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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MR. ARTHUR GREENWOOD AND FAMILY ALLOWANCES	391
WOMEN POLICE—THE NEED FOR STATUTORY REGULATIONS AND TRAINING. By D. G. Peto, O.B.E.	391
REVIEWS :	
Poor Isodora Duncan ! By M. D. S.	393
Shirin. By A. H. W.	393
The Bachelor Woman. By M. D. S.	393
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NOTES AND NEWS.

The New Session.

Strenuous times for Parliament are expected in the session which opens next Tuesday, and will last up to Easter. The extent to which the Coal Bill will have an easy or a difficult passage will inevitably depend on the way in which Mr. Graham's statement with regard to arrangements in connection with the amalgamations and to methods of preventing excessive raising of prices are embodied in actual amendments. If the Liberals do not consider the new proposals adequate, the Bill will have indeed a stormy time, and its ultimate fate cannot be predicted. Several of the measures of first class importance have been promised; the main points of the Slum Clearance Bill have already been communicated to Local Authorities, and the Factories Bill will, it is already known, be on the lines of that introduced by Mr. Henderson, when Home Secretary, but will, if anything, be more comprehensive. The Mental Treatment Bill has still to run its course in the lower House. One of the most interesting of the Private Members' Bills will be Sir Hilton Young's Rural Amenities Bill, particulars of which have already appeared in this paper. We shall refer again next week to the prospects of the new session.

The Naval Conference.

The thoughts of everyone are turned to the opening next Tuesday of the Naval Conference. We welcome the publication last Monday of the British Note issued in answer to the French Note of a fortnight ago. The Note which is couched in moderate and conciliatory language criticized important points in the French statement. It pointed out, for instance, that "it would not conduce to the success of the Conference if various Governments were to entrench themselves before the Conference opened in positions—based perhaps on misunderstandings—from which they could not recede"; that what was necessary now was "not to recite elementary obligations internal and external, but rather to concentrate on the important problems which have to be faced" and further that "unless a beginning in the reduction of naval armaments is made now, public expectation will be disappointed, and the tendency towards expansion of armament, which is already only too evident, will be developed, and the nations taught once more in practice to trust only to military preparations for their security". The whole Note is in fact a plea for not waiting until every problem relating to international security and disarmament of every kind is first settled, but to get ahead with the job for which the London Conference was specifically summoned, viz. the reduction and limitation of naval armaments.

The League of Nations Council.

The international meetings at the Hague and in London cause the League of Nations Council Meeting at Geneva to receive less attention than usual. It is, however, dealing with matters of considerable importance. In particular, proposals are being made with regard to the amendment of the Covenant of the League so as to make it square with the Kellogg Pact by closing up the famous gap which allows members of the League to make war if after a certain period of delay the Council is unable to reach a unanimous decision on the merits of a dispute. Whether it could best be closed by all-in arbitration treaties or in any other way is obviously a matter requiring much hard thinking. The Council will also have to consider the response of the various Governments to the proposal to call a conference to deal with a tariff truce. Twenty-six States, including of course this country from whom the proposal emanated, have declared their willingness to attend. Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand have, however, all declined. This, although unfortunate, has the advantage of making it clear that the British Empire cannot be regarded as a unified, aggressive, commercial undertaking. Petitions from Upper Silesia will once again be presented in order to try to obtain rights for the German Minority to use their own language. A proposal is being made to hold a special session of the Mandates Commission in order to consider the report of the Palestine Inquiry Commission, and this country has already decided to ask for an international inquiry into the Wailing Wall Question.

American Women and Peace.

At the beginning of this month, Miss K. D. Courtney, Chairman of the British Section of the Women's International League, sailed for the United States. She is taking part in the fifth National Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, organized by ten national women's organizations which is meeting in Washington this week under the presidency of Mrs. Chapman Catt; and she is one of four distinguished foreign guests invited to attend the Conference. The other three are Frau von Velsen, of Germany, Mme Puech, of France, and Mrs. Tsune Gauntlett, of Japan. After attending the conference, Miss Courtney intends to tour the U.S.A. for three months, speaking on internationalism over a wide area, from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts. Those who are inclined to be sceptical concerning the real value of these continuous peace-publicity efforts of the U.S.A. women's organizations, would be well advised to study the recent history of American foreign politics, especially in the sphere of navy disarmament. "The Women and the Churches" have in fact become a definite and clearly marked political interest—on behalf of peace—with which politicians have to reckon. We offer Miss Courtney all good wishes in her journeyings, and hope that her thousands of widely scattered hearers will see her not merely as a peculiarly penetrating and clear-headed individual exponent of international problems, but as the ambassador of a mighty public on this side of the world, which shares the hopes and participates in the tasks of the American Women's Peace Crusade.

The Liverpool Struggle for Women Police.

