :

NOTES AND NEWS

Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Bill.

The Bill which the Government agreed to bring in on condition that the N.U.S.E.C. withdrew its Separation and Maintenance Orders Bill was introduced on Wednesday, 2nd August. The Bill is based on the Separation and Maintenance Orders Bill, and contains many useful points. It provides that an application by a married woman for a Separation and Maintenance Order on the grounds of cruelty or neglect may be made without her having to leave her husband first. All who have followed the fortunes of the first Bill will appreciate the importance of this change in the law. Moreover, a woman may apply for a Separation Order under this Bill if her husband has compelled her to submit herself to prostitution, or if "he has been guilty of such conduct as was likely to result and has resulted in her so submitting herself." If after a Separation Order has been given the woman commits an act of adultery, the Order will not, as under the present law, be revoked, if such adultery was caused by the failure of the husband to obey a Maintenance Order. Many of the provisions of the Separation and Maintenance Orders Bill to provide for the enforcement of Maintenance Orders have been incorporated—such as the power to grant a warrant by arrest, the provision that imprisonment for the non-payment of a Maintenance Order shall not necessarily extinguish the liability of the defendant, the power to attach pensions or income and to accept as evidence of wages a copy of an entry in the wages book. This Bill therefore represents a real advance on the present law. In many cases now it is almost impossible for a woman to apply for a Maintenance Order, or for the payment of it when made. Moreover, the Government is pledged to the passing of the Bill in the autumn session. Nevertheless, the Government Bill is very much less valuable as a measure of social reform than the Bill promoted by the N.U.S.E.C. In the first place, nothing is to be done for the unhappily married man; he can still only obtain a Separation Order from his wife on the grounds of habitual drunkenness. Secondly, no Maintenance Order can be given unless the couples are to be separated—thus involving the unnecessary break up of many homes. Thirdly, no provision is made for the maintenance of the children when the mother has the custody, in cases where her own Maintenance Order has to be revoked on the ground of adultery. Fourthly, no provision is made for an equitable arrangement with regard to the tenancy of the house and the ownership of the furniture. Although it will not be possible to re-introduce provisions which represent important or controversial changes in the Bill, it is much to be hoped that some at least of the omissions will be accepted by the Government as amendments.

The Royal Assent.

The following Bills, in which readers of this paper are interested, received the Royal Assent on 4th August: the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and the School Teachers (Superannuation) Act.

The Lunacy (Visiting Committees) Bill.

Sir Robert Newman tried once more, on the last day of the session, to extract a promise from Mr. Chamberlain that his Bill to co-opt women on the visiting committees of asylums when there are women patients, should be passed during the autumn session, or that if not the Government would themselves undertake to pass a measure of their own having the same object in view. Mr. Chamberlain replied that the Ministry of Health is preparing a Bill which will deal, amongst other things, with this subject.

The Pay of Temporary Women Clerks.

Mr. Myers asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer recently whether he is aware that the Treasury proposals for the future payment of temporary staffs gives a basic minimum to Grade 4 woman clerks, which is lower than the factory workers' minimum laid down by Mr. Seebohm Rowntree, after prolonged investigations, as the lowest standard wage upon which health could be maintained by an individual woman without dependents, that the majority of Grade 4 temporary women clerks have

others wholly or partly dependent upon them and in London considerably higher fares than are usual for the women with regard to whom Mr. Rowntree's investigations were made. Mr. Myers suggested that the proposals should be revised in view of the fact that they would bring women clerks considerably below the figure laid down for certain sweated trades as Trade Boards' minima, or that the women's case should be investigated by the Industrial Court. Mr. Young said the Grade 4 women were for the most part under 21, and engaged on semi-manipulative duties. Where adult women were employed in Grade 4 the minimum rate of 40s. or 43s. a week would be reduced to 36s. 1d. or 38s. 10d. a week. These amounts, he suggested, are in excess of the general level of minimum rates prescribed by Trade Boards for adult women.

Another Question.

