

WOMEN'S SERVICE.

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THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Back to 1825.

Shortly after the General Strike of last year, a nameless leader writer in the *Manchester Guardian* expressed the view that the reform of trade union machinery was as urgent a problem as was the reform of electoral machinery in 1832. That view evoked sympathetic response, not merely among the members of the public against whom the strike had been directed, but among those who had, by a series of blunders, found themselves actively and disastrously operating it. At any rate, the entire community, with a few fanatical exceptions, emerged from the ordeal with the unshakable conviction not merely that this particular general strike had proved futile, but that by their very nature all general strikes must inevitably prove futile. It is perhaps idle to speculate on what might have been. If Mr. Baldwin had succeeded in preserving and impressing upon his followers the pacific spirit in which he terminated the general strike—if the coal dispute had not ended in a "dictated peace" with its heritage of profound bitterness—then it is conceivable that the reform of the trade unions both from within and without might have been undertaken with some show of constructive co-operation. But things have not fallen out like this, and to-day it is war to the knife between the trade unions and the Conservative Party, over a Bill which, while it refrains from specifically penalizing trade union activities in the manner of the Combination Act of 1799, reproduces with all their legal uncertainty, and consequent opportunity for petty persecution, the indeterminate conditions which followed the Act of 1825. In one of the most moving of his many moving speeches, Mr. Baldwin declared more than a year ago that if there was to be war between employers and employed, he, at any rate, would not be responsible for firing the first shot. Well—the present Bill has come too late in the day to be designated as a "first shot". The preliminary round has already been fought out on the coalfields. Nevertheless, it may be compared in effect, whatever the intentions of its promoters may be (and like most human intentions, they are probably very mixed), to a new phase in that conflict—a heavy discharge of long-range artillery on a very wide front. The political tacticians of the Labour Party may welcome this development as a bond of unity and a source of party fervour. But to the advocates of industrial peace and constructive reform it brings a sense of very dark foreboding.

The New Representation of the People Bill.

On 20th May Mr. Arthur Henderson will be moving the second reading of an Equal Franchise Bill which is being backed by many old friends, including Miss Bondfield, Miss Lawrence, Mr. Pethick Lawrence, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Whiteley, Mr. Lunn, and others. The Bill provides that the franchise shall be extended to women on the same terms as it is now given to men. The whole of the Friday (20th May) can be devoted to the discussion of this Bill. Does not this present a fine opportunity to the Government to announce its intention of taking over the Bill, at any rate as regards its main principle? In putting forward this suggestion we cannot make it too clear that we have complete confidence in the intention of the Prime Minister to carry out his pledge to introduce legislation next session. At the same time we cannot help having vividly before us his own remark that an unexpectedly early general election might prevent such legislation being introduced in time if left until next year. To take over an Equal Franchise measure now would, for all practical purposes, avoid this possibility. It would also have the practical advantages of giving longer time to those concerned to make up the new register and would, we hope, by becoming a *fait accompli*, stop the dastardly campaign which is being waged in a section of the Press, and, we fear, among a section of the Conservative Party, against "Votes for Flappers." These attacks on the intentions of the Prime Minister and the Government make it of overwhelming importance that the women of the country should give tangible evidence of their support of the Government's intentions. No woman, whether organized or unorganized, who cares about Equal Franchise, will feel able to relax her efforts until it actually reaches the Statute Book.

A Triumph for Margaret Bondfield.

At a special national conference of Labour and trade union bodies held last week to consider the report of the Blanesburgh Committee on unemployment insurance, Margaret Bondfield secured a weighty endorsement of her action in signing the report without reservation. It may be remembered that the report recommended the continuance of unemployment insurance after the expiry of the present Act, and made certain specific suggestions for new scales, both of contribution and benefit. These last involved a reduction in the benefits paid to unmarried men, offset by an increase in the wife's allowance, and a very heavy scaling down of the benefits paid to young persons under 21 years. The latter recommendations involved the Labour signatories of the report—Miss Bondfield, Mr. Frank Hodges, and Mr. Holmes—in a certain amount of unfriendly criticism from the left wing of their own party—criticism which is reflected in the resolutions standing on the agenda of the forthcoming national conference of Labour women. On the present occasion, however, a memorandum welcoming the general proposals of the report for a permanent unemployment insurance scheme and criticizing only certain specific sections, notably the reductions of benefit, was carried on a card vote by a majority of 2,538,000 to 1,081,000. The opposition was led by Mr. Wheatley, who unsuccessfully moved the reference back of the memorandum, and by Mr. Cook, who moved an amendment (subsequently ruled out of order) condemning the action of Miss Bondfield and her co-signatories, and instructing the Parliamentary Labour Party

'Keep fit on
cocoa'

BOURNVILLE
SEE THE "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE
OF CHOCOLATE

Write
Cadbury, Bournville
about Gift Scheme

to oppose any Government Bill framed on the lines of the report. The defence of the three Labour signatories was conducted by Miss Bondfield, who pointed out that by accepting personal responsibility for a compromise she and her colleagues had secured more practical weight for their point of view than would have been the case had they dissociated themselves and framed a minority report. The result of the conference may be regarded as a victory for the *realist* section of the Labour party, and in some measure as a very notable personal triumph for Margaret Bondfield, following upon a period of somewhat hostile and often very ill-informed criticism by members of her own party.

Waste.

