

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

The Employment of Married Women.

The Lancet of 14th May has a useful article on the Married Women (Employment) Bill. It points out that the Bill concerns the medical profession from at least two direct points of view. It not only affects the interests of medical women engaged in Government and Municipal service on contracts which terminate with marriage, but the arguments used by the opposition were almost wholly based on medical grounds. *The Lancet* points out that the only medical speaker in the debate, Dr. Graham Little, stated that there was no medical authority for the statements made as to the inferiority of the married woman worker, and that data concerning the sickness-rates of married women, as compared with unmarried women or men working under similar conditions, are very difficult to procure. The article proceeds to give some statistics drawn from sickness data of Elementary School Teachers by J. V. Hart, 1904-1919, which appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* in 1922. One striking fact emerges, that while the absence rate for married women is higher than that of unmarried women or men, the differential rate was at the lower and upper extremes of age. Between the ages of 30 and 55, married women showed less absence than unmarried women! Statistics have a knack of hitting back unexpectedly when used to serve the ends of propaganda. The writer in *The Lancet* does not, however, stop there. "Even if it should be established that a substantially greater sickness risk has to be debited against the married woman, it by no means follows that the last word has been said on the efficiency of women as workers." He goes on to argue the case for the married teacher and to deplore the wastage which results when a highly trained woman is thrown out of employment solely on the grounds of marriage. We hope Members of Parliament will take to heart the closing observations of the article: "When the matter next comes before the House, it is to be hoped that broader and more scientific views will prevail."

Something Wrong.

On the other hand, if we may trust Mr. Kershaw, the President of the National Union of Trade Union Approved Societies, the sickness rate among their married women policy holders is very much higher than that among unmarried women industrially employed. Allowance must of course be made for the fact that

the majority of these unmarried women are under twenty-three, while the majority of married women are over that age, but still it appears that the principal occupation in which women are engaged is also the unhealthiest, and anyone acquainted with the conditions of industrial wage-earning life will gather that if this is the case, then it must be very unhealthy indeed! In other words, when women work under conditions which approximate to those of men, they are healthier than when they work under conditions peculiar to women. When we begin to speculate upon the causes of this differentiation a number of reflections occur to us. The National Health Insurance Act makes no continuous provision for the medical needs of the home-keeping woman. The wage system ensures her no economic security. The Ministry of Health leaves her at the mercy of amateur and commercial quack birth-controllers. Into wider and wider reflections are we led—to challenge finally the assumption of contemporary society: that woman's work of racial reproduction is an insignificant and unworthy business compared with the splendid male preoccupation of wealth-production.

Equal Franchise.

Figures quoted in our issue of 6th May with regard to the age of women who would become voters if an Equal Franchise measure is passed, can be analysed in an illuminating manner. These stated that the new women voters over 25 would be 3,650,000, and those under 25 about 1,590,000. As the Home Secretary had said previously, the new women voters over 30 will be about 2,000,000; this leaves us with 1,650,000 between 25 and 29. There are in Great Britain 11,800,000 men and 8,800,000 women at present on the register. Together with the new women voters this would reach a total of 25,840,000. The figures quoted show that at each year of age between 21 and 30 there would be something under 400,000 women voters. The new women voters at any age between 21 and 29, such as for instance at 21, will therefore represent something less than 2 per cent of the voters. Will not these proportions cause *The Daily Mail* to cease trembling for the fate of the country?

The Royal Liver Friendly Society.

The Royal Liver Friendly Society is a friendly society having some 4,506,000 policy holders. Of these over 2,000,000 are women. The women, however, are specifically disqualified from election to its governing body by Rule 110 which reads: "The members shall be represented at the Annual and Special Meetings of the Society by male delegates duly elected who are the governing body of the Society." Thus women are not merely disqualified from election by this rule, but powerless to alter it by any vote which the constitution allows them to cast. At a recent conference of the Society a motion to eliminate the word "male" was lost by 200 to 80 votes. The Society's solicitor, Mr. W. E. Corbett, of Liverpool, strongly supported the motion. In the course of his speech he regretted that the Sex Disqualifications (Removal) Act omitted specifically to include Friendly Societies, but suggested that nevertheless a judge might in all probability rule that these public bodies were not entitled to enjoy a privileged position under the Act. We understand that a number of the women members are communicating with the Registrar of Friendly Societies to protest against the registration of such a rule.

Ladies of the Air.

Last week Mrs. Elliott-Lynn and Lady Bailey established an altitude record for light aeroplanes. With Mrs. Elliott-Lynn

acting as pilot, they remained in the air for 2 hours 33 minutes 35 seconds, and reached a height of 16,000 feet. Mrs. Elliott-Lynn subsequently announced that though it was very cold 16,000 feet above the earth, her breathing was not affected. She added that her effort was "nothing to make a fuss about", but that it should help to popularize the light aeroplane—machines whose cost should soon be within the means of the ordinary light car owner. She announced her own preference for flying at such altitudes, as in the event of engine trouble they leave more space for descent. This last utterance is characteristic of Mrs. Elliott-Lynn, whose habitual tendency to belittle her own achievement and exalt the convenience, safety and general superiority of her particular transport medium, is indicative of the true "air sense". There are of course all sorts of advantages in going about one's business in a light Avro-Avian flying at 16,000 feet alt. One is not incommoded by the headlights of oncoming traffic; one is well above the dust of road vehicles; it is less stuffy than the underground, and less tardy than the motor bus. The number of people who have been killed, or who have died suddenly at such altitudes is (to amplify Mrs. Elliott-Lynn's earlier statistical assertion) a mere fraction of those who have suffered death in the streets of London alone. And yet—we are still of opinion that Mrs. Elliott-Lynn's achievement has in it an element of daring, enterprise, and steadiness, with which we are not all of us similarly endowed!