Later in the week Lieut.-Col. Hurst said that whereas the lowest London minimum rate for Civil Service temporary women clerks in 1914–15 was 21s. 2d. a week, under the present Treasury proposals for reductions based upon a sliding scale the new basic minimum adult women's rate for London for similar work works out at 19s. 6d. a week, while the basic rate for temporary male clerks on similar work comes to 31s. 2d. a week. Colonel Hurst asked what the justification was for such differentiation in view of the carrying out by the Government of the Lytton Committee Reports, involving, as this does, the dismissal of women who do not contribute to the support of others, and suggested that these proposals should be revised, and the women's case should be allowed to go to the Industrial Court before the Treasury scheme is imposed. Mr. Young replied that under the Treasury proposals the minimum rate payable to an adult Grade 3 temporary male clerk employed in London would be reduced to 57s. 9d. a week; the corresponding revised minimum for a woman in the same grade would be 44s. 3d. a week. These rates are consolidated rates and do not consist of a specific basic element plus a specific bonus element. There is some difference between these figures and those of Colonel Hurst. We should like to know whether Mr. Young referred to the grade to which Colonel Hurst was alluding. In any case, the inequality between the men's and women's rates is a fact and a discreditable one. With regard to that, Mr. Young said that it had been decided, after full consideration, that the case is not one which could suitably be referred to arbitration. The Treasury will hear of this again.

Women and the Cost of Living.

The Woman's City Club of New York has set itself to find out how much an understanding of trade conditions and more intelligent buying on the part of women can reduce the high prices of food. The foods and markets committee of the club is now engaged on a series of surveys, the results of which it is proposed to make public later in an educational campaign for the women of the city. The committee, with the co-operation of the New York State Bureau of Foods and Markets, and representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture, has toured the wholesale district of New York City, watched the fixing of prices on the daily trading and "dealing in futures" on the Mercantile Exchange, investigated the handling of produce and sale by agents to wholesalers, wholesalers to distributors, distributors to retailers. Greater knowledge on the part of women buyers would make it impossible for dealers to charge high prices when there is no justifiable claim that the produce is of finer grade. The educational campaign which the committee is undertaking will be based on a consideration of food problems from all angles as the make-up of the committee indicates. Mrs. Thomas D. Rambaut, the chairman, is a practical farmer. There are other farmers on the committee, as well as a member of the board of a co-operative laundry, a woman who is at the head of a chain of three co-operative restaurants, a domestic science teacher, a professional investigator for food values, an economics expert, and a number of housewives.

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WOMEN CLERKS AND THE COST OF LIVING.

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For our part, we find in two considerations which have been overlooked by other papers, matters of great relevance. The first of these is that in comparing the living budgets of various people with each other, you must bear in mind the standard of living of the class to which they belong. "Class" is an outrageous word, and it is doubtless an outrageous thing. But, whatever we may think of that, it remains true that to a young labourer accustomed to life in a village, 51s. 8d. a week means more than it does to a young man with a secondary school education and a taste for the amusements of a town. Comparing girl clerks with labourers with many children may give effective figures for dialectical scores. But it does not really prove anything else than that society is all awry. And certainly it does not help either the girl clerk or the married man. The second consideration is as relevant and more far-reaching, and it arises from the question, does it help one class of workers for another to be badly paid? Is it to the advantage of the married man clerk that his women competitors should be paid a great deal less than he is himself? Does the surplus go out of their pockets into his? And if not, why should they starve, too? It may be harsh and hard that some man has to support six people upon the pay which another spends upon himself alone; it is harsh and hard, indeed, and naturally causes bitterness. But it is not a harshness you can smooth away by turning women out of work. As these subjects clearly show, the women concerned are themselves supporting others, and are in no better case. Everyone of the temporary women clerks surviving after the final cuts of the Lytton Committee is a "hardship case" and the argument on dependents does not hold. There remains therefore nothing but the idea that women and their dependents ought not, somehow, to need as much as men and theirs. It is a terrible and a cruel idea, but a very prevalent one. And until it is dispelled the women clerks will suffer unmerited unpopularity.

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THE GIRL'S LOT IN PERSIA.

BABYHOOD.

A great deal of noise and laughter and running to and fro, a room crowded with women and children talking, smoking, and drinking tea. A pathetic-looking girl in her early teens is propped up by cushions, and wrapped round with a gaily coloured wadded quilt, and left pretty much to herself in a corner of the room. Pushed away under the edge of her mother's quilt is a tightly swaddled scrap of humanity; her head is tied up, and a rosy face, with eyes and eye-lashes heavily outlined with collyrium, is all there is to show that it is not a bundle. If the little stranger were a boy, how different it all would be; music and sweets and a silken cradle; a proud and delighted father and other admiring relatives standing outside the curtain, and waiting for news—but only a girl, how little she matters!