Last week saw the publication of the preliminary figures concerning births, deaths, and marriages in France during 1926. These demonstrate a characteristic of French vital statistics which has been operative since the war, i.e. a very small annual natural increase of population secured by the coincidence of a moderate birth-rate and a high death-rate. The total population of France in 1926 was 40,745,000. This shows an increase as compared with 39,300,000 in 1920, but a decrease as compared with 41,470,000 in 1913. The French birth-rate, which in this country is popularly believed to be (a) very low, (b) rapidly declining, is as a matter of fact fairly steady and somewhat higher than the birth-rate of England and Wales. In 1926 the French birth-rate was 18.8 per 1,000, that of England and Wales 17.8. But whereas our own death-rate was in that year 11.6 (sufficiently low to give us, with a birth-rate of 17.8, a very substantial natural increase of population), in France the death-rate was 17.5. The magnitude of this sinister figure is largely accounted for by heavy infant mortality. For this, comparative rates are only available down to 1925, in which year the French rate stood at 89 per 1,000 children born—as compared with 85 per 1,000 in 1924. For England and Wales the corresponding figure both for 1924 and 1925 is 75 per 1,000. But whereas in 1926 our own rate fell to 70 per 1,000, in France the year 1926 shows a further increase. In 1925 68,367 children died below the age of 1 year, in 1926 74,698. Clearly there is something wrong with the conditions under which the greatest of women's occupations is being carried on in France, and we are tempted to suggest that the continued exclusion of Frenchwomen from the sphere of politics and government is not conducive to a well-proportioned national policy in this respect.

Married Women's Names.

Most feminists sympathize with married women who wish to retain the use of their maiden names. Everyone sympathizes when the particular woman has done good work under her own name before she married. But we do not for that reason agree with *The Times* when it suggests that the custom should be extended to all married women whose names are carved upon foundation-stones. There are, in fact, two sharply distinguished classes of married women in public life. There are those who occupy their positions by virtue of their own distinction, and those who have been exalted to them simply because they are their husbands' wives. Of these it is customary to say in welcoming speeches that they must have contributed to their husbands' careers, but that labour of theirs, deserving though it is, could hardly be better rewarded than by "Mrs." before that husband's name upon the foundation-stone. Why indeed should a stone be engraved with such a name as "Mrs. Mary Smith" when the only reason the lady was asked to touch it with a trowel is that she is legally married to Mr. William Jones? In fact, a married woman may have two rôles to play: she may be herself and she may also be her husband's wife, and our contribution to this controversy is that she should use both names, choosing, and in particular posting about the country, that which is most suited to the occasion.

More Women Chairmen.

We are glad to learn that the Barrow Board of Guardians has elected Mrs. E. A. Ward, J.P., as Chairman for the third time. At Ashton-under-Lyne, Bristol, Caernarvon and Dewsbury women have been elected to the Chairmanship of Boards of Guardians, and the Hemsworth and Hollingworth Urban District Councils have appointed women chairmen. Mrs. Graham, who has been elected at Hollingworth, has already held the position some years ago.

Committee on Traffic in Women and Children.

This League Committee has just ended its session. The greater part was spent in the consideration of the Report of the Committee of Experts on forms of the traffic. In view of the fact that unfortunately the Council of the League has not yet authorized the publication of the second part of the Report dealing with traffic in different countries, the Committee decided to postpone until next session consideration of some aspects of the problem as, for instance, the relation between the existence of licensed houses and the traffic. An important question discussed was the exploitation of women by traffickers. The Committee unanimously recommended governments to refuse to admit them to their territories and to deport them if found. The Committee devoted special attention to the question of contracts of artistes in music halls, and recommended an inquiry by the League Secretariat and the I.L.O. regarding national legislation for the protection of artistes travelling abroad.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

We congratulate both the Women's National Liberal Federation and Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY on her election as President. How Mrs. Corbett Ashby manages to carry out all the obligations of her many offices is a standing mystery, but that she does so succeed is most gladly admitted. It is pleasing to us to see that the resignation from the Presidency of a recent member of our Executive Committee, i.e. Mrs. Winttingham, is followed by the appointment of our present Chairman. We hope to publish a short account of the Federation's Council Meetings next week.

Mrs. Dod Proctor.

We offer our warm congratulations to Mrs. Dod Proctor, the painter of "Morning," which the *Observer* and other sections of the Press acclaim as "the most significant picture of the year" in the Royal Academy Exhibition, and which has been bought by *The Daily Mail* for the nation.

In Despite of the Government.

In view of last Friday's verdict on married women's work, endorsed by the House of Commons, and blessed by the Government, Miss Amy Robinson's life-sized cast of a seven-year-old boy appears as a double embodiment of revolt. For in private life Miss Robinson is Mrs. Tibbey, the wife of a London headmaster, herself a headmistress, and only in off moments an exhibitor of sculpture in the Royal Academy. Surely public opinion requires the decent interment of at least two out of this lady's three "talents?"—unless, of course, we may assume that last Friday's decision does not adequately represent public opinion, or (another possible alternative) that the investment of human "talents" is governed by a higher law.

Questions in Parliament.

May 3rd.

WOMEN FRANCHISE.

Sir John Gannon asked the Prime Minister whether upon the passage of the proposed Franchise Bill he will leave the question of the age at which the vote will be given to a free vote of the House?

The Prime Minister: It would be premature to reply to this and similar questions.

Captain Garro-Jones: Will the Prime Minister bear in mind that by leaving this question to a free vote of the House he will, in effect, be withdrawing Government support for a Measure which they are pledged to support?

The Prime Minister: I am grateful for the suggestion, which is, none the less, premature.

Mr. Thurtle asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his Department has been able to form any estimate as to the number of additional women voters there would be over 25 years of age and under 25 years of age, respectively, on the basis of women being granted the vote on the same terms as those now applying to men?

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Joynson-Hicks): It is estimated that the number of new women voters in Great Britain over 25 would be about 3,650,000 and under 25 about 1,590,000.

Mr. Thurtle: Will the Right Hon. Gentleman discourage his supporters from describing this proposed change in the franchise as votes for flappers in future?

THE AGES OF MAN.