Deputy Governor of Holloway.

Miss Mary Size, who has recently assumed office as Deputy Governor of Holloway Prison, is the first woman to occupy this post. We look forward, however to the time when not only the Deputy Governor but also the Governor of this important women's prison will be a woman.

A Very Natural Liking.

On 20th May, speaking at Surbiton on the New Prayer Book, Lord Hugh Cecil confessed to a liking for the "obey" clause in the old marriage service. He said: "I am all for the old marriage

vow. I am not very likely to get married, but if I did I would insist on the old service." We understand, though we do not sympathize with Lord Hugh Cecil's feelings. It is very pleasant to be obeyed. But let him suppose that he himself, instead of exacting obedience, were required to promise (under conditions which he would regard as peculiarly sacred) unconditional obedience to another person—would his liking for the word "obey" persist? We must presume that it would, since his faith requires him to do unto others as he would that they do unto him.

Women of India.

Last month the inaugural ceremony of the Indian Women's Association (Hindi Mahila Mandal) took place in Ankleswar. About 500 ladies, under the presidency of Mrs. Matigauri Dave, were present. Mrs. Dave dwelt upon the evils of child marriage, and urged the formation of such associations in every town and village.

No Progress in Switzerland.

It is reported from Basel that the electorate has rejected by a substantial majority the proposal to introduce cantonal women's suffrage.

An Eminent Headmistress.

On 19th May, Miss Lucy Soulsby died at the age of seventy. Her teaching career dates from 1885, when she served under Miss Beale on the staff of Cheltenham Ladies' College. From there she made a quick ascent to the top of the educational tree. Two years later she became Headmistress of Oxford High School, and in 1897 of a private school at Brondesbury, from which she retired in 1915. It was during this last long stretch of constructive activity that she made her indelible mark on many generations of young women, many of them of the leisured class who were the less leisured in after life because of the ideals with which Miss Soulsby inspired them.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Psychologists delight in pointing out to us that the more vital a subject is the more confused and illogical are our methods of thinking about it. This is not always true. We are neither illogical nor confused when we reason on the topic of drinking-water. But it is true when we approach the subject of the law's relation to a man's liberty and his life. On the one hand, those peoples and individuals who accept and submit to systems of law do so mainly in order that life and liberty shall be secure and sacred. On the other the law obtains this end by a freely exercised power of depriving discovered offenders of one or the other. There is nothing paradoxical in this, it is a mere matter of convenience, one of those arrangements which works well enough until it becomes the object of analysis. As soon as this occurs—owing not to any failure of the arrangement but merely to the determination of human beings to prove that they are acting on principle even though it be evident that they are not—doubt and disagreement begin. Nobody knows whether people who make nuisances of themselves are imprisoned and executed because the community is justified in revenging itself on them—and thus keeping alive the awfulness of moral indignation—or because the punishment acts as a deterrent to others or because such treatment is in the highest interests of the offender himself. Borstal and the Inquisition spring from the last of these grounds; the Mosaic law and the whole system of the vendetta, whether between nations or families, rests upon the first; magistrates in passing sentences upon habitual criminals consider partly the second, and partly the convenience of the local police. Most of us vary. If a crime be sufficiently revolting a feeling of revenge does undoubtedly enter into our keen wish that "justice should take its course". On the other hand, with young offenders we are more anxious that they should be saved from a life of crime than that they should be punished for their first offence. The height of this confusion is, as might be expected, reached when life itself is in question. Most people feel a strong aversion from the cold, calculated, lengthy process of a judicial execution. To some it seems so much more horrible

than an ordinary murder—news of which only reaches them when any cold, lengthy and calculated planning which may have led up to it is over—that they are willing to risk a few more murders in order to avoid it. Starting from the principle that life is sacred they point out that two wrongs do not make a right, and add that the prospect of death leads in fact to stupor rather than repentance, and that the death penalty cannot be proved historically to have deterred from the crimes to which it was attached. To these arguments, in the last few years, another has been added. Many alienists are nowadays of opinion that a man who will commit a murder is *ipso facto* not a normal man, but more or less mad, and cannot therefore be held fully responsible for giving way to his impulses. On this ground they prefer to condemn him to spend the rest of his life in an asylum. Now, setting aside for the moment the first three arguments, we suggest that this last is due to faulty imagination. To an alienist, to put it brutally, a man in an asylum is an ordinary phenomenon; a man executed is a case spoiled. In fact, madness can be so terrible a disease, so fearful a combination of physical distress and mental anguish, that if we thought only of mercy we should end the lives of many incurable lunatics. If we do not do this it is less for the sake of the sufferers than for our own, because to do so would be to open new possibilities of human wickedness and error. But when a man or woman has already committed serious crime, when he can never be released lest he commit another, this reason no longer operates. Every day in this country valuable lives are lost simply for the lack of a little money. We nearly all contrive to live none the less cheerfully because dockers, miners, railwaymen and the rest are killed when they might have been saved by more expensive precautions and apparatus. The infant and maternity death-rates, operating almost every hour, are still at a point where they could probably be halved. There is something wrong with the emotions which can acquiesce in this and yet triumph in the thought that a degraded being who is often a source of degradation and danger to others, is being forced to remain alive in an asylum.