What a jolly baby she looks, though she would be the better for a bath. Her eyes are like deep pools and her mouth sweet and laughing. Her rather shabby clothes are of rich stuffs, plush and velvet and silk, but such odd colours for a baby, emerald green and royal blue, with gay tinsel round her cap. Strapped on her upper arm is a tiny silver filigree box containing a miniature copy of the Koran. The child is quietly munching a small cucumber. The plump, badly dressed young woman is her foster-mother. "Has she no mother of her own?" you ask. Yes; that is her lady mother reclining on cushions and filling the mouth of a two-year-old model of a man with sweets. He is her soul and the light of her eyes!

GIRLHOOD.

After going along a wide street we turn down a lane, so narrow that you may see a cat jump across from one roof to another. These high walls shut in the compounds around which the houses are built. The fourth door is very low and firmly fastened. After our knock a distant voice calls out: "Who is there?" As the voice comes nearer we call out "Open!" and slowly the key is turned and the bolt pulled back. We are in a very dark passage, and the voice says: "You are welcome. Bring your Excellency in. In the name of God." We are soon in a compound with three dark rooms opening on to it, and with an open well; and, oh! the smells! We go up to the little verandah outside the chief living room, a scrap of ragged carpet is shaken, and we are begged to sit down on it, "in the name of God!" An old woman is tottering about in the compound, a swaddled baby is strapped on to a hammock cradle, and two women and children are sitting on the ground busily at work. The woman has a frame on which a piece of white cambric is stretched; she is doing a tiny piece of very fine drawn-thread work at one end of the material. What can it be? Just the little lattice for the eyes on the ordinary white veil, or "rubandeh," worn over the black "chadar" by the townswomen. When she has finished half a dozen she will go and sit on the ground at the side of the bazaar and sell them. The other woman and the two little girls are laboriously stitching away at the uppers of the cotton shoes, or "givehs," so commonly worn by men and boys. There are merchants who send round agents to give out materials and to collect the finished work. None of these women earn a living wage. The children are kept very hard at work, and beaten or starved if they are lazy. They have never been to school, but their knowledge of life makes one shudder. "I want to come to your school," one of them says, "let me be your daughter." "We are too poor" says the mother, "but we could send them if you would give them their bread. Their father only feeds himself. What can we do?"

In a recent visit to a large carpet factory under European supervision, it was noted that there were no weavers under five years of age!

In another factory the owner was showing the work of an expert little weaver of five to a visitor. The Englishman asked what the child's daily wage amounted to for such beautiful work. When he heard the small sum he asked if it was possible for her to live on it. "No, of course," was the reply, "but she is only an orphan."

A girl was one day brought to a Mission Hospital, one of whose legs was more like a Z than anything else. Her general condition pointed to such bad treatment that inquiries were made. The factory in which she worked was owned by her brother. She could not walk home, and he would not carry her, but had dragged her along, and thus brought her to a pitiful condition. Though a good weaver, she was only a girl and of little account.

It was a village house to which few new clothes or sweets ever came. But one spring day several trays of these much-valued things, carefully covered over with large silk handkerchiefs, were brought to the house. The little daughter asked who had sent them, and was told that they were a present from the bridegroom. "What bridegroom?" she asked. "Yours, of course," said her mother, "every girl must be married, and your age is the best of all!" "Why is it the best?" asked the child. "Because his Excellency the Prophet (Mohammed) set us the example in marrying a wife who was nine years old, and in giving his only daughter, Fatimeh, to be married to Ali, when she was nine. Peace be upon him." "Well, I don't want to be married, let me wait a little longer," she pleaded. "It will be a long time before you are married, this will only be the sweet eating." After many preparations and many tears the bride is ready. A crowd of women fill the room. Sitting on a cushion on the floor in front of a looking-glass is the little bride. All her clothes are new, she wears some jewellery, and over everything is thrown a gauze and tinsel veil. There are flowers and lighted lamps in front of her, also a tray with nuts and sweets and oil and grain and salt, and knotted thread and a piece of bread, each of which has some special significance.