Many of us must have been wondering during the last few weeks what qualities are conferred or taken away by the mere fact of living, irrespective of how one's years are spent. We have a little collected wisdom to help us, but not much. The civilized nations seem to agree that up to twelve one is certainly a child. At twelve one pays full fare in the tubes, where sheer space is perhaps more valuable than anywhere else on earth, and girls are allowed to marry. At fourteen one pays full fare everywhere; and for the great majority of the inhabitants of England education comes to an end, and work for wages starts. Sixteen is the age at which, according to modern psychologists, the human intellect is fully developed. It is not for this reason, however, that sixteen is also the age of consent and the age at which a man may take a wife. After sixteen, moreover, the budding criminal is no longer dealt with in a children's court. At eighteen kings come of age, conscripts are conscripted, middle-class boys are shut into offices, and girls whose parents can afford it are seriously introduced to social life. At twenty-one—except for women—legal and social age-points end for some time. At twenty-one one may sit in Parliament, and all but the specialists have finished with their schooling. Working men and women now receive, if they have not yet done so, their full adult wage. The possibility of wrecking one's life by disastrous personal ties is completed by the fullest opportunities for financial ruin. The next notable age is twenty-three, because at twenty-three Pitt was Prime Minister. Twenty-five, now so brightly in the limelight, is not a very distinguished age. All that we know is that after twenty-five, according to some scientists, the mind ceases to be capable of new departures. After this, except for thirty, already mentioned, there is comparative peace until we qualify for an old age pension. These are the meagre facts, and our store of reflections is still more meagre. Youth, whether ended at twenty-one or twenty-five we do not know, is supposed to be the age of generosity. A well-informed peer observed the other day that few women and no men have generous impulses over the age of forty. Youth is also popularly credited with "long, long" thoughts and "tireless energy", with being golden, and with sitting in the prow when pleasure takes the helm. On the other hand young people generally regard themselves as extraordinarily practical, as being the only section of the community willing to face facts or capable of disregarding comfort. The truth is that although

THINGS INDUSTRIAL SEEN IN CHINA.¹

By DAME ADELAIDE ANDERSON.

XI.

During my revisit to Nanking in May, 1924, when I was the fortunate guest of the British Consul-General and Mrs. Pratt, an interesting opportunity was given me by the Hon. S. T. Wen, Commissioner of Foreign Affairs in the Province, for meeting a few influential members of the Kiangsu Provincial Assembly about factory reform and protection of child workers, at a luncheon party at his home.

Miss Zung Wei-Tsung was once more the interpreter, although our host largely helped to explain the subject, and Mr. P. C. Wang, head of a Law School, made the legal position clear to the members, who, as Miss Zung Wei-Tsung said, "were not yet aware of the importance of the question," a not infrequent state of mind in China both then and now. After the explanation, she added, "they began to show interest and even enthusiasm" for proposed action in the Assembly that should help the Civil Governor in the matter. Again I was asked for a guiding memorandum on factory legislation—which was supplied to them.

A small group was formed during this visit to Nanking, of University and other officials, Y.M.C.A. Secretaries, and Mr. P. C. Wang; a group which undertook to be ready to give constructive advice in such matters of social reform whenever opportunity arose.

Early in June I wrote to Mr. S. T. Wen, when forwarding the Memorandum desired by the members of the Provincial Assembly, pointing out how very important the setting up of the new Child Labour Commission by the Civil Governor would be for the protection of the children. In his kind reply he said: "It is sincerely hoped that this preventive work against immature

¹ Previous articles appeared in our issues of 4th, 18th, and 25th February, 18th, 25th March, and 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th April.

they are under our eyes, we know almost nothing about the changes which our minds and characters undergo as a result of the action of time. The doctors tell us that our physical age varies enormously from man to man—that a man who has lived fifty years may be physiologically either forty-five or sixty. The same is probably true of the mental and spiritual life of an individual. Some of us harden with age and others mellow; some minds, until the decay of faculty sets in, become more and more enriched with treasure, others shrink until it seems as though a man who had been given a whole house to live in had gradually restricted his occupancy to one small stuffy room. It does seem true, however, that wealthy societies have, in the case of their upper classes, deliberately extended the length of a human being's childish irresponsibility. In their proper desire to prevent young lives (well-to-do young lives) from being wrecked by a premature explosion of sex, they have deliberately cramped the fling of the growing mind and attempted to direct all its radiating ardours into the single channel of organized games. This insistence is reinforced by the calculated trivialities of most of the press, of the theatre, and of popular reading matter. Until these pressures are removed, until a sustained concerted effort has been made to interest people below the age of twenty-five in the problems of social and political life, and to show them that the interest of these things is at least as great as the interest of batting averages, it seems to us premature to decide that youth is inherently incapable of such an interest. The facts of history and psychology seem at least as well to show that most of the serious thinking people do is done before they are twenty-five, before a growing absorption in business or family cares has blunted the edge of their appetite for knowledge, and their power of sympathy with unfamiliar facts and ideas. Whether this be so or not, the average age of the inhabitants of this country is steadily rising, and perhaps for that reason alone we should hesitate, unless we are prepared to disfranchise our old people, before we decide that a human being is not fit to vote until he or she has spent a whole third of his life. If men and women, fathers and mothers, of twenty-three and twenty-four are childish, then surely the upbringing that makes them so is absurd. Let us address ourselves to correcting this and not embark on an argument which tends finally to make a man suspect that only one age is fit to govern anything—his own.

child labour will penetrate very deeply into our hearts and that the evils might be prevented with your co-operation throughout China in times to come."

The negotiations in Nanking were taken up a little later and carried a step further by Mr. Pierre Henry, from the International Labour Office at Geneva. He, too, saw the Civil Governor, shortly before the outbreak of warfare, in the autumn of 1924, which proved completely devastating to our peaceful plans for Chinese constructive working towards this great reform.

