

MONTHLY NEWS
of the
CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST
WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION.

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EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED.

The magnificent work that is being accomplished by women and girls in various industries specially connected with war services, has often been noticed in *Monthly News*; but the human and social side, apart from the industrial, has not been referred to. The following account, taken from the latest Report, contributed by Miss Anderson, the Principal Lady Inspector of Factories, and her Assistants, and incorporated in the General Report of the Chief Inspector for the year 1914, is of great interest. We advise our members to obtain a copy of the Report, and to study Chapter IV. for themselves. It gives a reliable account of the position of women's industries, in the face of changes so great and far-reaching that they have no parallel in previous experience.

Miss Anderson pays tribute to the considerate conduct of employers during the chaos which followed the outbreak of war. We read that "Before the war came, the inspectors knew of a greatly increasing and extending desire on the part of manufacturers to improve the conditions of factory life beyond the statutory requirements; but even that hardly prepared them for the sudden blossoming out in August and September of innumerable cases where the foremost thought was to stand by the weakest of their workers and share alike in profit and loss. And this appeared not only in such cases as that of the large old-established factory, when the senior partner slowly explained how everyone in the business, office and all, was sharing *pro rata* in the short time and short earnings with the factory workers, and how any sums that he might have given to relief funds were going either to his workers in need, or to wives and dependents of his workers who were reservists or recruits for the new Army. It appeared also in smaller employers, who made deep inroads in their savings to avoid discharging a single worker. Factory inspectors are not likely to forget these things, which so greatly predominated, in spite of instances of a contrary kind."

Then we get delightful pictures of the enthusiasm and patriotism of the women and girl workers themselves. Miss Anderson tells us: "It was in the earlier stages of the rush to produce war supplies, before greatly extended use of power machinery had been achieved, and before numbers of workers from other occupations had been brought in and trained, that overtime was in some places worked to a really serious extent that

must have defeated its object if it had continued much longer. The provision stands in all the Orders that it shall not be 'a condition' of a worker's employment that she shall work overtime. This, coupled with the workers own recognition of their country's need of them, made explicit by direct personal appeal to them by Lord Kitchener 'in carrying out the great work of providing the Army with its equipment, employers and employees are doing their duty for their King and Country equally with those who have joined the Army for service in the Field' posted in the factories, has led to a spirit of sustained, untiring effort never seen before and most admirable."

Miss Anderson quotes from the reports of some of her colleagues:—*Miss Squire*: "This spirit has accomplished what the mere prospect of increased wages has failed to do; it is a truism among managers that girls, even on piece work, cannot be induced to exceed a pace which enables them to earn what they consider a normally sufficient wage; but during the last few months the motive 'our soldiers need it' has made them work at top speed. 'My sweetheart, he's out there, and my brothers, so I may as well be working,' is often heard; and a married woman writes to her husband in the trenches to tell him she is doing her share." *Miss Tracey* says: "It is a sustaining thought to many an over-tired mother or sister that she is not leaving all the hardship to the soldiers"; and *Miss Sloccock*: "It is only by visiting the factories that one can realise the extent to which the equipment and comfort of the troops in the field depend upon the work of the women and girls at home; and the amount of overtime work has, I believe, only been possible without injurious effects because the workers have been so glad to help. In one factory I found them singing for joy, because after a long spell of short time on blouse making, they had started on a Government order for mattress covers."

An interesting point is raised by *Miss Pearson*, who was surprised to find so little complaint or ill-effect from long hours. She considers: "This may be partly due to the better standard of living that the overtime money makes possible, but I think it is mainly due to the ideal for which the women are now working. . . . It would revolutionise industry if some ideal other than money could be inspired during times of peace."

A list of posts required by ladies now in our Hostel will be found on page 4.

NEW SERIES OF LECTURES.

Our Dominions Overseas.

The subject of the next lecture in the series "Political and Social Conditions in Belligerent Countries" will be SOUTH AFRICA. The Committee have been fortunate in obtaining the consent of Mr. Dougal Malcolm to give the lecture, which will be held on Saturday, April 8th, at 3 p.m. at 84, Eaton Square, S.W., by kind permission of Viscountess St. Cyres. The Chair will be taken by Viscount St. Cyres.

Admission (free) will be by ticket only (a few reserved seats 1/- each). The Committee hope that members will show their appreciation of the kindness of the lecturer in giving his valuable time to the Association by applying as soon as possible for tickets for themselves and friends, (enclosing ½d. stamp to cover postage), to the Secretary, C.U.W.F.A., 48, Dover Street, W.

Further lectures are being arranged for May and June on Australia, Canada and New Zealand, in the order named.

Canadian Women's Institutes.

