

Miss Blackwell

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

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

AND
THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS

Parliamentary Success.

This has been a good week, and the usefulness of enfranchisement has been well proved. On Thursday, Lady Astor made a fight for the Trade Boards which, if not obviously successful at once, will bear fruit, unless we are greatly mistaken. Later in the night the Criminal Law Amendment Bill went through the Commons, in spite of the violent and very disagreeable obstruction of a handful of Members. The following day the Civil Service debate ended in a triumph for the women, and now, as we go to press, the Equal Guardianship Bill is about to be discussed. Do all these signs mean that a General Election is drawing near? We do not like to be cynical—but some things are obvious, and the connection between women voters, constituencies, and non-party measures is one of them. We recommend our readers to study the Hansards of Thursday and Friday, August 4th and 5th (Vol. 145, Nos. 113 and 114), and, if it so happens that they live in the right constituencies, to study the speeches of their own Members on these women's questions. Some of them will repay attention and will provoke forcible comments.

The Civil Service Charter.

We publish here the text of the Civil Service Resolutions adopted as the policy of the Government, and passed without a division last week. We comment on this matter in our leading article (page 403).

(1) That this House approves of the temporary Regulations for competitions governing the appointment of women to situations in the new reorganisation classes in the Home Civil Service. Provided that after a provisional period of three years women shall be admitted to the Civil Service of His Majesty within the United Kingdom under the same Regulations, present or future, as provide for and prescribe the mode of admission for men. Provided, further, that the allocation by the Civil Service Commissioners of such candidates as qualify at the examination shall be made with due regard to the requirements of the situation to be filled.

(2) That women shall be appointed to and continue to hold posts in the Civil Service within the United Kingdom under the same Regulations, present or future, as govern the classification and (in so far as regards status and authority) other conditions of service for men.

(3) That, having regard to the present financial position of the country, this House cannot commit itself to the increase in Civil Service salaries involved in the payment of women in all cases at the same rate as men; but that the question of the remuneration of women as compared with men shall be reviewed within a period not exceeding three years. Provided that arrangements in hand for the inclusion of ex-service men on special terms be not by these Resolutions prevented or delayed."

Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

This Bill has at last passed through all its stages in the Commons but, owing to the addition of a totally new clause, it must go back to the Lords for what is undoubtedly a purely formal ratification. The Bill, as finally amended, contains the following items:—

(a) A new clause, which provides that gross indecency between females, in public or private, shall be a misdemeanour punishable by imprisonment for two years with hard labour, and that any parties to the commission of such acts shall be equally liable.

(b) Raises the age of consent to indecent assault from thirteen to sixteen, but if the consenting party is of the age of fifteen he or she shall also be guilty of a misdemeanour.

(c) Increases the penalties against brothel-keepers, and, if aliens, compels the court to recommend their deportation.

(d) A new clause, which provides that alien procurers shall also be recommended for deportation.

(e) Repeals the section of the Incest Act which requires that all proceedings under that Act shall be held *in camera*.

The main omission from the Bill is the deletion of the clause extending from six to twelve months the time in which a prosecution can be begun for criminal assault. The Bill, in effect only contains two important reforms: (1) It raises the age of consent to acts of indecency from thirteen to fifteen, and (2) it abolishes "reasonable cause to believe" as a full defence in cases of criminal assault. We welcome these advances, but we think the law might well have protected the immaturity of children of both sexes up to sixteen without quibbling about the responsibility of consenting parties aged between fifteen and sixteen. The new clause dealing with indecency between females is on right lines in so far as it equalises the sexes in this respect, but we imagine the offence will be very difficult to prove. It is open to question whether any good purpose is effected by making

the commission of acts of indecency between adult persons of the same sex a criminal offence. It seems to offer a peculiarly easy means of blackmail, but so long as it is thought desirable to apply the law against men in this respect, there is no obvious reason why it should not be extended to women also. The thanks of all women's organisations are due to Major Farquharson, M.D., M.P., for his persevering efforts on behalf of the Bill, and for the time and thought he has given to the subject. Lady Astor too deserves our hearty thanks. Her mere presence in the House has done more than outsiders can easily understand to facilitate the discussion of this Bill, and her keen support for it and the persistent, quiet work she did in the lobbies were of invaluable assistance. We believe that without her, and without Major Farquharson's wise and loyal support, we should never have got the Bill through.

Catering Trade Boards?

Lady Astor's revelations as to the starvation wages paid in Newcastle and Sunderland to women in the catering trades did not draw from the Government a promise to set up a Trade Board for the protection of these workers. Sir Montague Barlow, however, promised to inquire into particular cases if a list of these were furnished to him. We know that that list would, if time sufficed, be a long one, though conditions so terrible as those mentioned by Lady Astor may be exceptional. A Minister need not refuse protection if he finds that only a few women are working a twelve-hour day and a seven-day week for 10s. a week, or doing sixty hours a week for 4s. We shall await the result of Sir Montague Barlow's investigations with hopefulness; and meanwhile it would be a good thing to send in to her all the authenticated cases which any of us encounter.

Labour Exchanges.

