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of the
**Conservative Women's Reform
ASSOCIATION.**
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"FOLLOW LIGHT—DO THE RIGHT."

Uniformity and Variety in America.

America offers a panorama of infinite variety, and no one can say that he has even scratched the surface of its interest until he has spent many months in the country. The immense expanse of the country; its almost infinite variation of climate; the multifarious elements of which its population is composed, all combine to baffle the visitor in his attempt to know what the real America is. Parenthetically it should be said that there are far too many Englishmen who pride themselves on knowing America, because they have visited New York, Washington, and Boston. No one can say that he knows anything about America unless he has travelled extensively not only in the States of the Atlantic seaboard, but in the vast region known as the Middle West, in the South, and on the Pacific coast.

In certain respects there is a superficial uniformity of appearance among Americans, which is apt at first to lead to the supposition that they are all alike. The young men, who are found in great numbers in every Pullman car, in every hotel lounge, and in all public places in America, are always dressed in the same way, and bear a very marked similarity of feature. When one remembers that the great clothing firm of Hart, Schaffner & Marx does a larger trade in ready-made men's suits than any other ten firms in America put together one begins to understand the source of the apparent uniformity in appearance. No doubt also in opinion there is a certain similarity due to the fact that the only publications of national scope are utterly conventional and standardized in their political and social propaganda. I am not speaking here of Journals such as the *New Republic* or the *Weekly Springfield Republican*, but of the big illustrated weeklies with circulations of several hundred thousands. These weeklies seem to be conducted on the assumption that the intelligence of the American reader must on no account be strained by too much "high-brow" stuff. And so the impression of uniformity grows, mainly because whether you travel in Alabama or Oregon, in Massachusetts or California you see men in the same kind of hat, and the same suits of clothes, reading the same bulky illustrated weekly magazines, and probably smoking the same kind of tobacco. But beneath this veneer of sameness there are differences as great as those

which distinguish Connemara from Yorkshire, or Edinburgh from Vancouver.

Taking the salient differences between England and America, before we touch on the differences that exist in America itself, I think the most vital difference to remember is that the use of one and the same language on both sides of the Atlantic conceals very deep-seated contrasts in social and political thinking. It is one of the commonplaces of the political student, that while America is a genuine social democracy, the United Kingdom is a much more effective political democracy. The truism is worth repeating, because it is to-day truer than ever. Here, then, is one of the fundamental differences. Except where wealth occasionally builds a frail barrier between one class and another in a few of the great cities, there is no class division whatever in America.

Evidences of social democracy are to be seen everywhere, and every day, in the United States; but when Americans speak with pride of the democratic character of their political institutions they must be unaware of the fact that practically every distinguished student of politics—both American and European—regards the modern development of American political practice as a very serious threat to genuine American democracy. When I was in the United States during half of last year and part of the present year, the President and the Senate were locked together in a fierce struggle for political supremacy, which revealed to many Americans the weakness inherent in the division of authority—especially in foreign affairs—between the President and the Upper House of Legislature. The power of the President has unquestionably grown greater during the last 20 years, and though many Americans profess to regard it with dismay, the detached observer can only see in it an inevitable and healthy reaction against the overweening power wielded by the oligarchy of wealth, from the death of Lincoln to arrival of Theodore Roosevelt in the White House. After all, the President is elected by popular vote, and it is a remarkable fact that the list of American presidents is marked by greater personal and political distinction than either the Senate or the House of Representatives can show. This is partly due to the fact that the Presidency is the most powerful political office in the world. But on the other hand, the comparative poverty,

especially in recent times, of both Houses of the American Legislature, is due to the fact that Congress has no political responsibility for the effective administration of the laws which it passes. In a certain sense it is irresponsible—a feature of its character which comes out very clearly in the reckless vote-catching in which it indulges at every opportunity. Serious students of contemporary political conditions in America constantly said to me that the decline in the prestige and personnel of Congress is a very serious element in American democracy.