For the moment the much-disputed question of women police in Liverpool hangs fire. At the first meeting after the City Council's favourable vote a proposal to appoint twenty women as fully attested members of the police force was postponed for three weeks because of a disputed technicality. Objections were raised by the opponents of women police that the three days' notice of such a resolution required by standing orders had not been given; on the other hand it was claimed that the recent resolution of the Council in favour of women police was equivalent to notice. In the meantime a lively correspondence

is taking place in the local Press in which we see that a well-known minister of religion has ranked himself against the desired reform. He fortunately is an exception, for the Bishop of Liverpool and the Roman Catholic Archbishop have joined with other prominent citizens in an appeal to the Watch Committee to allow the principles of democratic government to prevail in their deliberations. This battle royal between the Liverpool public as represented by the City Council and the Watch Committee will be watched with interest all over the country and we predict that victory in Liverpool will be followed by similar victories elsewhere. Miss Beavan is well qualified as an experienced magistrate and social worker as well as a member of the recent Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure to lead the campaign and her reply to the opposition presents an irrefutable case. We draw attention to the article by Miss Peto, Director of the Liverpool Women Police Patrols, in another column.

Women Civil Servants and the Marriage Bar.

We greatly deplore the majority decision of the women members of the Civil Service Clerical Association to favour the retention of the existing rule by which women are required to resign from the Civil Service on marriage. We understand that the ballot paper circulated on the subject asked two questions: (a) whether they favoured the abolition of the marriage bar if it involved the abolition of the existing marriage gratuity for those who resigned voluntarily on marriage, (b) whether they favoured the abolition of the marriage bar if those who resigned voluntarily were granted the marriage gratuity. The first question resulted in a majority of 4,352 to 112 in favour of compulsory resignation on marriage, the second in a majority of 3,219 to 1,245. While it is regrettable that any body of women Civil Servants should take this somewhat servile view of their own personal status, it must be remembered that the Civil Service Clerical Association only represents 6,800 of the 75,688 women employed in the Civil Service. The bulk of them are, moreover, engaged on more or less routine jobs, and a quick turnover of personnel must at any given time appear as the immediate personal interest of the majority. It is significant that the Institution of Professional Civil Servants, in response to the decisively expressed opinion of women members, is pressing for the removal of the marriage disqualification.

A "Woman's Question" and the Bootle Borough Council.¹

An unusually enlightened discussion, if we can judge from Press reports, took place at the last meeting of the Bootle Council over a letter from the Town Clerk of Shoreditch requesting support for a resolution to the Ministry of Health asking that municipalities be allowed to provide facilities for information on family limitation through the medium of the public health services. A motion that the letter lie on the table was rejected and a resolution in support of the Shoreditch resolution was ultimately carried to 22 to 20 votes. Miss Thorpe, one of the women members of the Council, urged that it was a woman's question, not a political issue, and made a plea on behalf of the needs of those who unable to find houses are obliged to live in furnished rooms while several men members spoke sympathetically on the right of the poor to skilled advice from the right source. It may seem a far cry from Shoreditch to Bootle, but the London Borough Council and the Merseyside Borough Council have this in common, that they are responsible for the welfare of a population mainly composed of those who are relatively poor in this world's goods and though a resolution approving of another resolution carried by a narrow majority does not go very far, it is a step in the right direction, and the Bootle Council deserves our congratulations on their courageous stand on a much misunderstood and highly controversial issue.

The Progress of Birth Control Clinics.

The Annual Report for 1928-9 of the Society for the Provision of Birth Control Clinics which lies before us shows an interesting, if somewhat slow, progress—slow, that is to say, in proportion to the awakening public opinion in favour of some more adequate provision of disinterested and expert advice to working mothers. The number of existing clinics affiliated to the central organization has been increased from eleven to twelve by the opening, in January, 1928, of a centre at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and the opening of a new centre to serve the distressed mining area of South Wales is confidently foreshadowed. In Exeter, too, local activities are well developed, and the coming year should see

¹ We have heard subsequently that the Birkenhead Health Committee, with an ex-woman Mayor as Chairman, passed a resolution to support the Shoreditch request.

the total number of affiliated clinics raised to fourteen. Turning to the statistical records of the Society, we find that between 1st September, 1928, and 31st August, 1929, 3,881 new cases were dealt with at all the clinics taken together, and 8,843 return visits were made by former patients. As to the number of recorded failures no information is given; but failures there must have been. The satisfactory point is that where these failures occur, careful records of them, their nature, and suspected or ascertained cause, will go to swell the volume of data now being handled by the Medical Research Committee, which is at long last working upon this vitally important subject. And here we touch upon an aspect of the Society's work which is sometimes overlooked in estimating its importance. It is from what may be called the *philanthropic* side that its appeal is most frequently brought before public notice. Support is asked for the clinics because their help is desperately needed by desperately poor or overpressed mothers. On the *scientific* side, however, the clinics are doing invaluable and indispensable work. They are the chief sources of accurate and detailed information on which students both of social and medical science can base sound conclusions. They are, to an increasing degree, rescuing the essential raw material of research from the vast mass of unrecorded fact which lies buried in millions of inarticulate individual experiences.