A. B. W.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE HUDDERSFIELD CONFERENCE.

Writing within a few days of the close of the National Labour Women's Conference, it is difficult to get a clear impression of the whole—one sees only broken fragments and isolated scenes. All the scenes emerge from the background of the Huddersfield Town Hall, brown, broad, foursquare, overhung by galleries, and just capable of seating the eight hundred delegates who arrived with such commendable punctuality each morning. So punctual were they, indeed, that only back seats were available half an hour before the Conference opened!

The thought of that half-hour's wait recalls the reiterated inquiry of the indefatigable salesman of the *Daily Herald*: "Have you got your . . . *HERALD*?" the sound of which forced us to recognize the superiority of the male voice. (But one forgives much to real enthusiasm, and he had brought them specially from Bradford, and sold them as a labour of love.)

Another impression is of the inadequacy of the chairman's bell. Not that the delegates (except on one or two occasions, when feeling and nervous tension ran high) needed exceptional powers of restraint, but the bell was ridiculously small for its job. Possibly it might have sufficed in a teashop, to attract the attention of one waitress: the eight hundred delegates merely drowned its sound in that of their own voices. But the tones of Dr. Marion Phillips prevailed over all, when silence became essential.

Certainly the delegates impressed one as being a warm-hearted body—almost over-ready to sympathize with any other body—collective or individual—who appeared to them to be suffering from hardship or injustice. One felt that this quality of warm-heartedness was shamelessly exploited by the would-be speaker who, having admitted membership of the Communist Party, and having been, therefore, quite correctly, debarred from speaking at a Labour Conference, left the hall amid a considerable volume of applause. Similarly, one felt that the emphasis laid by certain speakers on the hardship involved by one recommendation in the Blanesborough Report (the recommendation that an "intermediate" unemployment benefit of 8s. per week should be paid to girls between 18 and 21 years of age) quite prevented the delegates from appreciating the finer defence of her action in signing the Report, imperfect though she believed

it to be, made by Miss Margaret Bondfield. One felt that the same warm-hearted sympathy, shown towards the over-tired, over-worked mother, with too many mouths to feed, was mainly responsible for the overwhelming majority in favour of the resolution demanding facilities for advice on Birth Control at Maternity and Child Welfare Centres. Indeed, one has the impression that the Conference responded always to an appeal to its emotions: it is only fair to say that the emotion shown most frequently and most strongly was sympathy—even anger and indignation seemed to be roused by sympathy in another direction.

All this, in retrospect, seems to apply chiefly to the first day of the Conference. The second day has left an impression of less excitement and of more achievement—an impression perhaps partly due to the peaceful passage of our own resolution, asking for more women sanitary inspectors, more health visitors, more school nurses, and for the improvement and standardization in their salaries and conditions of service. This resolution was seconded, spontaneously and enthusiastically, by a working woman delegate, and carried unanimously. It is a happy reflection that over eight hundred women, a very large majority of whom must have had personal experience of the ministrations of health visitors and school nurses, want more of them. It seems an effective reply to those who tell us that they seek to "protect" working mothers from our "interference." The Huddersfield delegates neither claimed nor desired any protection from women public health officers.

Though not received during the Conference itself, one's most lasting impression may be that made by Miss Ellen Wilkinson at the big public meeting on Wednesday night: in a speech on the Trades Union Bill she moved her hearers to scorn, to laughter, and to tears. No other speaker at Huddersfield approached the level of that speech but the qualities which underlay its emotional appeal—sincerity, restraint, and sound argument—were characteristic of almost every speaker at the Conference.

AMY SAYLE.

Delegate to the National Conference of Labour Women, held at Huddersfield, 11th and 12th May, 1927.

CIVIL SERVICE MARRIAGE BAR PROBLEM.

By CHRISTINE MAGUIRE.

At first sight, one would suppose that the only problem concerned was the tactical one of how best to secure the removal of the barrier to the employment of married women in the established Civil Service as speedily as possible.

This is true from the standpoint of broad equalitarian principles. In practice, however, there are a number of difficulties to be faced by women Civil Servants themselves.

It cannot be said that there exists a single organization representing women in the Civil Service on the established (or pensionable) side which has received a clear mandate by ballot vote or otherwise from its rank and file women members to press for the removal of the marriage bar.

In the autumn of 1926, a Conference of London women branch representatives of the Civil Service Clerical Association voted in favour of the principle of removing the marriage bar, but only with a comparatively small majority.

Since then, however, meetings have been held up and down the country in our various branches at which the average rank and file member has attended in addition to the possibly more advanced women who tend to be elected as representatives. The overwhelming vote of these rank and file women has been against the removal of the marriage bar at this stage, and in favour of removing it in the case of deserted and legally-separated wives, and of married women who are the bread-winners for their families.

There are two main causes for these votes.

The first affects all grades including a large proportion of women under thirty alike; the second primarily concerns the lower grades.

The first difficulty arises from the marriage gratuities at present paid to women who are compelled to resign on marriage. In our own Association, between one hundred and fifty and two hundred women resign each year for marriage out of an average membership of six thousand. Their average length of service at the time of their retirement enables them to take with them anything from six months' to twelve months' pay on resignation.

Under the present regulations, if retirement on marriage were voluntary and not compulsory, the marriage gratuity would disappear.

It might be argued that while women are paid less than men, a case could be put up for the retention of the right to gratuity on voluntary marriage resignation. This argument, however, only could be used in the case of common grades; a high percentage of women are in grades confined to women.