The proper correction will no doubt be found; and the source from which it will spring is the inexhaustible fertility of America. In this matter of the resourcefulness of the American mind there is of course a contrast to be noted. The American is a man who will fling costly machinery on the scrap heap without a moment's hesitation whenever he can get better machinery to replace it. But on his political side he is apt to be intensely conservative. Indeed, the worship of the Constitution, and of the Fathers who wrote it, is carried to such ludicrous extremes that, for instance, Mr. Will Hays, the chairman of the Republican National Committee attributed something like divine inspiration to the American Constitution. There is, of course, a growing willingness to introduce amendments into the Constitution; the most recent of these, namely the Prohibition Amendment, being regarded by many Americans as a most unaccountable intrusion of a purely police question into the constitutional sphere. But even though the conservative character of the American in politics comes out clearly in his attitude towards the Constitution, none the less in questions of State government he has shown a resourcefulness, fertility, and readiness to experiment, second to none in the world. It cannot therefore be very long before the less workable provisions of the National Constitution are seriously modified.

Meanwhile, the Constitution as it stands, is used as a heavy bludgeon against all who desire social and political change of any kind. The most remarkable feature of American public opinion since the Armistice has been its tendency to move in mass formation, grinding into the dust any minority which upholds an unpopular opinion. I do not think that this is due to a double dose of original sin in the form of intolerance to any greater degree in America than, say, in Great Britain. I think it is more probably due to the fact that the American people had worked up a tremendous war enthusiasm, and had roused their national energy to the very highest pitch when the Armistice came, and the end of the war bereft them of any vital object on which to spend the energy thus generated. They, therefore, let it loose upon any person or object which happened to be unpopular for the moment. This trouble will however cure itself. America will blow off steam for the next three or four months during the Presidential contest, but when President Wilson's successor is elected she will get back to work in a more or less normal frame of mind.

There is one thing which we in this country must remember during the next few months—England

is the favourite Aunt Sally of American politics, and many things will be thrown at us during the coming fight. We shall do well to reflect, however, when very provoking things are being said about us, that there never was a moment in the history of the United States when Great Britain had friends more numerous, more generous, or better informed than she has at this moment. And I think we may take some additional comfort from the platforms drawn up by the Republican and Democratic parties last month, because they show that the responsible leaders of the two great National parties are strong enough and wise enough to prevent the extremists from playing too violently the national pastime of twisting the lion's tail.

One word in conclusion—I hope that my fellow-countrymen will visit America as often as they can; and that when they do they will penetrate right into the heart of the Middle West. Only so will they understand what the real America is. I am sure they will find, as I did, a very warm welcome; and will return home with the conviction that America and Great Britain must and will stand together in times to come.

A. F. WHYTE.

(Mr. Whyte's name will be familiar to all readers of "The New Europe." Mr. Whyte has just returned from America where he has been lecturing upon English politics of the present day.)

Parliamentary.

The outstanding political event of the past month is the Spa Conference. The moral of the Spa Conference is obvious: the Allied Powers with a united front will permit no evasion of the Disarmament and Reparation Clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, and Germany has come at last to recognise this fact. In the past undoubtedly there have been mistakes: unexpectedly difficult situations have arisen, uncertainty and hesitation have done their deadly work. But the Allies have learnt their lesson, and the last few days have shewn their determination to insist upon the proper fulfilment of the Peace Treaty.

The Home Rule Bill passed through Committee of the whole House on July 5th, with the exception of the financial clauses and until autumn brings with it time for the presentation and consideration of these clauses nothing more can be done. Meanwhile though the Bill has been considerably improved in Committee, and signs are not lacking of the awakening of a wider and wiser interest in the Irish problem, Ireland herself is in an increasing state of unrest, suspicion and discontent.

The Rent and Mortgage (Restrictions) Bill received the Royal Assent this month. As this Act is somewhat complicated, we give an explanation of the principal clauses, as set out in *The Times*.

Increases of Rent and Mortgage Interest.