Family Allowances and the Clergy.

In the December *Monthly Notes* published by the Family Endowment Society—a monthly publication which we have from time to time recommended to the attention of our readers—interesting extracts are given from the latest report of the Finance Committee of the Presbyterian Church of England with regard to the increased use of the payment of children's allowances. Annual grants in respect of children from birth to the age of 18 have been given to ministers of the Church with stipends below a given amount since 1920, and last year these have been considerably augmented. So far as we know the reunited Church of Scotland with its Sustentation Fund inherited from the organizing genius of the late Dr. Chalmers has not yet advanced in this direction. South of the Border, however, it is no new principle. The credit of its introduction is due to the Wesleyan Church, where it has long been the custom, and in the National Church it has been adopted in several dioceses. There would seem to be many advantages about a method of beginning a reform of this kind with the educated classes both for eugenic reasons and because it is likely to dispel any sort of inferiority complex which might prejudice the wage-earners against a scheme if they regarded it as devised exclusively for themselves.

An Aspect of the Rhineland Occupation.

It was stated in the *Liverpool Post and Mercury* last week that the number of illegitimate children to-day in the Rhineland whose fathers have been members of the occupying Allied forces number about 15,000. This figure has been obtained from a report prepared by the Rhineland Women's Organizations which are interesting themselves in the protection of those children. They have, we are told, appealed to the Governments both of France and Great Britain for soldiers' children's allowances for their maintenance so far without success. The *Tagebuch*, a Berlin weekly review, commenting on these facts, suggests that apart from its social aspects, the question is of sufficient political and international import to justify its consideration at the Hague Conference on the grounds that it would not serve the cause of international understanding if thousands of Rhineland children "grew up in poverty amid curses levelled against their enemy fathers." With memories of the grossly exaggerated stories of "war babies" in 1914 to 1916, it is impossible to accept these figures without seeing chapter and verse of the report referred to and we would venture to suggest that the women's international organizations which include powerful German as well as British and French auxiliaries should take the matter up or at all costs institute inquiries.

Sex Instruction for Children.

An interesting resolution was passed by the Frome Urban District Council last week when it expressed the view that the raising of the school leaving age to 15 and the appointment of whole-time county district medical officers required by the Local Government Act offers an opportunity "for the systematic giving by the county school medical officers of instruction in elementary sexual hygiene, and the dangers which underlie incontinence, to children who are about to leave school." In view of the need, which is generally accepted by all educationalist of the proper instruction of children on sex matters, we hope that many other authorities will follow Frome's example.

MR. ARTHUR GREENWOOD AND FAMILY ALLOWANCES.

A fortnight ago, to judge from published reports, the Minister of Health, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, made some enigmatical remarks on the subject of school maintenance allowances in relation to social insurance. We will quote his words as they appear in *The Times* of 6th January: "It was clear," he said in connection with the proposed addition of an extra year to the compulsory school age, "that there must be a money grant." But the proposed sum "was not as high as the wages these young people could earn in industry. Therefore they were going to call on working-class families to make a further sacrifice. . . . If they were to give a money grant they had got to decide whether it should come from the Exchequer or whether part should fall on the local authorities. He believed that the policy of extending the school-leaving age would have an important effect in reducing the number of unemployed. . . . He was not prepared to discuss the controversial issue of family allowances but it was obvious that the State could spend money more effectively on social services than by direct grants." "I think," he said, "we can ease the burden on working-class families in the near future by a further development of the social services." At this point he passed to the question of social insurance. "One of the problems is the place which maintenance grants might occupy in a developed scheme of social insurance. The time has now arrived, after nearly 20 years' experience, for a general overhaul of insurance schemes. We are trying now to get a general picture of the experience since 1911 of our systems of social insurance, and it may well be that within the framework of a developed scheme of that kind something by way of maintenance or allowance might become payable. That would solve the question of means—assuming that the system of social insurance continues on a contributory basis. If you keep the contributory basis no question of means arises." He added that one difficulty in imposing a means test in connection with a maintenance grant is the necessity for continuous and exhaustive investigation.

Seldom has a speech by a responsible statesman been more in the nature of "thinking aloud" and more pregnant with tentative constructive thought. Seldom have we so greatly desired to have the speaker of such a speech at our mercy under cross-examination and bound by oath to tell us what is in his mind! But since that cannot be, let us endeavour, from the slender secondhand evidence of his reported utterances, to surmise what is in his mind, or what appears to be gradually forming there.

In the first place it would seem that Mr. Greenwood does not altogether like the coupling of maintenance allowances with means tests. At any rate it is certain that he would have none of them in his own Pensions Bill. We are not surprised. We do not altogether like them ourselves. But the exigencies of the

WOMEN POLICE—THE NEED FOR STATUTORY REGULATIONS AND TRAINING.¹

By D. O. G. PETO, O.B.E.