It would not be possible to secure the retention of marriage gratuities for all women on voluntary resignation, because this would involve admission by the Treasury of the principle of treating superannuation benefits for Civil Servants as in the nature of deferred pay—a principle which the Treasury has always resisted, although it is supported very strongly by the staff.

For this reason, nearly all our girls contemplating marriage who attended our recent meetings on this issue, were against the removal of the bar.

The second difficulty is connected with promotion problems. Promotion in the Service is exceedingly rare. On the clerical side, members of the writing assistant and typing grades who have an average educational standard equal to that of the better-paid clerical class, generally speaking, can only secure promotion when a man or woman member of the clerical class dies, retires on account of age, or ill-health, or resigns on marriage.

Of these three causes for vacancies arising, the last mentioned provides the largest proportion of openings for the lower grades. It is only natural that while large numbers of women who are officially classified as of outstanding suitability for promotion have this one prospect of advancement, they should be very anxious not to lose it.

These are no doubt the main reasons why the majority of women Civil Servants have as yet shown no signs of conversion to the standpoint of those who desire the early removal of the Civil Service Marriage Bar.

EQUAL FRANCHISE.

THE JOHN STUART MILL DEMONSTRATION.

A Tribute to His Memory.

It was a happy thought on the part of the Women's Freedom League to celebrate the birthday of John Stuart Mill last Friday. A group of representatives of women's societies met in the Temple Gardens, each bringing a tribute of flowers to place on the bronze statue of the great philosopher. Dame Millicent Fawcett, who was present with her sister, Miss Agnes Garrett, recalled his defence of women and her tribute to his memory must be quoted in full:—

"We do well to-day," she said, "to commemorate the great leader of our cause, which is and always has been an extension of the vote to women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men. It was a great thing for us when our movement started just sixty years ago to have as our leader a man of such universal acknowledged eminence as John Stuart Mill. He has been dead for more than fifty years, but he still remains a living power. Only the other day I came across a specimen of his combined courage and wisdom. 'Fear not,' said he, 'the reproach of quixotism or of fanaticism, but after you have well weighed what you undertake and are convinced of its justice go forward, even though you risk violent hostility from the very men through whose changed hearts your purpose will one day be accomplished.'"

"We have seen this change in process of development through the long years of our struggle—we have seen our enemies become our friends. And we go on in confidence, taking as our motto 'Hold on, hold fast, hold out,' and victory is ours."

The Central Hall Meeting.

The day ended with a representative meeting organized by the Women's Freedom League in the Central Hall. Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence presided, and the speakers included representatives of different women's organizations, several of whom were under the age of thirty and voteless. The following resolution was carried with enthusiasm:—

"This meeting on the 121st anniversary of the birth of John Stuart Mill pays grateful tribute to the man who first championed the cause of full political equality for women, in moving a Woman Suffrage Amendment to the Reform Bill sixty years ago.

It deplores the fact that the present Government has prevented the Second Reading in the House of Commons to-day of the simple Bill conferring on women the right to vote at twenty-one on equal terms with men.

"It further calls upon the Government to redeem its pledge to grant equal voting rights to men and women by introducing its proposed measure to enfranchise women at 21 and on the same terms as men at the very beginning of next Session and to pass it into law without delay."

THE KENT CONFERENCE OF WOMEN CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS.

At a conference of Kent Women Citizens' Associations held in Bromley on Wednesday, 18th May, one of the subjects on the agenda was "Equal Franchise". Miss Elizabeth Macadam described the present position. A resolution was carried recording the thanks of the conference to the Prime Minister for his announcement and its conviction that the question must not be complicated by the introduction of any other electoral issue.

CONSERVATIVE SUPPORT OF VOTES FOR MEN AND WOMEN AT 21.

Some straws seem to indicate that the wind of public opinion on the question of Equal Franchise is changing to another direction. At several meetings of Conservative women in different parts of the country speakers have defended the Prime Minister's promise of the vote at the age of 21 and at the annual meeting of the Hallam Women's Conservative Association, Sir Frederick Sykes, Conservative Member for Hallam, in expressing his faith in Equal Franchise, declared that they could not now go back to the age of 21. "In any case, girls of 21 were as able as men to judge for themselves." The speech of the Prime Minister in the Royal Albert Hall on Friday, 27th May, is looked forward to with much interest as it is generally understood that he will allude to his proposals for the extension of the franchise.

THE YOUNG SUFFRAGISTS.

The youngest suffrage organization, "The Young Suffragists," are collecting expressions of opinion from representative men

*(Continued in next column.)*THE KAISER.¹

Miss Colburn Mayne is an imaginative and penetrating student of morbid psychology. In the past she has given us some queer, subtle, haunting stories, and a life of Byron in which she had full scope for her talent. Now she has found another congenial subject by translating Herr Ludwig's book on the Kaiser. Like Byron, William II was obsessed by the knowledge of a physical deformity, which not only hindered him in the kind of life he sought to lead, but conflicted with his image of himself. If we are to believe biographers, the conflict was in both cases accentuated by the conduct of the mother, who perhaps released upon the child the injury to her own self-esteem caused by the imperfection of her offspring. According to Herr Ludwig, most of the troubles in William's life have been the result of the paralysed, withered left arm, which he was always hiding and trying to forget. It must have caused him much strain and suffering during the severe physical training of his boyhood, and his biographer says that he was subjected to agonizing surgical treatments. It clearly gave him that inward sense of helplessness which many of those who are disabled from birth feel; and this made him timid. He might have had a happy and useful life in spite of that, if only he had been born in an ordinary environment. But he was born not only into a royal family, but into the Prussian royal family and for him all hope was lost at birth. The artificial existence which members of a reigning house are forced to lead was accentuated in his case, by the pernicious traditions of the Hohenzollerns. He had to be not only an emperor, but a War Lord—the supreme War Lord of the world. In the tremendous conflict that waged within him, all hope of a straight and normal development was lost.