The further interruption and hindrance at Shanghai in May and June, 1925, of the efforts of the Municipal Council (backed by the child labour reform movement and supported by the advice and help of the British Consul-General)² to secure the passing of an interim Child Labour By-law for the International Settlement, received wide international notice, not least in Great Britain. Far greater attention was there given to it than to the earlier interruption by civil war of the wider labour reform movement for China as a whole. None the less, the real cause of the failure in the Settlement lay in the unpreparedness of the Chinese people for the reform. This was not generally realized, and in some quarters the real position was badly misrepresented in Great Britain. Here, still, there is need to lay particular emphasis on the concluding words of the Report of the Shanghai Child Labour Commission: "Reform of present industrial conditions and the consequent amelioration of the lot of the Chinese child worker cannot be achieved unless it receives the moral and active support not only of the foreign residents but of the vastly greater body of the Chinese public." Chinese as much as foreign members of the Commission signed these words.

² See China No. 1 (1925), Papers respecting Labour conditions in China, Cmd. 2442, page 108. Consult also China No. 2 (1927), Cmd. 2846.

Perhaps the heartiest of all the Chinese invitations that reached me, to come and help in labour matters, was from King-te-chen, in Kiangsi Province, described by the Priest-in-Charge of the American Episcopal Mission in the district, as the "biggest, oldest, and most completely Chinese (original) industrial centre in all China, a complete whole by itself." It is the only one that is "entirely devoted to one industry, the manufacture of porcelain." Of the population of about 300,000 the great bulk, over 250,000 he said, are pouring the ability of their heads and hands, in one form or another, into the making of porcelain, and the annual export figures out about \$800,000 Mex. Even in this simply organized "rather crude manner of industry," the same chasm existed (he considered) between labour and capital as in modern forms. He wrote to the Secretaries of the N.C.C.C. that they should not fail to put a visit to King-te-chen on my programme, and that I should decide the length of my stay after seeing, on the spot, the large scope of the work to be done. Owing to the very friendly relation between the community and their "infant Church," they were able to form a "Society for the Promotion of Virtues" which included gentry, general merchants, students, capitalists, porcelain manufacturers, higher and common class of workers on porcelain. He believed that my visit might call forth sympathy, "which is so badly needed between labour and capital." He added in a letter to myself his full agreement with the line of action I had attempted in China, with a view "to enlisting the sympathy of those leaders and capitalists who have the power to reform." He thought that advice and suggestions I could offer concerning the welfare of the tens of thousands of manual workers would come at a favourable time, for recent strikes had caused "sufferings to labourers and small capitalists in a degree which is appalling."

The writer of those words showed thoughtful care in trying to arrange for my proposed journey under congenial escort and companionship. There was nothing that one could more strongly have wished than to achieve this visit to an absorbingly interesting industry of China before the summer rest began. The Shanghai Child Labour Commission, however, did not finish its work until mid-June, 1924, and the indispensable visit to the industrial Wu-han cities left me, alas! no time after the period of "great heat" had arrived; when by common consent the journey was impossible, across Lake Poyang and up the Jaochou River in a shallow draught boat, to the great porcelain-making centre, fifty miles or more distant from Jaochou. In the autumn I had to pass down to the coast in order to be ready to begin my journey home to England, for official reasons. A brief visit to Japan of three weeks had been promised, and in September and October it was accomplished, for the very necessary purpose of a comparative industrial reconnaissance in the most highly industrialized country of the Far East.

The main value of the varied special inquiries and negotiations carried out in China in 1923-4, in relation to labour conditions (and above all relating to child labour) in Chinese industry, probably lies in the definite showing that there is ready, and waiting to be developed, much and widely spread popular Chinese sympathy for real reform in the backward and often terrible conditions. While political troubles, unstable government, and economic and social unrest and suffering from interminable faction fighting hinder necessary legislation and administration they have not in fact prevented thoughtful sustained work among individuals and groups in the north, centre, and south of China, of an experimental kind in education, research, public health, and practical as well as theoretical instruction in questions of political science.

The hopes which sprang up with the Southern development of the Nationalist movement, and its rapid political and military extension, have recently received a great shock. The pronounced regard of the Nationalists for labour has led under existing conditions to great excesses and some extreme absurdities in labour demands. Yet even there lies potential hope for the future, and still more does it lie in the new leading of women generally in the movement to a definite share in emancipation and practical efforts for some kind of social reconstruction.

What one misses so far is any explicit declaration, by the ostensible Southern Government, of the fundamental need for sustained protection and elementary education of the nation's children. The more need for unrelaxed effort and courageous testimony among the social reformers in China who have knowledge and are not inextricably caught in the toils of the military struggle; they ought, in season and perhaps sometimes out of season, to testify to the principle of "children first." Until children are taken out of factory and other heavy or dangerous

toil, and little girls are rescued from domestic slavery, very little that is constructive can be secured for the adults.

I offer, for what it is worth, my testimony that Chinese of all ranks immediately respond when even a foreigner speaks to them of the need of more care of the children. Never was it distantly suggested that they thought I was encroaching or that they could deal with the affair themselves.

MARRIED WOMEN (EMPLOYMENT) BILL.