I have the honour to address you on two points, of which the first is the urgent need of Statutory Regulations for Policewomen, standardizing their recruiting, training, and conditions of service.

Might I say that the experience from which I speak includes four years as Director of a voluntary organization in Bristol which trained policewomen and patrols, including almost all the patrols for Q.M.A.A.C.; four years as detective inquiry officer attached to the Birmingham City Police; and two and a half years in the post I now hold, Director of the Liverpool Women Police Patrols, a body paid from a grant made by the City Council, and engaged on street duty and the care of stranded women and girls?

It is sometimes said that the supply of suitable women will never meet a general demand for their services. Now, in the face of a statement by H.M. Chief Inspector of Constabulary in 1924 that Chief Constables were lucky if they secured five per cent recruits from the men who applied for appointment, I am not going to suggest that the problem of finding the right women is not also a serious one. It is. But I venture to say that at the present time the biggest obstacle in the way of recruiting suitable women is put there by the Home Office, in failing to define by Regulations either the qualifications upon which the selection of women should depend, or the conditions of service which await

¹ Speech by Miss Peto during a Deputation on Women Police to the Home Secretary. For reports of other speeches on that occasion, see issues of 13th-20th and 27th December.

national finance have ensured such a coupling. Therefore Mr. Greenwood's mind moves in the direction of a kind of benefit in connection with which no one is likely to hint at a means test: an insurance benefit on a contributory basis. In other words a family allowance paid for one year of school life per child, as part and parcel of a national insurance scheme. But national insurance is ripe for a big overhaul. Therefore the possibility of including this embryonic family allowance "within the framework of a developed scheme" becomes practical politics. Thus far we seem to trace the workings of Mr. Greenwood's mind. We leave them, however, at a somewhat unstrategic frontier. A maintenance allowance on an insurance basis for one year of each child's school life? But why only one year?

At this point we must turn for guidance to the earlier part of his speech. He was not, he said, prepared to discuss the controversial issue of family allowances. How indeed could he, as mouthpiece of an uncommitted Government and member of an undetermined political party? Nevertheless he was ready to admit that the extra school year, maintenance grant and all, was going to add to the economic burdens of parenthood; and by a natural sequence of ideas, his discussion leapt the large assumption of a need for an increased measure of State provision for families, and came to rest on the possibility of a considerable expansion of the social services for the economic assistance of parenthood. Thus it would seem that Mr. Greenwood, though "not prepared to discuss the controversial issue of family allowances," is in fact prepared to accept the fundamental promise of the family allowance case: that our existing wage system makes inadequate provision for the adequate discharge of family responsibilities. He is, however, in fact prepared to go even further. He is prepared to indicate the possibility of two perfectly practical lines of advance towards the realization of the family allowance principle, in the first place by the expansion of social services, in the second place by the development within the framework of a reconditioned contributory national insurance scheme of money payments for the maintenance of children of school age. At what point of the child's career the social service should, in Mr. Greenwood's view, be supplanted by or extended by a money payment, is not clear. Indeed he has as yet said nothing to suggest that he is contemplating more than a year (the last school year) of insurance benefit. But what he is contemplating is significant enough for those who are dissatisfied with the existing provision made by society for the rearing of future generations, and we shall follow with deep interest such further processes of thought as Mr. Greenwood may disclose to us. Frankly, they appear to us, so far as we can understand their direction, to be extraordinarily fruitful and practical processes!

them after appointment. If Regulations did nothing else, they would do this; they would create confidence in the mind of the future policewoman.

But they will do much more; they will standardize and make available the experience of Chief Constables already employing policewomen. Take, for instance, the question of selection. Chief Constables must be free to choose their own women; we all recognize that. But at present good material is being wasted because one Chief Constable only wants women over 5 ft. 8 in. and under 25 years; a second seeks University graduates with a preference for a small weekly wage; whilst yet a third welcomes kindly widows of any size, shape, age, or mental attainments. Out of this chaos, Sir, we ask that a standard may be defined, in order that eventually a type may be evolved.

Now, with regard to training. I would like to say, both on behalf of the societies which we represent, and out of my own experience, that we are convinced that the complete training of a police officer, whether man or woman, can only be given by police officers, and can only be received within the Force. The way to secure recognition of this fact by the public clearly must be to set a high standard of training for women within the Forces. Efficiency and economy alike demand it. At present, the argument of an Authority which does not want policewomen is apt to be this: "Policewomen are only wanted for special work, so they do not need general training; and as there is not enough special work to occupy them in our Force, we do not want policewomen at all."

Contrast that with a remark made to me recently by a Chief Constable with twelve years' experience of policewomen. He said, "I am having my women taught traffic duty; I do not expect them to undertake it, but I want to feel that if, in the absence of a male officer, one of them came on a traffic block, she would be able to deal with it." There speaks the Chief Constable who believes in policewomen.