The tragic results are vividly described in this extraordinarily dramatic and exciting book. Herr Ludwig tells us, in the preface, that he has constructed his portrait wholly from the Emperor's own deeds and words, and from reports of those who stood in close relation to him. He has drawn largely on the remarkable series of German Foreign Office Papers that have recently been published to the world. He has also drawn on the numerous memoirs of Germans in high official places that have come out since the war. Some of the worst things that he tells us about the Emperor are given us in the Emperor's own words, as for instance the account of the way in which he tricked the Tsar. Nevertheless, one cannot help wondering at times whether the portrait is quite fair; there are ways of arranging things, and surely no human being was ever so devoid of all attractive qualities as this one appears in his representation. Herr Ludwig shows us William, coarse, cruel, cowardly, a liar, without any generous impulse or true affection, without decency, and without grace. We cannot quite believe that he is or ever was as bad as that. But alas! everything that he has done or said since 1914 has borne out the contention that he was never anything but a stage War Lord, that his "shining armour" was always cardboard and tinsel, and that his sham heroics have never been coloured by any vein of true romance.

I. B. O'MALLEY.

(Continued from previous column.)

and women on the extension of the vote "to refute the superstition that there is no demand for the vote among intelligent people". We should like to quote many of these in full, and propose to deal with them more fully in a later issue. To-day we must confine ourselves to the statement of one who has practised what he preaches in his professional work. Sir Henry Wood writes: "My own personal opinion is . . . that there should be complete equality on this matter as regards sex."

¹ *Kaiser Wilhelm II*, by Emil Ludwig, translated by Ethel Colburn Mayne. (Putnam, 21s.)

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MEMORANDUM ON FORCED LABOUR.

At a recent conference of women's organizations convened by the Women's International League, the following resolutions were passed:—

Having in mind the Resolution passed on 25th September, 1926, by the Seventh Assembly of the League of Nations,

This Council instructs the Secretary-General to communicate to the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization a copy of the Slavery Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations on 25th September, 1926, at its seventh ordinary session, and to inform the Governing Body of the importance which the Assembly and Council attach to the work undertaken by the Office with a view to studying the best means of preventing forced or compulsory labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

This Council desires to emphasize its condemnation of the institution of forced labour, and urges that the recognition of such labour should be admitted into any convention promulgated by the League of Nations solely as a temporary expedient for public work, to be replaced as soon as possible by free contract labour.

In those cases where forced labour for public service is permitted, the following conditions should be laid down by convention of the League of Nations and enforced by the administering States:—

1. The only legitimate employer of forced labour should be a Government or public authority (or the competent authority of the native state or mandate) having the consent of its government.

2. Forced labour should only be permitted when adequate voluntary labour is absolutely unobtainable. In accordance with the present practice of the British Empire, no forced labour should be allowed for any purpose in any colony or mandated territory without reference to the Home Government of the administering State.

3. Forced labour in all circumstances should only be permitted for necessary public work.

4. The term "forced labour" should include local compulsory village labour for public services according to the present definition of the French, though not of the British administrations.

5. All forced labour should be adequately paid, and should be employed only for a definite limited period.

6. The number of men summoned to perform forced labour from any family, village, or tribe should not be so great that it causes local distress for lack of adequate male labour, nor should the period of work be so long that it causes the natives thus employed to break their connection with their families and tribes.

7. Every native employed upon forced labour should be allowed to return home at least once a month, and proper facilities for this return, together with food and travelling allowances, should be provided by the employing authority.

8. Adequate safety laws should be enforced for the protection of natives unused to machinery.

9. At the end of a native's period of forced labour the authority employing him should pay all expenses involved in returning him to his home.

10. Forced labour should be exacted from adult males only, and there should be an age limit for employment according to local standards.

11. No man should be employed upon forced labour unless he has passed a medical examination by a qualified practitioner, who has certified fitness for such work.

12. There should be medical inspection to ensure healthy conditions of work and accommodation, and suitable dietetic value of food rations, if provided, according to the habits of the natives concerned.

13. The employing authority must provide adequate treatment for all infectious and other diseases occurring during the period of forced labour, and must take the necessary steps to safeguard villages from infection caused by the return of natives carrying disease.

14. No provision of prostitutes should be countenanced in connection with forced labour.

15. Adequate records should be kept, and returns submitted to the medical and central authorities, giving the number of natives employed on each piece of work under forced labour,

(Continued at foot of next column.)

WOMEN AND CHANGING CONDITIONS.

SCOTTISH COUNCIL OF W.C.A.S IN CONFERENCE.