The Married Women (Employment) Bill was defeated on the occasion of its second reading on 29th April by 84 votes to 63. In view of the fact that the Government took a strong line against the Bill, and that a large number of potential supporters were absent at the Labour Party's Conference on the Trade Union Bill, it is some poor comfort that the defeat was not greater. The debate was an unusually interesting one. The speeches in support of the Bill were far more numerous and on a far higher level than those against. Sir Robert Newman and Mr. Pethick Lawrence, as proposer and seconder, put the case clearly and forcibly. Sir Henry Slesser, in what perhaps was the best speech of the day, explained the legal position, and put forward many cogent arguments. Lady Astor's sparkling, witty speech contained certain aphorisms which we hope will long be remembered. "Much nonsense," she said, "is talked by men about women's place in the home. I know the type of man who generally says that. It is not the type of man who makes home most pleasant for a woman." When Mr. Macquisten pronounced that the woman who stays at home and is able to cook is far more capable "than the woman who can get up and make speeches," Lady Astor aptly remarked "Some can do both!" Perhaps the most disappointing feature of the whole debate was the exposure of the line which had been taken by the Civil Service Clerical Association, which represents some six thousand women in different sections of the Service. The plea was irrespective of their views on the general principle of the right of married women to undertake paid employment, and was admittedly put forward for reasons of expediency. The reasons given were that the retention of married women in the Service would lessen already scanty chances of promotion, and that under the present regulations those who retire voluntarily forfeit the marriage bonus. There was no reason why this last difficulty could not have been met. It is unfortunate that the desire for promotion should have caused one important set of women to have little regard for the many of their number who marry. Although there are very few reforms which do not offend vested interests, it is singularly unfortunate that in a Bill which clearly could not have become law in this session, an important body of women should have advertised the fact that they prefer the mess of pottage for themselves and justice for others. The case against the Bill, as expressed by Mr. Ronald McNeill, was based partly on the attitude of the women Civil Servants but mostly on the fear that the retention of married women in the Service would lead to irregularity of work owing to absences during the birth of their children. We wonder if Mr. McNeill had read the recent figures with regard to dependency in the 1921 census. He would have seen that the average number of children under 16 per professional man is .9. Do single women never require leave of absence for a period of two or three months during a service extending over several decades? It was interesting that the case of the teachers met with far more sympathy, and that the Association of Municipal Corporations, so Major Hills told us, had decided neither to oppose nor support the Bill. Does not this point to the probability that next session's Bill should perhaps be confined to teachers only, where at least we can depend on the support of the women concerned? It is interesting to note in the division list that there were 15 Unionists, 5 Liberals, 41 Labour, 2 Independents among the Ayes; and 81 Unionists, 3 Labour among the Noes.

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

EVERY FRIDAY. ONE PENNY.

SPECIAL TERMS FOR SOCIETIES

Send 6/6 to the Office of the Paper, 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.
1/8 for Three Months. SUBSCRIBE TO-DAY.

PALESTINE, 1927.¹

By DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT.

On board the Orient S.S. "Orvioto", homeward bound,
22nd March, 1927.

Since the date of our last visit to Palestine in 1922, a much more friendly feeling has grown up between the Moslem population and the British administration. This is due to a variety of causes, the chief of which are probably the spread of education for both sexes among the Moslems and experience of British methods of dealing with legal and financial troubles which had beset the Moslems largely in consequence of the war.

The British High School for Girls, the opening of which was one of Lord Allenby's first acts as head of the Palestine administration, has had an important effect on public opinion in Moslem circles. We heard in many directions that Moslem young men, when they knew that their fathers were arranging a marriage for them, would express a wish that the bride might be taken from Miss Warburton's school. For the education of young men had caused them to desire to find in their future wives a companion and friend as well as a suitable mother for their children.

The chief woman officer of the Palestine Government, Miss Nixon, has a friendly and perfectly open manner of approaching these subjects and discussing them with Moslem fathers. On one occasion, when she was talking with a group of elderly men, she remarked that it was obvious that "no nation could rise above the level of its women." This was in a town at some distance from Jerusalem, and a notorious centre of Moslem fanaticism. This seed appears to have been dropped on unexpectedly fertile soil, and Miss Nixon went her way in pursuit of her ordinary round of work, and did not return to the place for several months. When she did return she found that her remark had been the subject of much conversation and discussion, and that the Moslem fathers had come to the conclusion that she was right and that the general level of a people could never be higher than that of its women.

Another circumstance which has favourably affected Moslem opinion has been the British method of dealing with the Waqfs, i.e. Moslem charitable and religious trust funds which had fallen into confusion partly in consequence of the war and partly also from Turkish confiscation when the Turks were in command of the country. The difficulties arising out of this state of things have been dealt with by the existing Government in a manner wholly consistent with British traditions of honesty and fair play, and these we were told had favourably influenced Moslem opinion throughout Palestine. See *Handbook of Palestine*, by E. Keith Roach and H. C. Luke. These circumstances have been among the causes which have produced a change in public opinion favourable to British institutions, among them the education of girls. One of the chief officers of the Government told me he had been amazed at the rapidity of the change in this direction which had already taken place, and described his surprise at finding a school for girls attended by more than fifty pupils in a place which a few years ago was considered a hotbed of anti-British feeling.

Schools are growing up on all sides, not merely Government schools, but those run by private individuals. The children evidently enjoy them and benefit by them intellectually, physically, and morally.

I have written on a former occasion of the chief educational centres for girls and boys in Jerusalem. These are as thriving and vigorous as ever and new schools are constantly making their appearance. Miss Warburton has been succeeded by Miss Jameson as head mistress of the British High School for Girls, but she keeps in close touch with the great school which she created; and the Anglo-Jewish School, conducted by Miss Landau, is as much alive and is as vigorous as ever. Miss Landau is now in process of converting it from a primary into a secondary school, by no means an easy task.

Among the new schools we were particularly struck by one which is financed and presided over by Swedes. What delighted us here more than anything else was the eager and almost vehement enjoyment of the children and the fact that it was, notwithstanding the snowstorm, an open-air school. The Swedish Consul and his wife naturally took a special interest in this school.

Seeing these things made a deep impression on us, and when we remembered how our own women's movement for freedom and citizenship had been founded and built up on education, we felt we could look forward to equally happy results in Palestine.

¹ Previous articles appeared in our issues of 18th March and 8th April.

THREE NEW NOVELS.

By MARY STOCKS.