Owing to long continued depression in trade the Labour Exchanges have been much more concerned in distributing unemployment pay than in their normal task of *liaison* between employers and persons seeking work. Dr. Macnamara carried his hearers with him when he demonstrated the usefulness of Exchanges as distributors of out-of-work pay; but what he said in the House did not touch well-founded criticism as to their shortcomings in more customary duties. We all of us abuse Labour Exchanges almost every time we come in contact with them; but whether we should be better off without them is another question. We are, however, on perfectly safe ground in saying that since they exist they ought to be well run; and we know from long experience that, as far as women are concerned, there is still great room for improvement. The House would do better to help than to carp at the Exchanges, if it continues their existence at all.

Belgian Women's Rights.

The Belgian Chamber has adopted without debate a measure permitting women to hold the offices of burgomaster, alderman, and rate collector. It will be interesting to see whether the proviso that married women must have the consent of their husbands before accepting office has any practical effect on appointments. In all probability it will be regarded as an amusing mediæval survival. Not so very long ago we used to hear at suffrage meetings in England that married women were adequately represented by their husbands, and needed no votes, a conception of the married woman's status which is somewhat obsolete!

Women Candidates for Parliament.

It does not seem very probable that Lady Bonham Carter will contest the Abbey division of Westminster; the opportunity is not tempting, and more attractive offers are said to be forthcoming. Mrs. Coombe Tennant, J.P., of Neath, has been adopted for the next election as a Coalition Liberal candidate. Miss Helen Fraser, well known as an organiser and speaker for the N.U.W.S.S., is another woman who will stand in the same interest, and Mrs. Ogilvy Gordon, president of the National Council of Women for 1920, and a distinguished author of scientific works, is also to stand as a Coalition candidate. The Labour Party has definitely adopted five women candidates: Mrs. Snowden, who will contest Leicester East, Miss Susan Lawrence, Dr. Ethel Bentham, Miss Bondfield, and Mrs. Pease. The candidatures of Mrs. Coates Hansen and Mrs. Ayrton Gould have still to be ratified by the Labour Party Executive. This adds a good many to the list of official women candidates for the next election. The other women candidates already known are: Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mrs. Egerton Stuart Brown, Lady Barlow, Miss Mabel Billson, Independent Liberals, and Miss

Eleanor Rathbone, who is standing as an Independent, but has recently received the official backing of the local Liberal Association. We sincerely hope that many of these magnificent women will be elected.

Women as Solicitors.

Miss Barefoot, a former student of Newnham, who is articulated to a firm of solicitors, has won the prize offered by the Law Society to Intermediate Students. Great as is the need for women barristers, it is less pressing than the call for women solicitors, and there are certainly many women whose natural gifts fit them for this branch of the law, as there are many others to whom the existence of women solicitors will prove a great boon.

Women Chemists.

The Institute of Chemistry has admitted women as members since 1892, makes no difference between male and female candidates for the Association or the Fellowship, and has informed Lady Astor that it considers that women employed in chemical research should receive the same salary as men similarly occupied. It does not, however, go so far as to pronounce in favour of equality of payment in the case of routine workers. Employers, one cannot fail to notice, are apt to regard almost anything done by a woman as routine work. If Mrs. Rosita Forbes had been sent on her exploring mission by a syndicate we should have heard that a sojourn in the desert was part of woman's daily round. Are there not Arab women there?

Need for Remand Homes.

Justices of the Peace for Lancaster have invited the Home Secretary to point out to magistrates throughout the country the objections to committing young persons to prison while awaiting trial at Quarter Sessions. This will not be a new idea to any Justice who takes his or her work seriously. But what is to be done with young persons between sixteen and eighteen who must be detained for days or weeks, and may, after all, be discharged without a stain upon their characters? The fifty boys and girls who have spent weeks of waiting in Strangeways gaol this year might very well have been otherwise disposed of, but Manchester has facilities which are altogether lacking in less populous centres. The Home Secretary's letter of remonstrance will be useless unless he points out not only the evil, but the remedy.

Mr. Hohler's Optimism.

Mr. Hohler, attempting in the debate on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, to defend the indefensible, remarked that at the present time women sit on juries, and that they can protect women who have been the victims of criminal assaults. There can be few newspaper readers, in or out of Parliament, who are unaware of the success with which women jurors duly summoned have been prevented from serving when their presence is most needed. If Mr. Hohler's ignorance is real, it is only less discreditable to him than if it is feigned.

Red Cross Campaign.

The League of Red Cross Societies is making a strong appeal for support in its peace work, which now takes the form of food relief for children, care of Russian refugees in Greece, repatriation of political refugees and Austrian prisoners, campaigns against tuberculosis in Czecho-Slovakia, venereal diseases in Venezuela and Poland, and typhus in Poland. The League is considering an organised campaign of publicity on the subject of cancer. The number of women who fall victims to this most painful of diseases in Great Britain alone is enormous and increasing, but if early operation were resorted to this increase would certainly be arrested. The bulletin of the League points out that the possibility of consulting medical women in cases of suspected cancer should result in the saving of many lives which are now sacrificed because the patient avoids examination till the disease has reached an advanced and incurable stage.