In order to make the employment of policewomen an economic possibility for every Force it is essential that the women shall receive the complete training of police officers, and shall be available for any and every suitable form of police duty. There would not be enough of one special class of work to employ a man whole-time in most Forces. It would be highly extravagant to appoint one man solely to serve dog-licence summonses, and another to detect long-firm frauds; besides, it would be uncommonly bad for both of them. The policeman only specializes after all round training and experience. A detective has had his turn of uniform street work; he has learnt the ordinary round of duty, and through it has developed the ability to deal with emergencies, a sense of discipline, and of responsibility to the public whom he serves; and he will be the better detective for it. The policewoman needs to do the same. It is bad for her to fix her mind continually on sexual offences, even though she may be wanted primarily for work in connection with them. If you would read, Sir, the list of duties laid down for the Glasgow policewomen, you would be satisfied that once a Force finds out how to use its policewomen, and fits them for such use, the trouble is to see that they get any spare time at all.

May we urge that the tendency which is growing up in Forces towards sending their men recruits to the bigger centres for training should be encouraged on behalf of policewomen also. We believe that the standard of policewomen's training should be a course in one of the best recruit-schools with the men, supplemented by special instruction under an experienced woman officer in the Force. In order that this may be available, great importance must attach to the appointment of women in the bigger Forces capable of fitting themselves to train others.

Time will not allow of my dealing in detail with the conditions of policewomen's service—their attestation as Constables so as to bring them within the Police Acts for all purposes; the appointment of adequate numbers with definite ranks; the standardization of their pay, allowances, and pensions; their discipline and control. The Baird Committee, 1920, and the Bridgeman Committee, 1924, made each of these points the subject of a special recommendation, and it is those recommendations which we ask you, Sir, to adopt as the standard for policewomen, and to embody in Statutory Regulations.

Some people seem to fear that if policewomen are given good conditions of service they will enter Forces just for the sake of a comfortable billet. I can assure you, Sir, that this is unlikely. The policewoman's life demands a very great deal of those who undertake it, and few women would adopt it except as a real calling. In justice to those serving now, as well as in encouragement of those who hesitate to apply for service in the future, we ask you to give to their profession dignity and stability, to make it, not casual labour, but a career.

I have been amazed, in reading the evidence given by Mr. A. L. Dixon, Assistant Secretary to the Home Office, before the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure, to find him saying: "Two Committees have reported quite independently and at a few years' interval . . . that there is scope for the employment of policewomen and that, if I may so put it, the women must find their own level." Mr. Dixon must have been aware, when he indulged in the use of that phrase, that far from its being intended by the Baird and Bridgeman Committees that policewomen should be left to find their own level, definite recommendations were made by these Committees with regard to attestation, selection, training, rank, pay, allowances, pensions, hours, and their organization by the Home Office. Had those recommendations been given effect in the only form open to the Home Office, namely Statutory Regulations, policewomen would long ere now have become an integral part of the British Police Force.

The other point which has been entrusted to me is the need for the appointment of a woman as Assistant Inspector of Constabulary. It is not too much to say that this question vitally affects the employment of policewomen. I cannot do better than quote the recommendations of the Baird Committee on the Employment of women in Police Forces, 1920, as follows:—Our recommendations that policewomen be selected, appointed and controlled by the same authority as the men involves the

formation of isolated groups of women under separate authorities, and often in numbers so small that even the rank of sergeant cannot be justified.

"With a view to co-ordination, we therefore recommend that a woman experienced in the routine of a Government Department, and in the organization of disciplined bodies of women, be appointed as subordinate to H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary at the Home Office to inspect and make recommendations with regard to the efficiency of policewomen. We recommend that she be known as H.M. Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, and that she sign for, and act under the orders of either of H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary. Until the number of policewomen in Scotland justifies a corresponding appointment we suggest that she be placed during some part of the year at the disposal of the Scottish Office for duty in a similar capacity.

In addition to her other duties the Assistant Inspector should be available to advise Chief Constables, if they so desire it, in the selection of recruits or otherwise.

"H.M. Assistant Inspector should interest herself in the welfare of policewomen and should be available if they need the help of a senior member of their own sex and service. She should give special attention to the discipline and morale of policewomen and should be available to advise in difficult cases; we lay special stress on the desirability of appointing a woman who has experience and due recognition of the importance of discipline."

At the date of that report, the numbers of policewomen employed were 37 attested, 107 non-attested in the provinces, and 104 non-attested in the Metropolitan area—a total of 248.

In 1924, the Bridgeman Committee reported that "It will be desirable, when the women increase in number, that a woman should be appointed to assist H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary, to advise the Home Office, and assist local authorities on matters connected with their employment."

You will recall, Sir, that between the issue of those two reports, the Geddes' Axe had fallen, by means of which policewomen had been reduced to a total of 104; that figure has risen to 150 at the present time; and it is interesting to note that the number of attested policewomen has been steadily rising throughout the history of their employment. The moment that a definite lead is given by the Home Office the number will rapidly increase.