It would be impossible to imagine a more picturesque background for a Woman Citizens' Conference than the ancient and royal town of St. Andrews—rich as it is in its associations with one of the greatest struggles in history for the emancipation of the human spirit. The choice of the subject, "Women and Changing Conditions," was truly an inspiration of genius, so supremely suitable was the environment for such a discussion. Nowhere except in this city of enchantment is there so vivid a contrast between past and present, old and new, busy, hustling modernity and the cloistered calm of an ancient University. Not many yards from the place where our meetings were held, stands the Martyrs Monument, with its inscription, so simple yet moving and nobly suggestive of the undying permanence of the things of the spirit. Surely it is not too fanciful to suppose that the rare atmosphere which broods over this old town of many memories gave the discussions just that quality of "aliveness" not always characteristic of such gatherings? It is at least a possible explanation of the consistently high level maintained by all the speakers and not least by Principal Galloway in his fine address to the delegates on the eve of the Conference. Lady Mackenzie, who presided, racy and impressive as always, stressed the great central fact of the Woman's Movement, viz. the far-reaching impetus to the progress of civilization of the entry of women into full citizenship. Changing conditions in the industrial world with particular reference to engineering and its possibilities for women was the subject allocated to Lady Parsons. Her unique speech opened, as it were, fairy casements of the imagination upon the vast and illimitable future which lies before scientific engineering and the alluring prospects it holds for women. The attempt to visualize the future of a perfectly free womanhood, untrammelled by either political or industrial fetters, is always a fascinating pursuit and to abandon such flights of fancy for the cold hard facts concerning "Women in Education" seems something of an anti-climax, but in the extremely capable hands of Miss Isabel Hamilton, L.L.A. (to whom this subject had been entrusted), no such reaction was experienced. Last upon the programme, but not least in interest, nor importance, was the question of "Changing Conditions and Women in the Home," illuminatingly dealt with by Dr. Mary MacNicol, who showed how all the great strides made in recent years, in the direction of Infant Welfare, Pre-natal Care, Public Health in general, were the outcome of an educated public opinion, and how mighty a weapon for further development this may become in the hands of the fully enfranchised womanhood of the nation.

A bald outline of the speeches gives but a faint idea of the inspiration they contained. The Conference might perhaps best be summed up in the motto of a local school quoted by one of the speakers—Ad Vitam: towards Life. It was the keynote supremely appropriate of the whole. Whatever the value of such a Conference may be, one thing is certain. It has at least, in some measure, contributed towards Life—the rich, full-blooded Life of "that one far-off, divine event" to which all great human movements are shaping their course.

M. MCP.

(Continued from previous column.)

and number of those returning home and of cases of illness and of death.

Attention is called to the practicability of using some of the vast sums of money paid in taxation by the natives for the organization of such public services as will eventually render forced labour unnecessary.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS.

By BERTHA MASON.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (WOMEN).

On 6th May, in reply to a question put by Mr. Hore-Belisha in Parliament, as to the number of women serving on Boards of Guardians in England and Wales, and how many women are serving on other local authorities, the Minister of Health is reported to have replied as follows:—

"I have no official information on this subject, but from particulars furnished to me, I gather that the services of women are available to an approximately equal extent (by means of either direct or indirect election of co-option) on Boards of Guardians and their committees on the one hand, and on county and county borough councils and their committees on the other, the figures in each case being approximately 2,000. I am not in possession of similar particulars as regards other local authorities."

In considering these figures, it is important to keep clearly in mind one important fact. The 2,000 women serving on Boards of Guardians (as a matter of fact the number is well over 2,000) are all *directly elected* by and *responsible to* the ratepayers, whereas the number of directly elected women serving on County Councils is only 130 for the whole of England and Wales, and of this number 11 are Aldermen. Further, 23 of these women are serving on the L.C.C., which reduces the number of women serving in the provinces to less than 100. Again, the number of directly elected women serving on county borough councils is only 168 for the whole of England and Wales.

These figures, which were supplied to me only this year, show on the one hand that the number of directly elected women serving on county and county borough councils is very small indeed, only 295 including Aldermen (the remainder of the 2,000 quoted by Mr. Chamberlain being indirectly elected or co-opted members of committees of the Councils), whereas the whole of the 2,000 women Poor Law Guardians are, as already stated, directly elected members of their Boards.

It is a generally accepted fact that indirect election does not carry with it the same status as direct election, nor is the position of a co-opted member as satisfactory from the standpoint of the work as that of a directly elected member. This, we believe, was admitted by Mr. Chamberlain himself in his reply to a deputation which waited on him recently in reference to his provisional proposals for the reform of the poor law.

In regard to the latter part of the question, as to the number of women serving on local authorities other than Boards of Guardians and Councils of county and county boroughs, concerning which Mr. Chamberlain is reported to have said that he had no information, we are in a position to state that statistics in our possession show that the number of directly elected women serving on urban and rural district councils as in the case of county and county borough councils, runs only into hundreds, as compared with the thousands serving as directly elected representatives on Boards of Guardians.

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Dinner 7.15 for 7.45 p.m.

Conference 8.30 p.m.

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Telephone: Victoria 6188.

WEEK-END SUMMER SCHOOL AT ILKLEY.

1st-4th July, 1927.

The subjects to be discussed will include Equal Franchise and other Legislation affecting Women and Children; Problems of Population; Social Insurance; the Married Woman, her employment and legal status; the Interpretation of the Object of the N.U.S.E.C.—What is Equality? The speakers will be Miss Macadam, Mrs. Stocks, and Mrs. Hubback. Accommodation may be reserved at well recommended hotels at prices ranging from 10s. to 18s. a day. All the hotels are in good positions near the moors. *Applications for rooms and tickets should be made as soon as possible to the School Secretary, Mrs. Lovelock, 23 Richmond Place, Ilkley. School fee 5s. Single lectures 1s. 6d.*

We very much hope that members of our more northerly societies will take this opportunity of discussing problems and meeting one another and Officers and Members of the Executive Committee from Headquarters. It is the first Summer School of its kind which has been held in north-east England, and promises to be a great success. We understand that Ilkley has been singled out as one of the best places to see the eclipse, which takes place two days before the School. Early application always facilitates the work of any School.