Miss E. M. Delafield never really disappoints us—still, when a confirmed writer of novels suddenly bursts into short stories one is prepared for the worst. But in her recently published collection, *The Entertainment* (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.), Miss Delafield dissipates our fears and gives us the best. Here is a truly entertaining entertainment; each story has sufficient incident to make it a real story, and sufficient wit to make the reader want to go on immediately to the next. Just one more—and then just one more, she murmurs (for all the world as though she were eating chocolate truffles)—while the clock hand moves neglectedly past the last minute of her rationed leisure. Well, let us confess it, that mythical "she" was ourselves. Of these admirable stories, "Blairgowrie" is perhaps the one that we shall remember longest.

Miss Naomi Royde-Smith maintains in her third novel, *Skin Deep* (Constable, 7s. 6d.), the regular progression of merit demonstrated by her first two. This last is a curiously nasty story—as nasty as *The Tortoiseshell Cat*—but its nastiness reflects moral as well as technical credit upon the author, for it concerns a nasty theme. It is the story of Lucinda, the lovely, stupid, misfitted, and a-moral Duchess of Merioneth, who pursued youth and beauty for a wholesome human purpose but forgot that purpose in the absorbing artifices of her pursuit. So at last we take leave of her, raddled and worn by the last stages of her losing race with time and change; a horrible shameless old woman in hopeless bondage to an unrealizable and worthless ideal. Miss Royde-Smith's technique has not yet realized the high ambition which she has clearly set herself. Her prologue is disproportionately elaborate. And her handling of the chronology of her story is so defective that at times the reader is forced to turn back the pages for a reminder of the particular period in Lucinda's life to which the narrative at the moment relates. But in her next novel Miss Royde-Smith will doubtless have outgrown such defects. In the meanwhile they are insufficient to disturb the reader's enjoyment of a remarkably interesting and original piece of work.

Alas! how gladly would we write thus of Miss Elinor Mordaunt's latest book, *The Dark Fire* (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.). In one passage she observes in relation to a certain phase of conjugal emotion that "Ethel Dell is right". Now we ourselves, who yield to nobody in profound admiration of Miss Dell, would be the last to resent any expression of homage on the part of a distinguished colleague. But in this case Miss Mordaunt has allowed such homage to degenerate into slavish imitation. She has gone so far as to adopt Miss Dell's form of literary characterization, and this without acquiring at the same time Miss Dell's marvellous sustention of interest and effective economical phraseology. And in so doing she has of course lost herself: the Elinor Mordaunt whom we know, whose characters have been, in the past, live human characters. *The Dark Fire* is the story of a man mysteriously enslaved by a demonical lady of the East Indian Isles, and of the fortunes of the intrepid white woman by whose constancy he is at length saved. Their adventures carry them through tropical forests to pearl beaches; but not for one moment do the forests or the beaches or their outlandish inhabitants ring true—as the contours and politics of Mauritius rang true in Miss Mordaunt's earlier works. It may be that the height of our esteem for those earlier works exaggerates our estimate of this new novel's crudity. Perhaps after all, judged on its own merits, it is not such a very bad novel—merely bad for Miss Mordaunt. At any rate there is this to be said for it: it would make an admirable six reel cinema film. One can even see, in the mind's eye, how Mr. Griffiths would produce it, with the symbolical "dark fire" of primitive human desire blazing on the screen as a carry-over between the scene-shifts.

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THE HEALTH OF AFRICA.

By M. I. BATTEN.

So successful has the Health Bureau at Singapore proved in preventing infectious diseases from spreading, that at the Sixth Assembly of the League of Nations the French Delegation suggested that a similar bureau should be set up in West Africa to deal with West African diseases. The suggestion was sent round to all the Governments concerned, and their opinions asked. As yet all the answers have not been received, but of those available opinion seems to be in favour of a pan-African health station, considering that the proposal for one dealing with West Africa only is premature.

Although the birth-rate in Africa is very high, the death-rate is even higher, and unless the further increase of disease is prevented, this country, immensely rich in raw materials, will soon become depopulated. The natives are and always have been underfed, living as they do only on small quantities of fruit and cereals, and being a very lazy race they will do nothing to improve their conditions. Any epidemic that breaks out, therefore, sweeps all before it.

The different States have no system of giving information as to where epidemics are raging, and the increasing communications and migrations in the country are rapidly spreading disease. The ravages of sleeping sickness have become so terrible that each State is doing all in its power to try and stop it. The germs of this disease have undoubtedly been carried into districts where it had never previously existed, with the long trains that follow explorers and officials.

Civilization has brought many diseases into Africa, which were not natural to the country, but there is also the danger of taking diseases from Africa into other countries where they are unknown. Africa is about the last place in the world where yellow fever exists, and although the number of cases of late have been very few, there is always the danger of its breaking out again. The natives seem to be more or less immune from it, but amongst white men it works great havoc.

A special committee has been set up to examine the details of the work that could be done, and the place most suitable for installing a station. Everything so far seems in favour of Algiers. The work of the bureau would be similar to that at Singapore, receiving and broadcasting information as to the movement of infectious diseases.