We respectfully urge that it is not when policewomen have been appointed, but while they are being appointed, that the woman official just described is needed by the Police Authorities.

I am confident that the appointment of such a woman will be welcomed by the majority of Chief Constables, and if one reflects upon the problems which must arise this can readily be understood. If a woman's advice and supervision is provided, it is essential that she shall be the official representative of the Home Office. A Woman Assistant Inspector of Constabulary can do more than anything else—except the formation of Statutory Regulations—to ensure the right choice, and the right use, of policewomen. Such an appointment will be, moreover, a pledge to women entering Forces that they are to take their place as public servants on a permanent and recognized basis.

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POOR ISADORA DUNCAN!

Mrs. Desti may or may not be an accurate biographer—though her story rings true enough—but she is a doubtful friend, for the story which she has to tell of the last years of Isadora Duncan's life is a sordid and horrible story. From Isadora Duncan's own point of view, it is perhaps a story better left untold. Only to the few who loved her unreasoningly and irrevocably can it be a story of high tragedy. To the rest of us—to the vast majority—it must appear as a story of mental, moral, and physical deterioration with hardly a redeeming feature to dignify its maniacal pages.¹

Its main concern is with the events of Isadora Duncan's life, from the point where her own autobiography breaks off—her departure for Russia in 1921—to its fortuitous and timely end in 1927. But in the first quarter of the book Mrs. Desti anticipates the conclusion of the earlier narrative, and traces very briefly her own personal contacts with Isadora from the earlier days of her first artistic experiments in Paris, through the palmy days of her budding successes in love and art, the appalling calamity of her children's death, and the first beginnings of her decline. With p. 87 and the year 1921, however, Mrs. Desti's narrative holds the field alone, and it is through her eyes that we watch the last six crowded, catastrophic years of Isadora Duncan's life.

In 1921 Isadora set out for Russia as to a new world teeming with promise and portent, humanity's new focus of artistic perception, freedom, true personal values, and the urge of life. But alas! the bleak arrival and offhand welcome of a Government preoccupied with more mundane matters presaged disappointment. All the grit and altruism which remained in Isadora seems to have been flung into the heroic experiment of making that Russian venture a success. But it was not a success; and she returned to the haunts of Western civilization with the worst possible legacy that the venture could have bequeathed to her: a poet husband, epileptic, inebriate, dishonest, and mentally unbalanced—a specimen of degenerate Russian youth so fantastically unprepossessing that were it not for the series of incidents categorically related by Mrs. Desti, one would have mistaken him for the preposterous invention of a Russian novelist. Accompanied by this youth, towards whom she displayed a touching if indiscriminating devotion, Isadora set out to re-explore the Western world. But he was a difficult travelling companion. He stole her money, her papers, her clothes even. He threatened her life, reducing her periodically to ecstasies of terror and hysteria. He broke up the crockery and furniture of the hotels in which, accompanied by him, she attempted to reside at the perpetual expense of her long-suffering friends. There was, it appears, a maniacal element in his raging drunkenness. Sometimes she would hide from him, at other times she would drink with him and rave with him. When at last he left her for another woman (and none of her multitudinous lovers, it seems, could bear with her for very long) he left her somewhat more dependent upon the quick stimulus of unlimited champagne and the hectic excitement of unpremeditated movement from place to place—somewhat more avid too, for a quick and still quicker succession of lovers. The European hotels which had closed their doors against the furniture-smashing proclivities of the Russian poet, became progressively disposed to close their doors against the reckless extravagance and money-sponging proclivities of Isadora herself. She would, it appears, beg or borrow money from any source, millionaires and hotel porters, poor artists and rich artists, the lover of the moment or the lover of the past, in order that she might have more and more and still more money to carry her by motor-car from one champagne supper to another. She grew fat and her dancing condition became precarious. She grew more ungovernable than ever in her rages and jealousies, and could not always be trusted to behave herself in company.

It was at this stage that the end came. Lunching one day in a Riviera café, she succeeded in catching the attention of a young motor agent. He bowed in response to her beckoning smile. "You see, I'm still desirable," she said, turning to her faithful biographer. Some days later the acquaintance ripened, somewhat awkwardly, because of an inadvertent meeting between the motor agent and an earlier lover from whom Isadora was in process of extracting a fresh supply of money. But it ripened at any rate to the point of a trial motor drive—that fatal motor drive on which Isadora met her end by the fortuitous entanglement of a dangling scarf in a rapidly revolving wheel. A few revolutions and all was over. Fate had done a kindly, tactful, and richly imaginative thing. For what, in the absence of such an end, would have been the end of Isadora Duncan?
M. D. S.

¹ *Isadora Duncan's End*, by Mary Desti. (Gollancz. 15s. net.)