A JUNE GARDEN PARTY.

The President and the Executive Committee propose to have a garden party on Monday, 27th June, in order to bring suffragists together once again at this critical but hopeful period in the history of the National Union. The Misses Alexander, of Aubrey House, Kensington, have kindly promised to lend their lovely house and garden for the occasion. Those who were present at the party to Dame Millicent Fawcett in this garden two years ago will, we feel sure, wish to renew their acquaintance with it. Fuller particulars with a list of guests of honour will appear shortly. Tickets, price 2s. 6d., may be obtained on application to Headquarters.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

We hear that the Edinburgh S.E.C. is busily engaged in combating the proposal for compulsory treatment for venereal disease referred to in Notes and News in last week's issue. It is carrying on successful propaganda among Town Councillors, and several of the Women's Co-operative Guilds have come to their support. The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene has published a special leaflet to assist the campaign.

CORRECTION.

A mistake has been pointed out in our paragraph headed "Nursing Homes" in the issue of 22nd April. In referring to the scandals which have been exposed in various nursing homes we had stated "the national disgrace of a Midwives and Maternity Homes Bill becomes inevitable." The Bill referred to should have been the Nursing Homes (Registration) Bill. We apologize to the whole body of midwives for this careless mistake and the unintended and unconscious slur on their work.

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A DINNER AND A HOUSING CONFERENCE.

Women's Pioneer Housing, Limited, which provides housing for professional women by converting large houses into flats, has reached a silver anniversary, inasmuch as it now owns twenty-five houses, providing about 250 flats. This point in the Society's history is to be celebrated on 30th May by a public dinner and housing conference to be held at the Hyde Park Hotel, and a great honour is to be done to this Society, as Sir Josiah Stamp, K.B.E., has promised to attend and speak.

Women's Pioneer Housing has come through many vicissitudes incidental to a pioneer, and it has now seven reports and balance sheets, which tell a story of an ever-increasing number of houses purchased and converted, and a 6 per cent dividend paid to the shareholders. Success carried with it responsibility, and a demand for progress and development, and, far from wishing to rest on their laurels, the Committee of Management are desirous of extending their work and using the experience gained during the last seven years to the best possible advantage. Therefore, a Housing Conference is joined to the forthcoming twenty-fifth anniversary dinner, and professional women of all kinds are invited not only to come and hear what is being done, but also to come and express their views as to the kind of housing they require. Interesting questions will be put to the Conference. Are flats to be with or without service? Are meals to be provided? Do many women wish to live in the suburbs, or would any of them go further afield to where golf and tennis may be arranged? Are country houses an attraction, with a garden? Do those who have retired from work wish to live in town or out of it? The provision of flats at moderate rents remains much where it was since the war, and offers no attraction as a private speculation, but working on co-operative lines the Women's Pioneer Housing, Ltd., has proved that if capital is available at a limited dividend, the provision of such flats is a practical proposition.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRTH CONTROL.

MADAM,—You do your excellent cause a great disservice by advocating birth control in your issue of 13th May. For, if a wife is given information on this matter at a clinic, of what good is it to her? True, she can prevent the birth of children, she can "enjoy herself" without fear of consequences; but she cannot produce a healthy child and she takes the same risk as an ordinary woman, whether her offspring are healthy or otherwise. Furthermore, "the statement that it is better to have three healthy children than six unhealthy ones has no apparent foundation," as has been pointed out by Dr. J. Brownlee, Director of Statistics to the Medical Research Council, after a careful examination of old statistics.

Birth control, like all lapses from virtue, is particularly degrading to the wife; it puts her in the position of a prostitute, the passive object of a man's lust, a thing of pleasure to be thrown aside when pleasure is exhausted. It injures also her physical nature. F. J. McCann, M.D., F.R.C.S., recently wrote, "After a large experience of practice in all classes of the community, and after having devoted the greater part of my life to the diseases of women, I affirm that all methods of contraception are harmful to the female, they only differ in being more or less so." Lord Dawson of Penn has warned parents of the danger of sterility resulting from the use of birth-control appliances, and Dr. A. E. Giles, Senior Surgeon to the Chelsea Hospital for Women, considers that such appliances are a cause of fibroid tumours in women.

The wife, therefore, who would have information about birth control, would receive something harmful to her unborn children, and disgraceful to her own moral and physical personality.

A. J. ELLISON, M.A., LL.B.

Oxford and Cambridge Club,
Pall Mall, S.W. 1.

[The medical profession is very sharply divided, and not universally well-informed concerning the possibilities of contraceptive birth control. There is, however, a considerable section which is agreed as to its harmlessness when practised under specifically defined conditions. There is also a very large section of the married women of this country who practise birth control for economic or medical reasons, without violating their own consciences or experiencing any sense of personal degradation. We think that it is a matter which individual married couples should decide for themselves in the light of their own circumstances and ethical principles. But in so far as birth control is practised, we believe that it should be practised under disinterested medical supervision. That is why, in our

issue of 13th May, we concurred with the organized Liberal and Labour women in their demand that the medical officers of maternity and child welfare centres should be allowed to give birth-control advice to those married women who ask for it.—Ed.]

"PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION" FOR WOMEN.

MADAM,—I should be glad if some of your readers or contributors could help me to clear up the problem of "protective legislation for women." After reading a good deal on the matter, I am still rather in the dark as to the real attitude of leading feminist bodies.