Presently a voice from an adjoining room asked if all were ready. The affirmative answer was followed by a deep voice, which told the little bride that such an such a man wanted to marry her, that he would give her various things and the usual dowry (literally hire). Would she marry him? To this the answer was: "I don't want to!" Her mother and the other women were angry, and said that she must say "Yes." Again the mullah asked the question, and this time, amid a chorus of "Say yes!" she replied "I won't!" A third time all the attractions of the bridegroom were set out before her, and after an overwhelming chorus of "Say yes," she falteringly did so.

The mullah, after asking to have this verified, pronounced the marriage legal and binding. Then followed congratulations, hand-clapping, and music. Presently it was suggested that the bridegroom would like to see the bride. All the women veiled, while a middle-aged, hard-looking man came in, sat on the ground beside the bride, and took his first look at her in the looking-glass. He neither spoke nor smiled; he drank the tea which was brought for him, smoked a pipe, and got up and went out.

Though this was really only the betrothal, it was the binding ceremony; and two years later the child-bride went to her husband's home. She had had very little childhood, and no girlhood. How can such customs be altered?

One day a schoolboy came to his headmaster. "I wish, sir, you would come to our house and help us." Asked what he wanted, he said: "You know my little sister? Well, she is to be married next week. I wish you would come and see my father and try to stop it." The Englishman went and saw the father, and spent a whole afternoon pleading and arguing with him. In the end he turned to his visitor and said: "She is 8 years old, and it is time she was married!" The boy burst in with "She is not yet 8 years old!" So she was married—to a man of 35. And all the light was darkened, all the joy and innocence of childhood blotted out. The tragedy of it all! And she was "not yet 8 years old."

Why did the boy think it was wrong, socially and morally wrong? He cared enough about it to try and stop it. A few years before and he, too, would have looked on it as the normal thing. Now his outlook was changed, not so much by teaching as by contact with Christian ideals and life. Old boys of this school now keep their little girls unmarried till they are much older.

An educated man thinks it might be a wise move to have his 8 year old daughter educated. He hears of a so-called school in an adjoining street. A trusted servant is sent to make arrangements, and the next day little Khursheed goes, accompanied by a woman servant, who hands her over to the opener of the door. It is a small compound, and she is taken into a room on the sunny side. Here there are two other girls, who are surprised and delighted to see a newcomer. The woman who opened the door is most voluble, and expresses all sorts of hopes as to Khursheed's happiness and success. She then gives her a tiny glass of very sweet tea, and when this is finished she gets a thin cane and sitting opposite to the child puts one end on her lips and says:

"This seals your lips, if you say anything about what you do here, except that you are very happy and becoming a good scholar, I shall know it; so don't forget."

Khursheed realizes that something dreadful may happen, and is willing to promise anything. The other two girls then spell out together from a primer some simple words, in a sing-song way, the woman pulling them up sharply over their many mistakes. After about half an hour this lady puts on her outdoor things, gathers up a bundle under her arm, and leaves the house. For a time the children lark about, then they try to sweep the house out, and then sit down to clean a large quantity of rice; then they eat the lunch which they have brought with them, and afterwards lie on the floor and sleep. Khursheed cannot understand it. Servants do all the work in her mother's house; she thought this was a school. Late in the afternoon the woman comes back and the children are sent home.

Their so-called school-mistress has spent her day sitting by a gateway in the city begging. Such and much more astounding conditions have prevailed in the "Girls' Schools" of Persia in the past.

At present the best schools are run by English and American missionaries. If a reasonable number of girls' schools are to be opened, educated and trained teachers must be found for them, and many will come from the excellent mission schools now at work. Normal schools have been opened by the Government in Teheran, also a number of intermediate schools both there and in the provinces. There are forty free primary schools in Teheran, ten of which are for girls. A remarkable advance truly for 1,200 Moslem girls in one city to be getting a free education from the Persian Government! It is estimated that 4,600 girls are now attending school in Teheran, only about 600 of whom are in Christian schools. A tremendous advance for the land of the Shah. Diplomas and prizes are given and the mistresses of the Government schools are formally appointed.