In the case of a dwelling-house within the present limits of protection (£70 rental in London, £60 in Scotland, and £52 elsewhere), the landlord will be entitled to an increase of rent:—

(a) Immediately of 30 per cent. of the rent, exclusive of rates, at which the house was let on August 3, 1914, where the landlord pays the rates—this to include any increase which may have been made under the Act of April, 1919; and

(b) At the end of 12 months of a further 10 per cent., where the landlord pays the rates.

In the case of a dwelling-house within the present limits of protection a mortgagee will be entitled to an increase of mortgage interest:—

(a) Immediately of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., if such an increase has not already been made under the Act of April, 1919; and

(b) At the end of 12 months of a further $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., subject to a maximum rate of 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

In the case of a dwelling-house between £70 and £105 rental in London, £60 and £90 in Scotland, and £52 and £78 elsewhere, which is brought within the limits of protection for the first time, the permitted increase of rent (40 per cent.) and of mortgage interest (1 per cent.) will take effect at once and not in two stages.

The permitted increase of rent is to be conditional upon the execution of repairs by the landlord, and the County Court will have power to suspend the payment of the increase of rent if the repairs are not executed within a limited period.

Security for Tenants.

Within the extended limits of protection, a tenant obtains security against ejection, subject to certain qualifications, until June 24, 1923, at which date the Act will cease to be operative.

Where a landlord requires possession of a house for his own occupation or for that of an employee or tenant, it is provided as a condition precedent to his right to an order that there should be available for the tenant alternative accommodation, reasonably equivalent as regards rent and suitability in all respects. There are two notable exceptions to this general rule:—

1. Where the landlord only gave up occupation of the house in consequence of his joining the Forces during the war, and now that he is demobilized, wishes to re-occupy it; and

2. Where the house is required for occupation by a former tenant who gave up occupation in consequence of his service in the Forces during the war.

In every case, the Court is entitled to consider the whole of the facts and to come to the general conclusion that it is reasonable to make an order.

Business Premises.

The Act imposes for the first time restrictions on the increase of rent of business premises. Its provisions apply in the same way as to dwelling-houses, subject to certain qualifications.

The rent limits are the same, but the protection is confined to one year, ending on June 24, 1921, as a Select Committee of the House of Commons is considering the whole question and is expected to make its report in time for legisla-

tion to be passed before that date.

The permitted increase of rent is 35 per cent.

Key Money and Bonuses.

It is made a statutory offence for a person to require any payment or to give any consideration as a condition of the grant, or continuance of a tenancy of any dwelling-house to which the Act applies. The Court may also order that the amount obtained or the value of the consideration given shall be repaid.

This provision does not apply to the grant or continuance of a tenancy for a term of 14 years or upwards.

Furnished Houses.

If it is proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the rent being charged is yielding or will yield a profit of more than 25 per cent. in excess of the sum which might have been reasonably expected from a similar letting in a year ending on August 3, 1914, the Court may order that such excess of rent shall be irrecoverable, and that any amount which may have been paid shall be repaid to the lessee.

In the connection it is made an offence for a person to obtain what the Court, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, considers an extortionate profit.

A Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, under the Chairmanship of Lord Muir Mackenzie, are engaged in the taking of evidence in relation to the Bishop of London's Criminal Law Amendments Bill, and Lord Sandhurst's Sexual Offences Bill, which have been referred to them. Lady Astor is one of the six members of the House of Commons. The meetings of the Committee are open to the public.

The Women Justices' and Children's Courts Bill which was moved by the Lord Chancellor last month, and which received its second reading without a division, has not yet reached the Commons.

Our Work.

A Conference on the Matrimonial Causes Bill was held on 15th July, at 52, Portland Place, by the kind permission of Lady St. Helier. Lady Lloyd Greame presided, and addresses were given by Mr. Rendall, who recently moved a resolution in the House of Commons in favour of the adoption of the Majority Report of Lord Gorell's Commission, and Lady Beecham, Hon. Sec. of the Marriage Defence League Council. An interesting discussion followed, opened by Mrs. Bennett.