POLICY.—The sole policy of THE WOMAN'S LEADER is to advocate a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women. So far as space permits, however, it will offer an impartial platform for topics not directly included in the objects of the women's movement, but of special interest to women. Articles on these subjects will always be signed, at least by initials or a pseudonym, and for the opinions expressed in them the Editor accepts no responsibility.

A GREAT VICTORY.

It is very delightful to record this week a really great advance in the position of women which was secured last Friday in the House of Commons. It is probably true to say that no such success has come to the women's movement since the passing of the Representation of the People Bill—all the intervening successes notwithstanding. For the victory of the women Civil Servants and the establishment of the principle of equality of opportunity in the service of the State, opens the door on the era of real economic equality, when men and women will get a fair testing of their abilities one against the other, and the field will be open without fear or favour.

Of course, we are not so wildly optimistic as to suppose that this state of affairs will come about at once. Even the words of the resolution which the Government was forced to adopt allow for various modifications, and they do not propose that the equal conditions of entry should come into force for three years. No doubt, also, the Treasury, which is so extremely resourceful, will do many things to modify and prevent that perfectly equal chance which will so irresistibly lead to the equal pay they dread; but when all that is allowed for, and all the watchfulness which we must still exercise has been applied to counteract it, the outstanding fact remains that it is now the accepted policy of the State to admit men and women to the home Civil Service by the same examinations at the same ages, to publish the successful candidates' names on one list, and to appoint to the bulk of the vacancies in the order of merit, and, once in, to promote Civil Servants, regardless of sex, on one single establishment list.

Now that this has become the policy of the Government, we can be sure that State employment will develop on the lines of equality: now, although things may be slow to move, we can rest in the knowledge that they are moving rightly; or rather, we cannot rest in that knowledge, but we can work in it. Many and many a Civil Service tussle on matters of detail lies ahead: many and many a Parliamentary question will be asked and evaded, many and many an injustice be shown up and exposed. But the battle is won all the same, the ultimate issue is certain, and time and custom and everything else have now turned over on to our side. The great Civil Service machine (after the terrible grinding and cracking which one expects when engines are reversed) will now begin to revolve the other way round. It will grind out equality for women, just as, up to now, it has ground out inequality. And the future of women in this great profession is assured.

All this is of the first importance. It is the fundamental principle for which the women Civil Servants have so long been struggling: and its implications on all other employments are, as everyone realises, very far reaching. It is a first-class victory, and well worth the lengthy struggle which it has cost.

Our readers have followed that struggle from month to month, but only those who have worked closely in connection with the Joint Committee on Women in the Civil Service (through which all the organisations have acted) can fully realise the immense amount of time, energy, enthusiasm, and, above all, faith which has been put into this cause by Major J. W. Hills (M.P. for Durham). He it is who has kept alive the hope that Parliament could and would prevail against both the Government and the Civil Service machine, and he it is who has secured the realisation of his faith. The Parliamentary debate (to be found in full in Hansard of August 5th, 1921, Vol. 145, No. 114) is well worth reading. It gives the speeches of some of our friends, and shows—though not to the full—how much the success of the final crisis owed to the courage of Sir Samuel Hoare, the wit of Lady Astor, the pertinacity of Sir Donald Maclean, and the skill of Lord Robert Cecil. They have been, as always, our very good friends.

All the things said in the debate were of interest, but the tone and temper of the House was even more important. For it revealed, as Lord Robert Cecil pointed out, the great difference which has come from our enfranchisement. We can now, when a grievance presses hard upon us, turn to Parliament for redress. We can make sure that it will then be fully and carefully considered; we can insist upon a hearing and upon plain dealing; and if we are in the right of it we can then triumph, though the Government, the vested interests, and even the Treasury itself stand in the way. It is a thing to note and to remember, for what could we have done in this matter before we had votes?

Victory leads on to victory. And now we must consolidate our gains. Three years from now the regular Civil Service Examinations will be open to us. How many women are going to pass in?

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

By OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.

The full effect, social, political, and ethical, of the immense victory for equality won by the decision of the House on Friday, August 5th, will be discussed elsewhere. It is the business of these notes to describe the debate itself, which was not undramatic. Major Hills and Sir Samuel Hoare had put down a series of resolutions, which were supported by Sir Donald Maclean and the Labour Party. These resolutions asked for equal entry, equal status, and equal pay for women in the Civil Service. When the House met it was believed that the Government would counter the attack with a direct negative. This turned out to be true; for a series of amendments to be moved by the Government was handed round, which put the whole question off for three years, deciding nothing and promising nothing. But there ran through the House one of those currents of opinion, so well known to Members, which said that this was not the last word. The House was full. When, just before Major Hills spoke, a count was moved, the Chamber filled instantly. It was noticed, too, that many who do not often attend on a Friday were present. Conferences were obviously going on. Mr. Chamberlain spoke long and earnestly with Lord Robert Cecil on the Opposition Front Bench. The Whips were fitting round the Back Benches. Sir Robert Horne left the House, and simultaneously the mover and seconder of the resolutions disappeared. Altogether there was that sub-current of electricity which portends that things are going to happen.