The classrooms are built around three sides of one end of a large compound—the other end is a playground with a see-saw and a swing and other delights. Look at this class of tiny children learning the Persian alphabet—bright little faces and eager voices make the teacher's task easy. In the next room we find bigger girls, and so it goes on, until in the top classes there is advanced work and keen competition. Some afternoons are given up to handicrafts; many learn their own beautiful embroidery, done in the first instance for men's turbans and waist wraps, but adapted by Europeans to many varied uses, also very fine drawn-thread work, its first use being for the women's veils. Cotton shoes, also stockings and brushes, have many makers. Competent instructors teach these different handicrafts. The morning school begins with a hymn and prayers and Bible lesson; and Christian ideals are always before the children. The boarders have a very happy home life, an almost unknown thing in a Moslem land. How is it that there are so many big girls in the school, both as teachers and pupils? They and their parents have realized the value of education, and this more than any other thing hinders child marriage, and helps to give woman her rightful place in the world.

DOUST-I-IRAN.

WOMEN'S HOLIDAYS.

It is not everyone who realizes how hard women work and how little leisure those of the working class have. Only the other day I heard a significant story. A labouring man broke his leg, and was confined to his house for some weeks. He one day said to a lady who visited him: "I never knew till now how hard the Missus worked. I used to fancy her just cleaning up after I was off, and then sitting down to her bit of sewing, or chatting round with the neighbours till I got home again. Now I see she's never done with her work till bedtime." This is quite true. The day begins with the preparing of breakfast for her man, then she gets the children up, feeds them, and sees the elders off to school. After that comes the washing of the inevitable baby, and the cleaning of some part of the home till it is time to give the children their dinner. Later, if the baby gives her a chance, there is endless needlework, darning, patching, making over old clothes, and on certain days there is washing for the house and family, besides any shopping that is necessary. Sometimes this labour will be increased by some odd jobs of washing or cleaning done for a neighbour who "feels a bit sadly", and for whose sake the kind woman is willing to add to her own hard work. Then there is the children's tea, and late in the afternoon the husband comes back, tired and dirty, and probably wishing to wash at the kitchen sink, where he makes what she describes as a "terrible muck" before sitting down to the meal which she must prepare. After that the children who are too small to put themselves to bed must be attended to, and when all that is done then the tired wife and mother may sit still for a few minutes before she herself lies down to sleep and forget the fatigue and worries of the day.

This is no unfair picture of the day of an ordinary labouring man's wife, and in many cases she works a great deal of happiness and contentment into it, being as a rule unselfish and devoted. Still the want of leisure, the impossibility of ever sitting down quietly to read something of interest or to listen to or take part in pleasant talk, and the entire absence of any form of recreation or amusement must in the long run be unwholesome. The mind that is always occupied with the round of daily drudgery may no doubt be contented, but it cannot mature, it cannot fix itself on higher things; no store can be laid up for failing health in old age, nor is it possible for one whose every thought is centred in the routine of work to be the companion and helpmeet to her husband, or the guide and ruler of her children, that a little more leisure and a little more knowledge and outside interest might enable her to become. There are but few of either sex who can go on working steadily day after day with no relaxation, without breaking down in mind or in body, but it is especially so with women, as their bodies are less strong and their feelings more sensitive. For them a week or two's holiday in the course of the year is really essential, if they are to be good wives and mothers, or, in other words, good citizens.

To meet in some way their needs, the "Women's Holiday Fund" was started in 1895, by one who felt keenly the need of rest and relaxation for the working women in her own neighbourhood, and quite unaided she sent a few of them to the country for some days in the summer. Gradually the work grew till in 1910 there were many subscribers to the fund, an office was rented in Denison House, a paid secretary was engaged, and over 1,000 women were sent away to seaside and country lodgings.

The office work is no sinecure. It needs a clear head to fit the different people into the various lodgings and homes. All beds are secured weeks beforehand, and must be paid for whether full or empty, and if at the last moment anyone fails to go for some reason, there is considerable trouble in at once finding another to fill the vacant place. The election of the women is made by a Case (Sub-) Committee, assisted by local secretaries living in the different districts, and their referees, who see to the correct filling in of the printed forms on which must be stated details of income, health, number in family, and so on, as well as what amount the applicant can afford to pay towards her holiday. Some are so keen to go another year that they begin to put by something towards their next payment as soon as they get home.