The next Conference will be upon the Bishop of London's Criminal Law Amendment (No. 2) Bill. Miss Picton Tuberville, O.B.E., Chairman of the Criminal Law Amendments Committee is to be invited to speak.

The C.W.R.A. is hoping to arrange a large Propaganda Meeting in the autumn, at which many Conservative Members will be asked to give addresses.

Monthly Notes will not be published next month, and the office will be closed during August unless urgent important business should arise.

Our Fashion Letter.

Final Bargains of a Great Sale

THERE is no ignoring the effect that the wet weather has had on the Summer Sales. Not only have people not come out to buy, but Stocks have remained far fresher than they usually do at this period of the year—a fact that makes the final bargains that are being offered throughout this week at Swan & Edgar's Great Sale, that terminates next Saturday, particularly tempting and attractive.

A Wonderful Week.

HERE, besides quantities of cotton and summer gowns for seaside and country wear, which promise to be in greater demand than ever, once the heat wave sets it, are all manner of lovely model gowns suitable for day and evening wear throughout the autumn, which during this week are being marked down to remarkable prices that scarcely represent the cost of the material of which they are made.

For Swan and Edgar are clearing out everything that has formed their summer stock, so as to be ready to start fresh next week with their autumn models that are already in hand.

CONSEQUENTLY, bargains abound in the great corner shop in Piccadilly, which stands out as the centre in which the very best models make their first appearance. Even smart tailor-made Suits have for this week been reduced to pre-war prices, for amongst the many costumes to be picked up here at bargain figures are some delightful fancy suiting suits made in black and white, and other fancy checks, which, for the next few days, will be sold for 52s. 6d. each instead of 4½ guineas; while those who want something thicker will be delighted with some ultra-smart and serviceable coloured frieze coats and skirts, which, obtainable in saxe, purple, browns, and a good range of other colours, cost 99s. 6d. instead of 6½ guineas.

Tailor Made at Pre-War Prices.

AMONGST smart suits for the Scotch season and the moors, special attention is directed to some beautifully-made over-check tweed suits of delightful cut, which, during the few days that remain, will cost 4½ guineas instead of 7 guineas each. Lined throughout with silk, and made with long rever collars and big pockets. These are amongst the great bargains of this sale, as are also a few good striped coatings at 4½ guineas each instead of 9 guineas.

Suits for the Moors.

THURSDAY, is the special red-letter day of this final week of this great sale, for this will see a great clearance of remnants of all sorts, ranging from cotton to wollen and silken fabrics. Amongst the latter special mention must be made of a quantity of coloured Beauté satin at 9s. a yard instead of 14s. 11d.; while all the lovely check suitings will be sold for 5s. a yard instead of 10s. 11d., and some thousand yards of printed shantung reduced from 10s. 11d. to 6s. 11d. per yard.

The Last Remnant Day.

BATHING Suits of the regulation type are another feature of this final clearance, for here one finds some delightful stockinette swimming suits in navy blue and white, and black, trimmed with an emerald bind, reduced to 6s. 11d. each. In the same department there are some wonderful bargains in lovely trousseaux lingerie, one specially attractive Crêpe de Chine set, made in either pink, pale blue, ivory, or white, and trimmed with fine lace, adorned with little floral wreaths of chiffon roses, being not only the most attractive, but quite the cheapest bargain to be found in town.

Bathing Suits and Fine Lingerie.

BLOUSES will also be featured at record prices at Swan and Edgar's Sale. Here one can take one's pick of delightful embroidered cotton blouses from 5s. each, including a lot of model oddments that offer extraordinary value. Spun silk skirts of various colours at 15s. 11d. instead of 29s. 6d. are other bargains worth securing, as well as some delightful model jumpers and sports coats priced from 25s. each, many of which are well worth double this figure.

Blouse Bargains.

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Members of the League are treated as private patients, and are placed in a cubicle or a private ward. Those who can afford to pay a small sum in addition to their subscription, are asked to pay it to the Hospital.

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