The debate, however, opened without any sign of a settlement; but, as it progressed, it was clear that the Government were beaten. Speaker after speaker abandoned them. Mr. Asquith made a sober and convincing appeal. But the climax was reached when Sir John Rees, that tough opponent, bluntly told the House that the game was up, and that it was senseless to resist any longer. After this it was only a question of what form the settlement would take. The conciliators had, meantime, been busy behind the scenes, and when Sir Robert Horne rose to speak the agreed terms were put into his hands. There was not even time to copy them; Mr. Speaker, when putting the resolutions, had to read from the actual document which the negotiators had drawn up—and he found it mighty difficult to decipher. Thus ended a long fight; and it ended to the satisfaction of nine Members out of ten. Six months ago such a result would have appeared incredible. Opinion often moves fastest when it moves unseen. But let there be no mistake about one thing: it was a Government defeat; they intended to resist the resolutions.

The week, in other respects also, was packed full of interest. On Monday and Tuesday, August 1st and 2nd, progress was made with the Railway Bill. On Tuesday night, at eleven o'clock, the debate on the Licensing Bill was begun, and the measure, passing with amazingly little opposition, was read a third time at a quarter to four next morning. On Wednesday, August 3rd, Mr. Amery, introducing the Navy Estimates, announced the Government's decision to build four big ships. Mr. Asquith opposed, not in one of his happiest speeches, and all unexpectedly Mr. Churchill replied. By general consent his speech was one of his best. He takes a point of view which is repugnant to the Opposition, and he states it without regard to the feelings of his antagonists. But, under all the bitter controversies which his personality always excites, there ran a full and generous appreciation of his genius.

Thursday, August 4th, saw a scrambling and inconclusive attack on the Ministry of Labour. Dr. Macnamara was very long, and would be more effective if he studied compression. The debate left on the mind an uneasy feeling that money was being wasted. But no two of the assailants could agree where it could be saved.

On Thursday night the House, undaunted by a series of late sittings, remained up till three next morning to carry the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, which passed with incredibly lighter opposition than any similar measure has ever received.

And so ends a remarkable week.

[The views expressed in this column are those of our Parliamentary correspondent, and are not our editorial opinion. Like so many other things in this paper they are expressly controversial, and comment upon them will be welcomed.—Ed.]

BURNING QUESTIONS.

We call the attention of our readers to the fact that in the heading of "Burning Questions" we endeavour to present the political thinkers. We do not ourselves express an editorial opinion, beyond this, that it is each woman's business first to be well-informed and then to come to her own opinion.

THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.—I.

By M. FRIDA HARTLEY.

The now famous Clause 3 of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill is dead, and its death blow was merciless. But the sentence was passed not because the Clause, which had for its object "Instruction and training in lieu of punishment" for young persons, could fail to have great possibilities, or because it could not have been so reconstructed as to fulfil these possibilities, but because it was felt that the Clause should be superfluous. It gave finality to our unsatisfactory treatment of youthful delinquents, or rather, it might be said, to young people who would not have become delinquents except for our neglect of them. Nevertheless, since the whittling down of Criminal Amendment to its minimum proposals of the Bill has shown that the Nation, or its Government, is not yet ready for substantial reform, and since the sole alternative of the Clause may, for some years to come, be prison for the girl under nineteen, a timely conference between supporters and opposers might have borne much fruit.

The Clause, as is well known, was opposed, generally speaking, upon three main points:—

1. That it penalised Prostitution, and that so final a term as "Common Prostitute" was applied to a girl under 18.
2. That it was dangerous to place in the hands of Magistrates the power to pass so severe a sentence as a maximum of three years' detention, even though the detention were in a "Home" instead of in Prison.
3. On the "Liberty of the Subject" and the "Equal Treatment of the Sexes" principle.

This last was perhaps the most important principle embodied in the opposition, yet no response was made to the remark of the Chairman of the Select Committee to one of the witnesses, that "if it were thought reasonable so to draft the Clause that it should apply to both sexes, there was no reason at all why it should not be done." It is probable that the opposers of the Clause considered that so reconstructed it stood no chance of becoming law, but the attempt would not have been unfruitful.

It has not always been quite clear as to whether the objection made to the term "Prostitute," as applied to the girl under nineteen, was based upon the application of so damning a word to the girl who has not yet arrived at the age of moral responsibility, or upon the iniquity of our having delayed to deal with her until she has virtually placed herself under that category. That girls under eighteen and nineteen do become "Professional Prostitutes" is, of course, well known, but to many rescue workers, here again lies the superfluity of the Clause. The girl under eighteen at any rate should not be in a position to be arrested for any of the offences categorised in the Bill as being committed by a "Common Prostitute," because she should be dealt with long before the word can be applied to her. It is entirely illogical to argue that it is shameful to place the stigma of Prostitution upon a girl who is not fully responsible, and at the same time to apply the principle of the liberty of the subject and to deny her such control as will make it virtually impossible for her to merit the term. It was, moreover, hardly a matter of the penalisation of Prostitution, or, as one witness said, of the punishment of a responsible woman "for an offence against which there is no law," because the compulsory detention only applied to those whose youth entitled them to special protection, and not to women who had reached an age to choose for themselves.