The total cost of sending away one woman for a fortnight is about £3, and with her child £3 10s.

The average contribution made by the applicant is about one-third of the total cost.

A new departure was made in 1910, when a house for mothers and babies was set apart. One of the greatest trials to the fund was always the vexed question of the children. It began essentially as a "*Women's* Holiday Fund," and as few children as possible were sent away. At first sight this seemed to some people a hard rule. Separating the mother from the family was thought wrong. In some cases it is difficult, in others it is impossible. But, on the other hand, what sort of a holiday is it if you take all your cares with you, and still more what sort of a holiday is it if having made an affort to leave your own cares behind you, you find your neighbour has brought hers with her, and you must share them? The poor troublesome fretful baby and the restless spoilt child cannot, certainly do not, reserve their noise and worrying exclusively for their own mother in seaside lodgings, but succeed probably in spoiling everyone's holiday. These considerations led to the experiment of setting aside one house for mothers and babies. The services of a trained nurse were secured, who lived in the house and saw to the proper feeding and care of the children. Her experiences alone would fill a volume, and one of great interest.

This scheme proved very successful, the immediate result being the lessening of complaints and trouble in the lodgings, where children were a frequent source of annoyance, to say nothing of the lessons of hygiene and management learnt by some young mothers under a wise and kindly influence. During the war

the house set apart for this purpose was commandeered for the use of troops, and it was not till 1921 that a new home was opened at St. Leonard's-on-Sea. It entails, of course, considerable expenditure, which it is hoped may be met by increased support from those interested in the welfare of young children.

One thing already accomplished by this fund is that it has taught a certain number of people the use of a holiday; that it does not only mean enjoying a few days out of London, but that it also means coming back to work with freshened energies, better health, better temper. It means having something to look back upon, something to look forward to.

In the grey and uneventful lives of many working women there is so little opportunity for recreation that when a holiday becomes possible they do not know how to employ it. The first consideration should be to change the surroundings, and for the dwellers in cities to get away into pure air, to see beautiful sights and hear beautiful sounds. Those who live in a constant round of manual labour which needs no mental effort, and who have had little opportunity for cultivating their minds, are apt to feel dull and depressed if set down suddenly in a quiet country place with no sounds but those of birds and beasts, and no one to talk to. Hence the greater demand for holidays by the sea than in the country.

Seaside places generally provide some sort of amusement and excitement for those who not unnaturally demand "a bit of fun" now and again, and who are much happier when they can listen to a band playing and can see people and shops, than if they find themselves in some lovely but lonely country place with nothing to do but to "commune with nature," a thing they neither can do nor wish to do.

Yet there are times when the sea succeeds in appealing to that poetic sense which is in everyone, though often so hidden and crushed out that when a sign of it appears we are startled. One woman who had not a very easy temper wrote, "When I sit and watch the sea I think if I always lived by it I could keep good." Many letters might be quoted equally illuminating on the question of the value of holidays from various points of view. A man writes: "The wife is a different woman since she has had a rest, she is that amiable." One's imagination pictures here the tired, overwrought woman, snapping at her husband, scolding the children, always working, always trying to do her duty, never enjoying herself as many of us know enjoyment, and on the verge of a breakdown. Think what it means to her "to get away", to have a little leisure, to dress nicely and do nothing for a few hours! If as, thank God, is often the case she has a good husband and loves her children, she will soon miss them and be glad to get back to them after a week or so, when the new things to speak of, and the recollection of that sunny day by the sea, or the walk through the ripening corn, will bring a new element of interest and a fresh impulse to exertion in her life. Then there are the young wife with the prospect of motherhood, or with the tiny infant already in her arms, the lonely single woman whose life seems one long dreary struggle for existence; to them the value of good air and change of scene are incalculable, and to all the knowledge that outside their dreary, or, at least, ugly, surroundings there is beauty, and that beauty brings pleasure, must be valuable.