SHIRIN.¹

Mrs. Rice's work is already known to our readers, and many have read with pleasure her *Persian Women* and will welcome the new book, *Shirin*. The story of the Persian girl, Shirin, is simply told, but in the telling of it Mrs. Rice succeeds in conveying to those who are strangers to Persia, a vivid impression of that country as it is to-day. Above all, this little novel gives an insight into the woman's movement of modern Persia such as might hardly be obtained by the study of many treatises. The author's motif is introduced by a quotation from Vincent Shecan's *New Persia*, which begins thus: "In our time the true health of Persia is to be sought through the programme of its least heeded voices, the teachers and the women." Shirin, "a sweet, responsive child," indulged from the first in "many day-dreams all leading up to the hope that she was going to tread an unusual path for a Persian girl, that of education and emancipation." All her troubles were before her, the bitter useless griefs of oppressed womanhood. She had her share of these, but through the friendship of an English woman doctor and teacher she developed into a personality whose strength moulded circumstances and, in spite of a forced marriage to a man she did not know, she won through and her husband, Akbar Khan, became her chief support in her schemes for the betterment of her country and of her fellow women. Perhaps the most interesting pages for readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER are those in which Mrs. Rice describes a meeting of the "Society of the Hundred Sisters." These "hundred sisters" drew up "a list of disabilities which Moslem women in general, and Persian women in particular, suffered from," and the various points were discussed at meetings of the Society. Foremost among these were the marriage laws—plurality of wives, easy divorce, temporary marriages (a devastating custom peculiar to the Shahs of Persia), and child marriage." This book is to be recommended as a gift for a young woman, or indeed anyone, whom it is desired to bring gently into the fold, that is to say, the fold of those "happy few" who consecrate their lives to the succour of unhappy women still in bondage; of whom, as Miss Rathbone has so nobly reminded the House of Commons, there are still not a few.

A. H. W.

THE BACHELOR WOMAN.

It must be frankly confessed that in *The Bachelor Woman and Her Problems* (Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 4s. 6d.) Dr. Mary Scharlieb has contributed nothing of any worth to the subject which she has taken in hand. Could she have done so if she had taken her task seriously? She is a very eminent lady, in her own profession and in the sphere of social thought, and her experience of life and human personality must be a rich treasury. But as a matter of fact she has not taken her task seriously. She has not approached within signalling distance of her subject in its modern phases. The bachelor woman is in fact the least important figure in her book. In the first half of it she deals with marriage, in the second half with the conventional life and the practise of prayer. And since experience of sex is to-day a subject of general everyday discussion, while experience of prayer is a matter whose very mention in polite society is likely to cause downcast eyes and hushed voices, it may be that to the general reader unfamiliar with even the most rudimentary forms of religious literature, the second half of the book may prove more interesting than the first. But from start to finish Dr. Scharlieb says nothing, either about marriage or about prayer, which has not been adequately said by earlier writers. And over the whole of her work there broods an undefinable atmosphere of the admonitory maiden aunt. Not, let us hasten to add, the maiden aunt who is revered and confided in by nieces inspired with the disturbing belief that there is a quality of simple rectitude and decent restraint in Victorian puritanism which is somehow escaping from our later age, but rather of the maiden aunt from whom they tactfully and mercifully conceal their ambitions, difficulties, and doubts.

M. D. S.

¹ *Shirin*, by C. Colliver Rice. (The Sheldon Press. 2s. 6d.)

THE WOMAN'S LEADER
EVERY FRIDAY. TWOPENCE.

SPECIAL TERMS FOR SOCIETIES

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NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

A deputation of women's organizations, organized by the National Council of Women on the Nationality of Married Women, was received on Monday by the Home Secretary on behalf of the Prime Minister. The deputation, which was introduced by Mrs. Keynes, the speakers being Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Miss Chave Collisson, Lady Emmott, Miss Macmillan, and Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, urged the adoption of the principle embodied in recent Bills that a British woman on marriage to an alien should not *ipso facto* lose her British nationality, and that a foreign woman should not acquire British nationality without her consent. It urged the Government to take the lead in obtaining the concurrence of Dominion Governments and in persuading foreign Governments to adopt the same principles. It also urged that at the International Conference on the codification of international law to be held next March at the Hague, the British Government should not support any proposal on nationality which would prevent any State from incorporating those principles in its own legislation. The Home Secretary gave a completely non-committal answer. He stated that the claims made raised issues of fundamental importance from the domestic, international, and constitutional points of view, and that many of the questions involved did not affect his Department. He proceeded to refer chiefly to back history, including the postponement of the consideration of the question by the last Imperial Conference. He pointed out various difficulties, but stated that his reference to these did not imply that the Government did not appreciate the view of the deputation.

NAVAL DISARMAMENT.¹

The meeting of representatives of the Naval Powers which opens in London on Tuesday next, offers a valuable opportunity for advance on the road towards a general reduction of armaments. What will be Great Britain's reply to President Hoover's challenge in his Armistice Day speech: "We will reduce our naval strength in proportion to any other. Having said that, it only remains for the others to say how low they will go. It cannot be too low for us"?