The objection to the wide powers given to magistrates was legitimate, but this could have been met. The bestowal of additional powers on the Committee working in conjunction with the Probation Officer, would have mitigated this danger, and a more sure remedy would have been the formation of a Committee of responsible and qualified men and women to be attached to the Compulsory Homes, and the reconsideration and possible revision of sentences by such a Committee every six months. The alternative of liberation or detention according to the girl's own conduct would have added the voluntary element which is of so great a value.

Much discussion also raged round the status of the Compulsory Home, as to whether it should be a State institution or

whether voluntary homes should be made use of, and brought to a certain extent under State Control.

The State-run Home might well suffer from the red tape element, and the lack of elasticity of a Government Department, the very worst atmosphere for a girl whose pressing need is the personal consideration which she has never received. On the other hand, the doing away of the voluntary character of the Home now run by Philanthropic Associations, would shake the confidence of those girls who have not placed themselves under the Law, but who are willing to be helped of their own accord. This would entail the revision of the finest ideals, and of the best features of these Homes, who justly regard the individual and personal confidence of their girls as sacred, and as a point of honour in no way to be sullied. The two kinds of Homes should be kept entirely distinct, and girls would have to be imbued with the realisation that the Voluntary Home stands ready to help those who do not place themselves under the Law, and that the Compulsory Home would be the last resort to which they would bring themselves by their own conduct, and one which the timely help of a Voluntary Home would avert. The voluntary system, ideal as it is, and wholly admirable, is hardly adequate to deal with the more difficult aspect of the problem, for, depending to a great extent as it must do, upon dwindling private subscriptions, Homes are rarely able to provide the education, training, or recreation which is so necessary. They present rather a blessed means of encouragement and consolation to a girl who has still strength to raise her own mind to the new ideals offered to her. Given a sound voluntary Committee behind a State-run Home, imbued with the powers suggested, and officers well trained according to the best ideals of the modern matron and rescue worker, and granted that the Home is subsidised by the State, and placed under the Education Authorities with suitable educational facilities, there is no reason why it should not be run on helpful and human lines. If those who have opposed the Clause from a dislike to what is called "Compulsory Rescue," and in fear of a narrow-minded and unsympathetic outlook on the part of those responsible, have studied the reports of the recent Conferences of Rescue Organisers, Workers, and Matrons, they cannot fail to recognise the great strides which have been made in the humanising of the work, and in the conceptions of the young offenders' needs. Therefore, if there had been no other method of treatment for the checking of Prostitution in girls who had already drifted on to the streets, and if the objectionable term "Common Prostitute" had been substituted for a term more applicable to a girl who was yet amenable to mental and moral training, the Clause would have been too valuable as a reformatory measure to have been lost. The advisability of consigning a girl to such a Home should, in all cases, have been carefully weighed with the alternative of Probation, and all cases of girls under nineteen should, of course, have been tried in the Juvenile Courts. But the feeling became widespread that energies should rather be turned to a better attempt to get at the root of an evil which is abnormal in young girls, than to the expense of working out a Clause which contained much that was ambiguous, and which emphasised the bad position of the young offender. Therefore, to the disappointment of many of those who were engaged in the more personal side of rescue and reformatory work, the Clause was "scrapped." They knew that the short term of imprisonment with the stigma which it entailed, and the subsequent return to the streets, the common lodging house or furnished apartment (veritable traps for such girls), or the bad home, was a foolish and a useless system of treatment. There was far more chance of a healthy and normal youth in the provisions of Clause 3 than in the system now prevailing, and normal surroundings are the first and last need of the greater number of our young offenders.

It was not, perhaps, fully realised that the greater number of the opposers of the Clause were anxious to adapt its possibilities, rather than to ignore them.

A FRENCH BABY CLINIC.

Readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER realise that it is widely known in other countries besides England, and I was not surprised, therefore, to find copies of it in a little French village, where I went to pay a visit early in the summer. Mainville is about twenty miles south of Paris, on the route to Fontainebleau, and three miles from the Seine, on ground rising to the Forest of Sénart. It is a tidy little village of a few hundred inhabitants in shuttered houses between orchards and vegetable gardens, and the old hunting lodge, where I stayed, was at the top of the straggling street, with a big walled garden bordering on the forest. The forest itself was a great refuge in the hot weather, but my interest in infant welfare often led me the other way, to a large villa over whose gate hung the notice:—

Consultation de Nourrissons Tous les Mardi à 9 heures.

In these magic words I found the practical example of what France is doing to raise the status of motherhood, and to lower its high infant mortality. Just as infant welfare work was first begun in England after the Boer War, so this work in France is largely the result of her terrible losses during the late war, and of her realisation of the national danger involved in an annual excess of 35,000 deaths over births. If the birth-rate is to be higher, and some of the 40,000 babies who die yearly are to be saved, mothers must be cherished and educated and helped, and *Consultations, Crèches, Mutualités maternelles, Pouponnières, Gouttes de lait, Colonies de vacances, and Centres d'élevage* are being established all over the country. As the Mainville *Consultation* is typical of the best of these, I think it may be interesting to describe it.