ESTHONIA.¹

Amongst the Baltic States, Esthonia stands out as a small country with great ideals and striking achievements, and at recent congresses its treatment of Minority problems has been specially commended. A nationality of ancient descent dating from a pre-Christian period, its history is a long drawn-out struggle for life and liberty, and only lately have the people emerged from oppressions such as those from which the Magna Charta proclaimed freedom for us in the thirteenth century. Cultural development, now freed from alien domination, is with them a primary interest, stronger perhaps than any desire for playing an important rôle in international politics. They claim that 30 per cent. of their State funds are devoted to education, that there are now practically no illiterates in the country, and that for every thousand inhabitants there are four University students, one-third of the whole number being girls. The long struggle for freedom from an alien domination overshadowed the struggle for sex emancipation, and women gained their ends with comparative ease and entered Parliament under the new democratic Constitution in considerable numbers. Eager to profit from contact with European culture generally, Esthonian affinities seem to be mainly with Great Britain, Germany, Scandinavia, and Hungary, and the bond with Great Britain has been considerably strengthened since the war. In religion also they are akin to the Nordic nations, 85 per cent. of the inhabitants being Lutheran. The Minorities are small and include a Saxon element of ancient standing. Esthonia has lately adopted a liberal law on Cultural Autonomy for Minorities, and its Constitution, with freedom for local organization—especially for Minority concerns—for liberty of religion, equality in language, education, and right of free speech and control of private property coupled with new agrarian laws and a moderating tendency in many directions, has given it a high place amongst the Baltic States. Whatever may have been the difficulties political and constitutional in its efforts for new development, it is stated that no Minority petition has been received from Esthonia by the League of Nations since 1922.

¹ Contributed by the Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, W.C.

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WEEK-END SUMMER SCHOOL AT MALVERN. 13th to 16th May, 1917, at ALDWYN TOWER, ST. ANNS ROAD.

The Malvern Summer School will be held at Aldwyn Tower, St. Anns Road, which is about half a mile from Great Malvern Station. The School promises to be a great success, and we hope that all those in the Midlands who are interested in the work of the N.U.S.E.C. will make a point of attending, if possible the whole School, but failing that at least some of the lectures, which cover a wide range of subjects.

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES.—Friday: 7.50 p.m., Reception; 8.30 p.m., Equal Franchise and other Legislation affecting Women and Children, Mrs. HUBBACK, M.A. Saturday: 9.30–11 a.m., Women and Social Insurance, Mrs. HUBBACK. 11.30–1 p.m., The Work of Women Police, COMMANDANT ALLEN, O.B.E., Auxiliary Service. 2.30 p.m., Excursions, rambles on Malvern Hills, conducted by Mr. Arthur Bennett. 6 p.m., Conference on the formation of Midland Federation. 8.30 p.m., The Right of Married Women to engage in Paid Work, Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY, M.A. Sunday: 3 p.m., The Work of Women and the League of Nations, Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY. 8.30 p.m., Informal Discussion on a subject to be selected. Applications should be made immediately to Mrs. Freeman, Wyche Cliff, Wyche Road, Malvern.

WEEK-END SUMMER SCHOOL AT ILKLEY, 1st to 4th July, 1927.

The Ilkley S.E.C. is arranging a week-end School from Friday, 1st July, to Monday, 4th July, of which we shall be publishing further particulars shortly.

In the meantime, we hope that our members and others interested will keep the date free, and will remember a visit to this could be conveniently combined with a visit to see the eclipse (29th June)!

EQUAL FRANCHISE.

A letter has just been issued to Societies suggesting a programme of work for the coming months, and an appeal for funds will shortly be issued. Meetings will be held in as many constituencies as possible in order that the Prime Minister may be convinced that he has the Country behind him in spite of the efforts of the "Stunt Press" to arouse opposition. Special attention will be given to constituencies in which the representatives have a bad record. We have to thank the Press, even the hostile Press, for giving the subject the publicity which is beyond our powers, and it is up to us to use this publicity for our own ends, and to arouse the intelligent interest of voters in questions of equal citizenship as well as to revive the interests of those men who are already enfranchised.

PERSONAL.

MISS RATHBONE.

Miss Rathbone is this week attending the meeting of the Child Welfare Committee of the League of Nations at Geneva, on which she is a representative of the international women's organizations.

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SHIRKERS VERSUS WORKERS IN IRELAND. SHIRKERS SCORE.

The question of the exemption of women from jury service was decided on Thursday last, when the Free State Senate discussed the Juries Bill on Report. The Minister for Justice moved an amendment exempting all women, but providing that any who desire should be allowed to volunteer for jury service. This has been described by the Joint Conference of women's organizations as a case of "Workers versus Shirkers." The Joint Conference asked for all women to be liable, and those who desired exemption to be placed on a panel, thus throwing the onus on the shirkers. The Minister declared there was no difference between his amendment and that moved on behalf of the Conference, except that under the official proposal the cost of placing women's names on the list would be avoided. The amendment was passed. The Conference had already sent an Open Letter to the Senate, pointing out that such an expedient involved a denial of the "equal citizenship" guaranteed by the Constitution. Further, as the Government gave no promise to discontinue the present methods of discouraging women who volunteer, there would certainly be so small a panel that it would very seldom be possible to secure the presence of women on the jury. The Bill will now return to the Dail. It is to be feared very little can be done there, but at least a stiff opposition has been maintained. D. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"WAGING THE SEX WAR."

MADAM,—I am sorry that you should have received an incorrect report, or formed an incorrect impression, of my address at the Guards' Chapel. So far from encouraging sex war, I expressed myself clearly as one who had no fear of the influence of women in politics. In point of fact, I do not think that many people of either sex are fit for political responsibility at 21. But the judgment of a woman of 21 is quite as likely to be sound as that of a man of that age. And, probably, in most cases she has a wholesome dislike for the type that I called "the feminine man"—for she usually admires strength. But this "pseudo feminine" person (as perhaps it would be better to call him) admires weakness—instead of encouraging it to cultivate strength.

(Rev. Prebendary) A. W. GOUGH.

The Vicarage, Brompton Square, S.W. 3.

MADAM,—I am a member of the congregation of Brompton Parish Church, where Prebendary Gough is Vicar. His choice of the expression "feminine man" seems to me unfortunate, but I am sure he had no intention of depreciating women, only their feeble imitators. Imitators frequently fail to acquire anything but faults or mannerisms. Perhaps the time will come—may it come quickly—when we shall all dwell less on our sex and more on our common humanity. In the meanwhile let the true woman come to the aid of the real man to redress the balance of civilization. It needs it.