It is admitted on all hands that a period of rest before and after child-birth is essential to married women workers. Do the bodies which stand for the abolition of protective legislation favour the repeal of the laws which insist upon such periods of rest? If so, is it their belief that married women workers will voluntarily take the needful rest? This is scarcely practicable, because in most cases the employers would not agree to it, unless legally compelled.

The statistics of infant mortality show how injurious to child welfare is the work of married women (see Cadbury, *Women's Work and Wages*, or Havelock Ellis' work on *Sex in Relation to Society*); and so long as the present imperfect social system compels married women to work, the least we can do is to safeguard the children in every possible way by legally compelling the mother to absent herself from work. The present time is far too short. The period should be at least three months before and after birth, to give the children a fair chance. It is quite impossible to treat the mothers of the race as if they were men with no maternal responsibilities! But perhaps I am in error in thinking that this comes under the head of the legislation to which exception is taken. As a serious student of the subject, I wish for a clear definition of what exactly is meant by "protective legislation."

Again, the phrase "equality of opportunity" demands exact definition. It is clear that men cannot enjoy the opportunity of maternity, which brings with it many rich experiences; and men are in this sense debarred from equality with women. Nor can women, speaking generally, expect to be soldiers or sailors, both of which are interesting and valuable experiences. Complete equality of opportunity is thus impossible, and it becomes very important to define what is really meant by the phrase. I worked and spoke in favour of Woman's Suffrage, and am therefore not a hostile critic. But it seems to me essential in the interests of the woman's movement that the problem of sex equality should receive a more careful analysis, unless insoluble contradictions are to arise.

(Dr.) MEYRICK BOOTH.

Lans,

Innsbruck.

[The only "leading feminist body" for which we can speak on this matter is the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. This particular body has always deplored the tendency of legislators to base protective legislation on the sex of the worker rather than the nature of the work, believing that in practice protection is generally as relevant to male as to female labour, and that differentiation is calculated to promote an artificial restriction of the woman's earning power. With regard to the protection of maternity, the N.U.S.E.C. has refrained from demanding the repeal of existing laws; it stands, however, for a positive rather than a prohibitive policy, urging that "legislation with regard to maternity should be on the lines not of forbidding women to select their own work, but of providing for them such economic conditions as should make it possible to give birth to their children without facing either ill-health or starvation." The lines of this policy are to be found under the heading of resolutions dealing with social insurance and family endowment. The definition of *Equality of opportunity* is beset with difficulties, as readers of this paper will be only too well aware. But in reply to our correspondent, it may be briefly suggested that women have not always been accorded an equal opportunity to invest the diverse talents which they may happen to possess, or to reflect through legislation and administration the experiences which are peculiarly their own. It is for such equal opportunity that we stand.—Ed.]

MARRIED WOMEN (EMPLOYMENT) BILL.

MADAM,—I note with surprise and regret the tone of your criticisms on the Civil Service opponents of this Bill. Surely, enlightened women, advocating a particular measure, ought to give their antagonists credit for intelligence and conscientiousness equal to their own! It is unconvincing to describe defensive action as "short-sighted and selfish" and to say that its advocates "prefer the mess of pottage for themselves to justice for others" (*The Woman's Leader*, 6th and 13th May). The persons thus attacked may well retort that it is equally selfish for other persons to desire dual economic advantages, for, whatever arguments may be advanced in favour of the proposed change, the fact remains that the married woman has a legal right to maintenance by another person, while the unmarried woman has *not*.

EX-CIVIL SERVANT.

[We are not claiming more or less for those who have been in the Civil Service who oppose the Bill in the way of conscientiousness and intelligence than they claim for themselves. They admittedly based their case on expediency, and their spokesmen have on more than one occasion confessed to their attitude appearing a selfish one.—Ed.]

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ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

MAY 29. 7.30 p.m. Meeting on "Equal Franchise" at Jack Straw's Castle, Hampstead Heath.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE.

Kensington Branch. JUNE 1. 5 p.m. Annual Meeting at 76 Campden Hill Road, W.8. Miss Muriel Lister on "The Message of Gandhi to the English People." Chair: Miss Gertrude Eaton.

WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING, LTD.

MAY 30. 7.15 p.m. Hyde Park Hotel. Public Dinner and Professional Women's Housing Conference. Sir Josiah Stamp will attend and speak.

WOMEN'S UNIONIST ORGANIZATION.

MAY 26. 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eighth Annual Conference at Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W.

MAY 27. 3 p.m. Mass Meeting at Royal Albert Hall, Kensington, W., to be addressed by the Right Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P. (Prime Minister).

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Westminster S.E.C. JUNE 14. 8 p.m. Caxton Hall. Miss Macadam on "Votes for Women." Chair: Mrs. Hoster.

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PSYCHOLOGY.—A course of ten lectures on INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY will be given by Miss Alice Raven at Leplay House, 65 Belgrave Road, S.W. 1, on Tuesday, 24th May, at 6 o'clock, and the nine following Tuesdays. Ticket for single lecture, 1s.; ticket for course, 7s. 6d.—Syllabus and tickets obtainable from Miss A. Raven, 10 Beaumont Street, W. 1, or at the door.

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 29th May, 3.30. Music. Professor John Garstang on "Recent Discoveries in Palestine." 6.30, Maude Royden: "Jealous gods."

LIVERPOOL SCHOOL OF MOTHERCRAFT AND BABIES' HOSTEL, Victoria Park, Wavertree.—Girls trained as Nursery Nurses and School Matrons; 8 months course. Posts found, certificates given. Children received at the Hotel for long or short periods. Prospectus on application.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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