It was established in 1919 largely as a clinic for the foster-children boarded out from Paris in the village, with the local doctor in attendance, and seven babies at the first consultation. In a few months it was moved from the little town hall to a private villa, when the *Goutte de lait* (sterilised milk) department was added, and at the end of a year there were thirty nurse children on the books, and over a hundred from the village and neighbourhood. Twenty-one healthy children of tuberculous parents, found by the Health Visitors connected with the hospitals in Paris, have been sent by the Hospital Social Service Department, and are paid for either by their parents or by the Hygiene Office. As they come from tuberculous families many of them are rather delicate, and they require specially selected homes and constant supervision.

The Superintendent and her assistants are English nurses, thoroughly trained in infant welfare work, but having practised their French in nursing *poilus* during the war. They live in charming rooms over the consultation hall and the big kitchen, where the milk is sterilised and their own meals prepared.

Tuesday is their busiest day, when the doctor comes at nine for the *Consultation*. It is held in a large hall opening on the garden, very clean and full of big windows. The doctor's advice seemed to follow our English lines, but there was less insistence on fresh air, and many of the babies were ordered bi-weekly injections of the salt water called *Plasmon de Quinton*, the popular French cure for every disease. Each foster-mother is given one franc for her attendance from the Town Hall at Versailles (the county town of this Department, *Seine-et-Oise*), which also pays the doctor; one franc for each baby he sees up to thirty francs (or fifteen shillings a consultation as compared to the guinea and a-half our doctors receive). The babies were very clean, and were dressed like sensible English babies, except that a long-sleeved *cotton* vest always goes on first, under any woollen garments.

The President, Madame Dubos, young, warm-hearted, and intelligent, one of the leading women workers in Paris, manages the work without a committee, and practically collects all the money for it, except the payments of the doctor and the foster-mothers. She supplies the house, and the salaries of the nurses and wages of the servant, she pays any deficit on the milk and on the stores of Dryco, malt, &c., and also pays for any medicines needed from the chemist. She supplements the clothing of the babies, and is responsible for a thousand and one extra expenses. But worth far more than her money are the time and energy, the intelligence and enthusiasm she gives, and the progressive spirit of her work would be difficult to equal anywhere. "I want to make it a perfect village," she said to me, and I think she will succeed.

ALYS RUSSELL.

THE Y.W.C.A. HOSTELS.

Every Englishwoman who has had to work away from home, or has been interested in others who have had to do so, realises the difficulty of finding moderate and comfortable accommodation. And this "housing problem" is not confined to Britain alone, but is present in every country, where during the four and a-half years of world war building operations were at a standstill, and the necessities of life at a premium.

To try and solve the housing problem as regards women workers, the Young Women's Christian Association has founded Hostels in five continents and countries. In these Hostels, for a moderate sum, girls of every class, nation, and denomination find a permanent and secure home.

In London alone there are twenty-one Hostels. These include the Hostels for business girls, the largest of which is Bedford House, with its two annexes, where 281,188 meals were served in 1920; hundreds of applications have to be refused.

The *Theatrical Hostel* for "chorus girls" and other "artistes" in receipt of small salaries, who can obtain there a cubicle or share of a bedroom at from 6s. to 9s. a week, and food at practically cost price.

An actress herself, writing to the *Daily Telegraph* of August 4th about the need to extend this Hostel, says: "Since London is the centre of the musical and theatrical world, any girl who wants to adopt either the theatre or music as a career, has to come to London to get work—if she does succeed in getting good lodgings, they are usually beyond her means. The theatre represents the life of the nation. Bring the reality of God and hope into the lives of actresses, and you will bring reality into the Theatre. The Y.W.C.A. is the only girls' organisation broad-minded and understanding enough to deal with this desperately needed work, and the Y.W.C.A. is panting to do it."

The *Blue Triangle Home Service Corps Hostel*, where demobilised women have been trained for domestic service, and from where they go out to daily work; the country needs many more in domestic work, and the Y.W.C.A. is ready to train them.

The *International Hostel*, with its Indian Annexe, of which girls from seventeen different countries have made use, and lastly, though perhaps the most useful of all, the two *Reception Hostels*. At one of these Hostels girls who are in moral difficulties are given a fresh chance and go out to work, coming back each night to the comfortable and home-like atmosphere of the Hostel. At the other, unmarried girls expecting shortly to become mothers, are received and cared for, and, after the birth of their babies, they are encouraged and helped to start life anew.

But, as I have said before, the activities of the Association are not confined to London, or even England (though there are Blue Triangle Hostels dotted all over the United Kingdom)—the whole world is its working ground.

It has Hostels in Africa, at Cairo, in Calcutta, Bombay, Shanghai, Mukden, Changshaw, and Tokio, in South America at Buenos Aires and Monte Video, and at nearly every town in North America and the United States.

Nearly all the Y.W.C.A. Hostels, thanks to excellent management, are self-supporting; but some, as the *Theatrical Hostel* in London, are not. Moreover, with the increasing rates and rents, the battle to make them so has become more and more difficult; in one Hostel alone the increase of rates, &c., was £1,100; while the need of making new areas for the increasing numbers of women workers becomes more pressing.

I would therefore ask all readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER to help this work, which is of such paramount importance to their sisters.