An article of special interest in the April number of the *Review* is on Canadian Women's Institutes, by Mrs. Alfred Watt, who is attached temporarily to the staff of the Agricultural Organisation Society for the purpose of forming similar Institutes in England and Wales. These Institutes were started in Ontario with the idea of raising the standard of living in the country, in home and in community life, with the direct result of making better and happier conditions and indirectly of stimulating all agricultural activities. They are non-sectarian, non-political and non-propagandist, so that the activities of practically all the women in their own rural neighbourhood are directed primarily to the betterment of home and neighbourhood conditions.

The Women's Institutes of Ontario are the pioneer organization of the kind in Canada. They were started in a small way in 1897 as a companion organization to the Farmers' Institute, which even then had been flourishing for some time. About ten years ago they were made a separate organization by the Government, and received moderate financial support through this Department. Since that time they have grown very rapidly, and now number 860 with an aggregate membership of 30,000.

The secret of their success appears to lie in the fact that they have been organized in compact local districts, and they have endeavoured to take up work of practical value to the home or community welfare of their particular district. During the past year practically their whole efforts have been devoted to assisting the various patriotic causes. In this work they have rendered very distinguished service and at the same time attracted much attention to the usefulness of the organization.

Women on Exemption Tribunals.

In our last issue we asked our readers to communicate with us if they knew of cases where women had been invited to serve on Tribunals. We are very glad to be able to give the following list:—

Brackley (Northants) one (C.U.W.F.A. member.)
County of Cornwall two.
Falmouth two.
Farnham (Surrey) two.
Weston-super-Mare one.
Paddington (London) one.

Deputation to Westminster City Council.

A deputation from the Women's Municipal Party waited on the General Purposes Committee of the Westminster City Council with regard to Women's Representation on the Council, Women on Local Tribunals and the appointment of Women Police.

The result was as follows:—

(1) The Council, without expressing any opinion on the desirability of women as Councillors, did not think the temporary expedient of co-option should be used for increasing the number of women councillors at the present time; (2) after full consideration of the representations of the Women's Municipal Party, the Council were unable to alter their recommendation that a man should be appointed on the Local Tribunal in the place of Alderman Walden; (3) although the Works Committee were unable to advise the Council to take any steps towards the appointment of Women Police as suggested, they thought in view of the statements made by the Deputation as to the usefulness of Women Police, the Works Committee might be asked to take back their recommendation for further consideration.

Two members of our Association—Winifred, Countess of Arran and Mrs. H. Percy Boulnois joined the deputation.

Young Offenders in War Time.

Lord Lytton, chairman, and the other officers of the State Children's Association, writing from 53, Victoria Street, S.W., with reference to the increase in juvenile delinquency and to the demand for severer punishments, urge that the children are not alone to blame, and that the war spirit has produced in them a desire for adventure which in many cases can only be gratified through acts of lawlessness. So far from their misdoings being the result of leniency in the Children's Courts and of the probation system, the writers state that but for these Courts the present condition of things would have been far more serious, and they firmly believe that if the children are to be saved it will be by an extended use of the system of reclamation through friendship. They appeal to the public, and in particular to women of education and experience, to offer themselves as Probation Officers, or for some work in connection with boys' clubs and kindred organizations.

MATERNITY CENTRES AND INFANT WELFARE.

BY LADY BETTY BALFOUR.

How often we now hear the cry: "The poor are better off than they have ever been. They are wastefully extravagant." It is generally uttered by people who are themselves quite comfortably off. I should like to condemn everyone who makes this assertion to live on the weekly budget of the women they accuse—1/9 a week per head for food—for instance. If they can manage to be "wastefully extravagant" on that, they will earn a self-respect they have never enjoyed before. The terrible revelation made to those who have helped to administer separation allowances in this war is the undoubted fact that, as Dr. Florence Willey says, "the vast majority of the working class mothers are insufficiently fed."

We are prepared as a nation to spend millions on hospitals, workhouses, homes for the feeble-minded, but we grudge a few pounds spent on the feeding of nursing and expectant mothers, which might save all this later expense through enabling a healthy and efficient race to be raised.

Wherever it has been tried it has been proved that the well fed, well cared for mother can nurse her own child, that that child does not succumb to infantile diseases, even in bad epidemics, and that it has the best possible start in life. It follows from that start that it will have the best chance of doing well at school, well in the workshop, well through life.

The effect on the mother is not pauperising. When she can, she will pay for her food. In such a mothers dining-room at Battersea, whereas before the war the mothers only paid 13/- towards the expenses, the same number in the same time have paid over £4 since they have been in receipt of their allowances. Their interest in their babies increases tenfold. They become objects of pride, instead of almost intolerable burdens, and the fathers, too, come to realise and value the difference that one hour's rest and one good meal a day will make in the mother and in the health of the baby.