The Women's Holiday Fund may therefore lay claim not only to helping poor working women to rest for a few days, but to showing them some of the great opportunities of life. All of us are probably agreed that those who deliberately lead a life of pleasure do not really know what enjoyment means. They have had so much that they are for ever seeking something new, something impossible. But pleasure as a relaxation from work can be drawn from an inexhaustible source, there will always be something left. To learn how to appreciate what is beautiful in nature, or in art, or in character is a great and good lesson, but it is not an easy one. It needs time and opportunity to master it thoroughly. Those who realize and acknowledge this fact will be doing a good work if they will help others less fortunate then themselves to have at least the chance of beginning to learn the lesson.

G. C.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Offices: Evelyn House, 62 Oxford Street, London, W. 1. Telephone: Museum 6910.

OXFORD SUMMER SCHOOL, ST. HILDA'S COLLEGE, August 19th—September 2nd.

The School will be assembling by the time this reaches our readers, but if this page should catch the eye of anyone in or within reach of Oxford, we would remind them that non-resident students are admitted to all the facilities of the School. A list of convenient lodgings can be provided. The second week, beginning 26th August, will deal with the Parliamentary work of the N.U.S.E.C., Local Government work and the League of Nations, and the Administration of Justice, the latter specially intended for women magistrates. After 18th August all inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, N.U.S.E.C. Summer School, St. Hilda's College, Oxford.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

North-Western Group of Societies affiliated to the N.U.S.E.C.—Report for Summer Quarter.

Chinley W.C.A.

Special efforts have been made to raise money for the Russian Famine Fund, resulting in £66 and a collection of clothing being handed over to that organization. Resolutions have been sent to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, and Sir S. Hill Wood, M.P., urging the Government to take such action at the Hague as will arrest a further Russian famine next winter, and insure to the Russian people a supply of the goods of which they stand in such urgent need.

Resolutions have also been sent to the Prime Minister, Minister of Labour, and Sir S. Hill Wood on the hardships of the Gap System which obtained under the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Liverpool W.C.A.

In May the Committee decided to arrange two public lectures—one by Miss Rathbone on "Family Endowment," and the other by Miss Macadam on "Bills before the House of Commons." Both of these were well attended, our room being crowded to its full capacity.

Following the custom of the last two years, we have arranged for a course of lectures on economic subjects, designed to interest the general public, and this year "Unemployment" was the problem dealt with. We were more successful than previously in attracting both men and women of the general public, and those who took part in the protracted discussions after the lectures were outsiders and not members of the Association.

The work of some of the wards is suspended during the summer, but in other eases where convenient and attractive meeting places are available, meetings and other activities are continued through the summer, and those wards which are situated in the south end of the town, who are able to avail themselves of Miss Rathbone's hospitality in the Pavilion Field, are just as busy in the summer as in the winter.

Following a short address on the subject, visits to one of the Liverpool Special Schools for Invalid Children were arranged for small groups of members, and so much interest was shown in this specialized work of the Education Committee that it is hoped next winter to reinstate the systematic visitation of interesting municipal undertakings.

It has been brought to the notice of one of our ward committees that the accommodation at one of the Liverpool public washhouses is entirely inadequate to meet the demand, with the result that women often have to wait for hours for their turn. A careful and systematic inquiry has been made and much evidence collected, which proves that the present state of affairs causes serious inconvenience. The ward committee has therefore decided to ask the chairman of the Baths and Washhouses Committee to receive a deputation so that the facts may be put before him, and they may have an opportunity of hearing from women who use the washhouses of the hardship involved by the shortage of accommodation.

Exeter.

The Exeter branch of the N.U.S.E.C. has lately concentrated on the effort to obtain the nomination of some women on the Exeter Bench. About 200 names were collected for a petition to be presented to the Lord Chancellor, and the writer can testify that she found nearly all the leading citizens whom she asked, subscribed their names very willingly, some welcoming the opportunity of doing so. This petition was presented to the Chairman of the Local Advisory Committee, and then forwarded to the Lord Chancellor with the names of two very well-known Exeter ladies recommended for the Exeter Bench. Our Society had the pleasure of marching in procession under its own banner in the demonstration in support of the League of Nations Union. The local branch of this Union is indeed most fortunate in its Hon. Secretary—H. T. Michelmore, Esq., who is young, gifted, and, above all, enthusiastic in the cause.

OBITUARY.

MINNA CAUER.

With Minna Cauer, who died on 3rd August in her 81st year, at her residence in Berlin, one of the veterans of the suffrage movement in Germany has passed away.