Does not everyone realise how much easier it is to work among comfortable and secure conditions than when the mind is tortured by the doubt of finding even bed and breakfast?

The Y.W.C.A. is ready to go forward if anyone will provide the wherewithal. Contributions will be gratefully acknowledged by the Hon. Treasurer, the Earl of Harrowby, at the Office of the Y.W.C.A., 26, George Street, Hanover Square, W. 1.

REVIEWS.

The Eugenic Prospect. By Dr. Saleeby. (Fisher Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

The Law of Births and Deaths. By C. E. Pell. (Fisher Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

There is no doubt that Dr. Saleeby is a prince among journalists. He writes so emphatically, so vividly, and he makes his points so sharply, that we find ourselves actually remembering what he has said. And for that reason, those of us who have during the past few years wallowed in the stream of British journalism, will, perhaps, find "The Eugenic Prospect" a little stale, because it consists in the main of articles which have already appeared in various periodicals. Nevertheless, they fall very neatly under their various headings. Twelve of them constitute Part I.: "The Future of the Race," which deals generally with the problem of population both in its qualitative and quantitative aspects. Seven more, concerning the question of lighting and heating in relation to urban conditions constitute Part II.: "Let there be Light." Six, dealing with tuberculosis, and its treatment, give us Part III.: "The White Plague"; and eight on food values make up Part IV.: "National Dietsetics."

A certain unity is given to the whole by the irrefragable consistency of Dr. Saleeby's views. He is conscious of having a particular gospel of health to preach to the public, and, like a zealous missionary, he never deviates from his task.

But there is one criticism that we are tempted to make. In his introduction Dr. Saleeby quotes a sentence from an earlier book, which, he tells us, "gave offence, for reasons unstated, and unsurmised by me, to one critic, who pronounced it objectionable and 'characteristic.'" We, however, can discern the cause of that critic's discomfiture. In almost every sentence throughout this book, Dr. Saleeby is obtruding his personality. Like many other true prophets he is a tremendous egoist. And this kind of egoism may be good journalism, but it is bad literature—as Shakespeare very well knew!

When we come to Mr. Pell's book we find ourselves in new and unexplored country. The author has a theory about the birth-rate which stands in sharp disagreement with that recently put forward by the National Birth-rate Commission in its two compendious reports. The Commission believed that there had been no decline in human fertility, and that the recent startling

fall of the birth-rate throughout Western Europe was due to economic causes producing voluntary restraint, expressed in the spread of contraceptive methods. Mr. Pell considers that the extent of this restraint has been vastly over-estimated, that there has on the contrary been a marked decline in human fertility, and that this decline is due to changes in environment which have led to a higher cerebral development and an increased generation of what he calls "nervous energy."

Mr. Pell puts up a vigorous defence of his proposition. So far as the general reader can judge, he seems to have made an interesting contribution to discussions of the problem of population. But occasionally we find ourselves on insecure ground. Why, for instance, in considering the comparative birth-rates of various social classes, does he omit to give the very striking occupational comparison published by the National Birth-rate Commission? Had he done so, he would have been faced with that very high figure in the mining industry which does not appear to fit into anybody's theory, and certainly would not fit into his. Again, why does he suggest that the nervous energy generated by the Russian Ballet accounts for the shortness of its lady members? There is a much simpler explanation of the phenomenon than that. Patrons of the theatre may have noticed that in the Gaiety Theatre, Strand, they are shown into their places by weak women; whereas, in the Queen's Theatre, Poplar, they are shown into their places (or flung out of them) by remarkably strong men. Is there any magic in the atmosphere of the Queen's which breeds strong men, and which is lacking in the enervating atmosphere of the Gaiety, with its race of weak women? Surely not; and the reason why the theatre attendants at the Queen's are so strong is the very same reason why the beautiful and accomplished ladies of the Russian Ballet are so short.

Finally, we suggest that Mr. Pell is a little hard on the National Birth-rate Commission. He declares that its members were hypnotised by pre-conceived ideas, and were thus led to ignore a mass of valuable evidence pointing to the fact of decreased fertility. Our own researches into the work of the Commission do not bear this out. Whatever may have been the preconception of individual commissioners, we can find no evidence of collective hypnotism.

M. D. S.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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GUARDIANSHIP, MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODY OF INFANTS BILL.

The glimmer of hope referred to in last week's page was amply justified; the unexpected has happened, and this Bill has now been starred by the Government, which means that time will be given to it. This shows that the Government realises the feeling behind the Bill, so that even if there is no time for it to pass through all its stages in the House of Lords this Session, there is every reason to hope that it may become a Government Bill next Session.

We have warmly to thank our own and other Societies, and our friends in the House of Commons, for their help with regard to this Bill; it would never have reached its present stage without it.

Readers may be interested to hear that in about ten days over 150 Members of Parliament have signed the Memorial asking the Government to give time for this Bill. This, we feel, is a very satisfactory result.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

Reference will be made in another part of the paper to the successful result of the Third Reading of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, and of the Debate on the Civil Service—better late than never!

We feel very much encouraged that so many of the causes for which we have been fighting are now receiving the serious consideration of Parliament, even so late in the Session.

VISITORS AT HEADQUARTERS.