I visited the Battersea dining-room, where over forty expectant and nursing mothers are daily fed. A happy family party they seemed, with a perfect comradeship between their health visitor and themselves. "You seem good friends," I said to her. "They like being scolded," was her answer. "How have you managed to get the babies so spotlessly clean," I asked. "Example mostly. But sometimes we use a little bribery. One mother seemed incurably careless, and could not keep her baby clean. One day I gave her a little white silk frock I had been given. Of course she had to live up to it. Her baby's clothes were never dirty again. In the case of another mother, I undressed and washed it in our nursery before all the other mothers, and clothed it afresh from top to toe. She never got over the disgrace of that, though I had said nothing. For two weeks she kept away from me, and then she brought the baby beautifully clean."

Maternity centres are cropping up all over the country. The good they do is, I believe, invaluable, and they afford almost unlimited scope for the willing voluntary worker. Comparatively few as yet have organised dinners for mothers, along with the weighing and care of babies. At home the working mother, who has to housekeep on an inadequate income, gives the best food to the wage-earning husband, and the best of what remains to her children—and any scraps are good enough for her. Moreover, she does not eat in peace, but with a baby, perhaps, in one arm and several toddlers pulling at her skirts. The dinner at the Maternity Centre, after her own family have been fed and the children started back to school, is a meal eaten in peace. Her baby is minded in a crèche upstairs, and she has food to nourish her and time to digest it.

The Influence of the Women's Vote in Idaho.

The women of Idaho were enfranchised in 1896, and since that time the following laws are among those which have been passed:—

Child-labour law. Wage-earning prohibited during school hours. From fourteen to sixteen maximum is 54 hours per week, 9 hours per day.

Protection of orphans, homeless, abused and neglected children provided for.

Compulsory education law.

Nine hour law for women in all industries, except harvesting, packing, curing and canning of perishable goods. Seats must be provided.

Wife given absolute control of her separate property (all property acquired after marriage, except by gift, is community property, and this includes rents and profits from separate property).

Penalty for wilful failure to support wife.

Provision for separate care of female convicts.

White slave law.

Cities and villages given power to regulate and suppress prostitution.

State Board of Health established.

Live Stock Sanitary Board established. Inspection of stock and treatment of diseased animals. Regulation of slaughter-houses.

Report required of infants with sore eyes.

Pure food law.

The Review.

The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the C.U.W.F.A. makes an important announcement in the forthcoming issue of the *Review*. This number contains several articles of general interest, including "A Question of Balance" by Lady Robert Cecil, "Women's Institutes" by Mrs. Alfred Watt, "Great Suffrage Victory in Canada: historic scene in the Legislature of Manitoba," "Voluntary Work" and reviews of books of special interest to women. The *Review*, price 2d. (3d. post free), can be obtained on application to the Office, 48, Dover Street, W.

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LECTURES:

Tuesday, April 4, 7.30 p.m.—**House Dinner**, Miss I. O. Ford. "The Ideal Man." Chairman: Rev. Arthur E. M. de Cetto.

Wednesday, April 5, 4.30 p.m.—Mrs. H. F. Wood. "The Naval and Military War Pensions Act." Chairman: Lt. Col. Sealey, H.M.'s Indian Army (retired).

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HOSTEL EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

We have opened a Bureau in connection with the Hostel at the Office, and we shall be glad to receive information regarding vacant posts. A list of positions required will be found below, and we ask our friends to help us to place these ladies as soon as possible.

C.H.P.—Lady seeks post in an Office. Some experience in typing and office work and good at figures.

A.L.A.—Lady seeks clerical work or post as secretarial-companion where knowledge of French and German would be an advantage.

M.A.B.—Certificated Masseuse requires engagements, visiting or residential.

M.T.—Requires post as manageress-housekeeper in hotel. Thoroughly experienced. Capable, energetic, good caterer, books, etc. Salary £35—£40.

H.M.—Lady requires post as assistant-matron in children's convalescent home or orphanage. Fond of and experienced with children, plain needlewoman and cook.

E.M.—Lady, training for motor driving, running repairs and mechanism, will be open to an engagement shortly.

E.K.—Educated woman desires post as governess. Capable, energetic, fond of children, good needlewoman, languages.

L.D.—Lady, who has lived last nine years in Paris, seeks clerical post or similar position. Music, French, Drawing, (all certificated).

K.E.—Lady seeks engagement in any position of trust, or as secretary where languages would be a consideration. Good at figures.

F.E.B.—Lady requires post as useful-companion. Over 7½ years reference. Can undertake clerical work and some book-keeping. Would be willing to assist with garden and poultry.

H.M.B.B.—Practical woman seeks engagement as manageress or superintendent, or any position of trust. Experienced in catering for large numbers, buying, house-keeping, book-keeping.

S.E.E.—Lady desires post as companion-housekeeper to lady or gentleman, or any position of trust. Domesticated, some experience in nursing. Fond of animals. Good references.

M.F.—English lady, who has had many years experience in teaching abroad, seeks post as Governess or Companion. French acquired in Paris.

M.T.—Seeks position as nurse to elderly lady, house-keeper, needlewoman. Good references. Abstainer.

All applications to be addressed to the Initials stated above, c/o The Superintendent, 9, Roland Gardens, South Kensington.

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