Minna Cauer belonged to that generation of women who have had to fight hard in order to be taken seriously and to be heard in public at all. It is difficult to realize nowadays the mental attitude towards women who forty years ago began working for the emancipation of their sex. Women were supposed to be too delicate to be exposed to politics. Ridicule, contempt, and loss of character threatened those among them who were courageous enough to take up arms against the prejudices of nearly the whole world.

Minna Cauer had gone through years of sorrow and bitterness when, after the death of her second husband, the historian Eduard Cauer, she devoted herself to the cause of women's rights. Her outward appearance was not that of a great fighter. She was slightly built, with a low, plaintive voice, not made for public speaking. But she was inspired with an indomitable enthusiasm for freedom and justice, which would not be overruled by any outward obstacles.

She began her campaign by collecting round her a small body of women who had been roused by her zeal, and in 1889 she founded the "Verein Frauenwohl", a society promoting the welfare of women which from the very first was resolved to *fight* for the principles to which it had dedicated itself. This society became the nucleus of the *Association of Progressive Women* which Minna Cauer presided over from 1899 till 1907. The Association took up the fight for labour legislation, for the protection of children born out of wedlock, for equal moral standards, for the abolition of State regulation of vice and other problems, which drew attention and much disapproval to the women who advocated reforms formerly hardly mentioned in their presence.

During this time Minna Cauer became more and more convinced of the importance of the question of woman suffrage. She recognized that all reforms reached step by step weighed nothing compared to the one gift of suffrage, which alone would be able to make women really free.

When in 1907 she resigned her post as president, because the Association of Progressive Women became affiliated to the National Council of Women, whose policy seemed too slow and moderate for her passionate temperament, she devoted herself entirely to the cause of woman suffrage. Her aspirations brought her into contact with a number of Anglo-Saxon women engaged in the same campaign. In 1895 she had attended the International Congress of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in London and been deeply impressed by the women pioneers of that movement, Lady Henry Somerset, Mrs. Steward, and the American, Miss Frances Willard. "What impresses me most," she wrote home at the time, "is the solidarity of Englishwomen. I know now what it is we have got to learn from them. It is not so much the method of their work—for that must be different in every country—but the will to overcome paltry differences of opinion when the welfare of the community is at stake."

When in 1906 the veteran American suffragist, Susan B. Anthony, died, she said on her death-bed: "I have fought a hard campaign for more than sixty-six years, and yet so little has been achieved. It is cruel to have to die without seeing full success."

Minna Cauer has been spared a similar fate. In November, 1918, the women of Germany were enfranchised. Soon after Minna Cauer retired from public life. She was too old and frail to contest a seat in Parliament. But she lived to see thirty-nine women elected in a Reichstag of 421 members and to see women enter public offices of all kinds.

ELISABETH ALTMANN-GOTTHEINER.

MISS ISABEL DICKSON.

We regret to announce the death of Miss Isabel Anne Dickson, O.B.E., who was the first and only woman assistant secretary in the Civil Service. She was educated at St. Leonard's School and at Girton. Her first appointment was as acting Principal of the Women's College in the University of Sydney, and later she held a similar post at Bedford College. Among the first women inspectors of schools under the Board of Education, she was also the first woman inspector of training colleges. She received the O.B.E. for services rendered to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries during the war. She was deeply interested in women's education.

COMING EVENTS.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

AUGUST 19. Hindley. Local Speakers. Dunmow. The Downs. 7 p.m. Speaker: E. Everett Reed, Esq.

AUGUST 20. Northampton. Allington Park, 3 and 8 p.m. Speaker: Lieut.-Col. Sir A. Warren, O.B.E., M.P.

AUGUST 21. Exmouth. Church Hall. 8 p.m. Speaker: Canon B. Ottley.

AUGUST 22. Acton Market Place. 8 p.m. Speaker: E. Everett Reed, Esq.

AUGUST 24. Windermere. "Dawstone." 3 p.m. Speaker: Sir Arthur Haworth.

N.U.S.E.C.

AUGUST 19–*SEPT.* 2. St. Hilda's College, Oxford, Summer School for Women Citizens and Women Magistrates.

MEDICAL, Etc.

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