An interesting visitor we have had this week was Miss Johnstone Scott, Parliamentary Secretary to the combined Suffrage bodies in South Africa. Miss Scott explained to us

what a very uphill task the Woman's Movement is having in South Africa, owing to politics there being complicated by the racial question. The Boer women, although most keenly interested in politics generally, are only just beginning to wake up to the special women's questions, and their co-operation is naturally absolutely necessary for success. The South African Woman's Movement hopes great things from the British Dominions Women's Suffrage Conference, which it is hoped will be held there next March.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION.

No one knows when this is to take place, but there is a general consensus of opinion that it cannot now be far off; political parties are already engaged in making active preparations. Women were barely alive to their new responsibilities at the last General Election, but we imagine that they will not only make use of their vote, but will make their opinions and wishes articulate in the forthcoming campaigns.

The N.U.S.E.C. is preparing a series of leaflets for free distribution in the constituencies, for the education of candidates and electorate alike, on reforms on our Programme. A set of questions to candidates is also to be printed for distribution on a large scale. Propaganda work with regard to women candidates has throughout the year been carried on through the Joint Committee for Promoting the Candidature of Women for Parliament, and now that the Election draws nearer steps are to be taken to carry out the policy decided at the last Council Meeting by offering help to at least one woman belonging to each Party.

An appeal will shortly be made for voluntary help, both for preliminary work in constituencies in which women are standing, and later for help during the actual campaigns.

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS.

A TRUE STORY.

MADAM,—The "true story," related in your issue of July 29th, recalls to my mind that when I was a child in Lincolnshire—forty-five years ago and more—the local chimney-sweep became ill from what was then called "consumption." During his lingering illness, and for some years after his death, his wife, in coal-heaver's hood and voluminous and sooty skirts, swept the Vicarage and many other chimneys. Not without derogatory comment! "A disgrace to her sect," my old nurse used to call Mrs. Brindley. Poor woman! She became so later through drink and dirt; but she made a gallant effort, well in advance of her time, to keep herself and her children out of the workhouse, and I think it deserves recording.

JANET E. COURTNEY.

WOMEN POLICE—DEPUTATIONS TO CITY COUNCILLORS.

The Home Office Committee of Inquiry on the Employment of Police-women rightly pointed out that the police authorities must decide how far the circumstances of the locality require the employment of women as constables; at the same time the Committee considered there was not only scope but urgent need for the employment of policewomen.

The Liverpool Women Citizens' Association is now taking action and practical measures to bring before their own local authorities the reasons why all those who are interested in social morality are asking for the appointment of women police.

The Women Citizens' Association Committee in each Ward are asking their representatives in the City Council to receive a deputation from their Committee to discuss the need for women police. Seven of the City Councillors, two of whom are members of the Watch Committee, have been interviewed lately, and the members of the deputation, including a representative from the Liverpool Training School for Women Police, feel that these interviews have given them valuable opportunities of explaining what appear to be obvious difficulties and objections to the appointment of women police. They have been impressed by the interested and sympathetic hearing they have had when they have made it clear that women are urging that women police shall be appointed to work in the interests of women and young people, especially in difficult cases in the police courts and on the streets, and that they have no desire to take on those duties that are obviously more fitted for men than for women.

One City Councillor, after listening with very little comment to actual instances within the experience of members of the deputation which illustrated the real need for women police, said: "I knew practically nothing of all this before you came, but if you tell the other Councillors what you have told me to-night you will have them with you to a man." Another member of the Watch Committee said: "There seems to me to be no doubt that women should do the work you have described. So many people think women are asking to do men's work and that they want to stand about the streets in uniform." They need to have the work women wish to undertake explained to them."

M. COWLIN, Director.

THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY SERVICE.

The Women's Auxiliary Service (late Women Police Service), founded in 1914, with Headquarters at 109, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1, and 38, St. Andrew's Square, Edinburgh, exists for the purpose of recruiting, training, and supplying educated women to fill the posts of policewomen to local authorities wishing to employ them. It has an extensive Propaganda Department, and training courses for policewomen, wardresses, and social workers are held periodically. In the Benevolence Department there is a call for voluntary service to aid in many branches of work.

COMING EVENTS.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

AUGUST 12.
At Hornsey Rise, Training College, 8.30 p.m. Speaker: Capt. Reginald Berkeley.

AUGUST 16.
At Exeter—Manor Ground (if fine), Church Hall (if wet), 7 p.m. Speaker: W. Lew. Williams, Esq.

AUGUST 18.
At Oxford, London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, 5 p.m. Speaker: Percy Ingham, Esq.

MODERN CHURCHMEN'S CONFERENCE.

AUGUST 8-15.
At Girton College, Cambridge.

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PROFESSIONAL WOMEN, Social Workers, Approved Society. Deposit Contributors; Exemptions; New entrants cordially welcomed.—Secretary, 16, Curzon-road, London, N. 10.

"MORE MONEY TO SPEND" (Income Tax Recovery and Adjustment).—Send postcard for this booklet to Mrs. Arnes Purdie, Women Taxpayers' Agency, Hampden House, 3, Kingsway. Phone, Central 6048.

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