(Miss) GEORGINA M. TICKNER.

10 Neville Terrace, Onslow Gardens, S.W. 7.

TEMPERANCE LEGISLATION.

MADAM,—In reply to Lady Horsley's letter on page 99 of your issue of 29th April, pointing out an "inaccuracy" in a resolution passed by the Council of the National British Women's Total Abstinence Union in connection with the reported great increase in licences in Jerusalem, etc., there has evidently been some misunderstanding on her part. If she will read the article in question again, she will note that a semicolon follows the statement, and that the paragraph which follows, "calling upon the strict observance of the terms of Article 22 of the Covenant" refers to another resolution altogether, viz., one moved by the Lady Cecilia Roberts, and connected with *Mandates and Native Races*, not with the state of affairs in Jerusalem, as she evidently supposed. Four resolutions were mentioned altogether.

(Mrs.) DOROTHEA M. NORTHCROFT.

British Women's Total Abstinence Union, 104 Gower Street, W.C. 1.

TREATMENT OF YOUNG OFFENDERS.

MADAM,—I have read Mrs. Rackham's article on the above in your issue of 22nd April with much interest. I am fully aware of the respect in which her views are held: it may therefore be regarded as presumption on my part to differ from her, or to bring criticism to bear (as on a previous

occasion) on the manner in which she has presented the Report, or rather, a portion of it, to your readers.

That portion concerns the Certified Schools, and to my mind, her statement as to the recommendations dealing with the terms of commitment is a very misleading one. Mrs. Rackham omits any reference to the clause in the Report giving power to School Authorities, jointly with the Home Office, to release on licence, at an earlier stage than the three years, if in the opinion of those bodies, release can safely be permitted. P. 125 (no) 50, nor does she point out that three years is the maximum period of commitment for children over school age.

Two pages in the Report (75–7) are devoted to setting forth the reasons for the conclusions arrived at; reasons, one would have thought which would have carried weight with any social worker accustomed to dealing with neglected or delinquent children, and yet Mrs. Rackham passes over these considered, expert opinions in complete silence and expresses the view that the usefulness of the Schools to the magistrates is much reduced by the very recommendations framed in the interests of the child. Surely, in all fairness, Mrs. Rackham should have drawn attention in her article to these reasons, even though they did not commend themselves to her!

No matter what the reasons for committal may be, the date on which the period of training will have achieved its object cannot be determined beforehand. That it was considered desirable to fix a maximum of three years' detention, in the Report, for children over school age, was, I assume, due to the view being held that that period was a sufficiently long one to enable the authorities to decide whether the child were capable of benefiting from the training provided in the Schools, or whether it needed some entirely different treatment, and that such a decision could not of necessity be reached in a shorter period.

Human nature has not yet been reduced to an exact science, and, for that reason if for none other, it is quite impossible for any individual, however great his or her knowledge, understanding, and vision may be, to determine in advance that which only the future can reveal. Surely, if the Home Office and the Schools are to be trusted, and public opinion has not declared otherwise, the child will not suffer by being left to the joint care of those who have its welfare very truly at heart. Mistakes may be made, but what body or person can claim to be infallible? and should the possibility of a mistaken judgment warrant Mrs. Rackham's contention that the usefulness of the Schools to the Magistrates will be impaired by the recommendations?

Mrs. Rackham's message seems to be ever the same, "Trust the Magistrates, trust the Children, but on no account trust either the Home Office or the Schools." I, as a School Manager, feel it is time that this attitude underwent some change.

(Mrs.) MILDRED PYKE.

10 Westbourne Terrace, W. 2.

[I should like to make two points in answer to Mrs. Pyke.

(1) The Report itself says, "There appears to be a reluctance on the part of some courts to send young people away from their homes for long periods and a consequential tendency to release on probation some of them who really require institutional training." It is to meet this reluctance (which is not apparent but real) that I am anxious to give courts the alternative of a shorter committal.

(2) The period of such a committal need not be fixed unconditionally by the Bench. As Mr. Clarke Hall says in his book, *Children's Courts*, "The Court should be given power, when passing sentence of detention in a school, to fix a date upon which the question should come up for further consideration. This would be an immense inducement to the child to do well in school and to the parents to improve the home conditions." The decision as to whether the child should remain longer at school would then be made by the court who would be guided by the school report on the child's progress, by the conditions in the child's home and other factors.

It was impossible for me to summarize the arguments of the Committee on this question. I hope that all those who are interested in child welfare will read the Report right through for themselves.

C. D. RACKHAM.]

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ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN.

MAY 11. 11.30 a.m. Second Annual General Meeting at Hotel Cecil (Richelieu Room).

MAY 12. 1.30 p.m. Visit to Standard Telephone and Cable Co.'s Works, North Woolwich.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

May 23 and 24. Conference on Limitation and Reduction of Armaments at London School of Economics.

May 23. 8 p.m. Public Meeting at Kingsway Hall. Speakers: The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Oxford and Asquith, Mr. Alfred Duff and Miss Sybil Thorndike.

LABOUR PARTY.

MAY 11 and 12. National Conference of Labour Women at Huddersfield.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

Gerrard's Cross Branch. MAY 6. 5.30 p.m. Mrs. F. W. Hubback on "Social Insurance."

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

MAY 13-16. Week-end Summer School at Aldwyn Tower, St. Ann's Road, Malvern.

London Federation of S.E.C. MAY 6. 3 p.m. General Meeting at 17 Campden House Road, W. 8. Chair: The Lady Balfour of Burleigh.

Dulwich W.C.A. MAY 10. 3 p.m. St. Barnabas Institute, E. Dulwich. Mrs. F. W. Hubback on "Family Endowment."

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