Members of the Women's International League in all parts of the country are urging their Member of Parliament to advocate the following next steps towards world disarmament: Reduction, not only limitation, of cruisers; the abolition of battleships and submarines. The following resolution, embodying the disarmament policy of the W.I.L., was passed at the last meeting of the Executive and is being passed at branch meetings all over the country:—

"This meeting of . . . expresses its deep sense of satisfaction at the friendly negotiations between the Prime Minister and the U.S. President, of which the Five-Power Naval Conference in January will be the outcome; welcomes the thrice-repeated American offer to reduce her naval strength in proportion to any standard, however low, which the other Powers will accept, and urges H.M. Government to use all its influence to ensure that the Conference results not merely in an agreement for limitation of ships (which would probably mean an actual increase in the world's armaments) but in a radical reduction of existing vessels.

It calls upon H.M. Government to implement its signature of the Pact of Paris for Renunciation of War by proposing a further reduction of cruisers, especially of the larger type, and the total abolition of battleships and submarines, as instruments of offence rendered obsolete by the Pact and as a grave menace to that sense of security which is a condition of the lasting peace of nations."

Further, a campaign has been set on foot by the W.I.L. to bombard the Prime Minister with letters and resolutions both now and while the Naval Conference is sitting. These will come from women's organizations, societies, clubs, groups and individuals of all kinds and in all parts of the country asking for definite reduction in all types of naval ships and for the abolition of battleships. Will readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER join in?

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

For the first time in its history a woman has been elected President of the Union of University Liberal Societies.

Among the annual prizes and studentships of the Royal Institute of British Architects, keenly competed for by young architects and students of the architectural schools in England and overseas, are two women prize-winners. Miss Kathleen Veitch won the studentship for the study of ornament and colour

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

decoration, and Miss Sadie Speight the medal and prize for measured drawings.

A simplified course of engineering for women engineers has been opened at the Borough Polytechnic, dealing with the study of machines, mechanisms and mechanical drawing, general engineering and workshop processes and electricity.

A coroner's inquest at which the jury consisted entirely of women was held at Bacup on 7th January.

Although in the steeplechase at Haydock Park last week Miss Sanday caught a horse that had thrown its rider, remounted and finished second in the race, she was disqualified on the grounds of sex, although the rule stated that in the event of a rider being disabled his horse may be ridden home by any person of sufficient weight. The steward considered that although Miss Sanday was a "person", she would not count as a "he".

We learn from a correspondent that in 1929 Miss Elsie E. Phare, of Torquay, and a Newnham student carried off the Chancellor's medal for her poem on "The Bridge". This she read aloud last June in the Cambridge Senate House, the first woman to speak there.

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY.

An interesting class for mothers and others interested in the welfare of young children, on "Child Psychology" was started this week at Morley College, 61 Westminster Bridge Road. The course, which is to consist of twelve lectures at a cost of 5s. 6d., is being given by Mrs. Isaacs, Chairman of the Education Section of the British Institute of Psychology. The lectures are held on Tuesday afternoons at 2.30 p.m.

R.T.C.

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Council for the Representation of Women
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A

CONFERENCE

On certain forms of Slavery—Economic, Marital, and Domestic—affecting Women under British administration throughout the Empire

will be held in the

CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1

on

Wednesday afternoon, 12th February, 1930

4 to 6 p.m.

Chairman:

MRS. OGILVIE GORDON, D.Sc., J.P.

Speakers:

THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL, D.B.E., M.P.

MISS ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P., M.P.

MISS NINA BOYLE.

Discussion open to Men and Women.

All Interested are Invited.

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General and Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HORTON.

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DEPUTATION ON NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

On Monday, 13th January, the Home Secretary received a deputation of women's organizations arranged by the National Council of Women, at which was put forward our claim that a woman should have the right to choose whether she should retain or change her nationality on marriage to an alien. The N.U.S.E.C. was represented by Mrs. Corbett Ashby and Miss Acland Allen. Mrs. Corbett Ashby spoke as President of the National Union and also of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship. A full report of the deputation will be given next week.

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING.

May we remind Secretaries of Societies that all nominations for officers and members of the Executive Committee and Vice-Presidents must reach Headquarters on or before Monday, 3rd February. The preliminary agenda will be posted to Societies on Monday, 27th January, and the latest date on which amendments for inclusion in the final agenda must reach Headquarters is Tuesday, 11th February. By that date also all applications for tickets, both delegates' and visitors', to the Council Meeting and to the luncheon and reception must reach Headquarters.

CONFERENCE AT ROTHERHAM, 30TH JANUARY.

We should again like to draw the attention of readers living in the neighbourhood of Rotherham to the Conference which is being held at the Tudor Café on 30th January, beginning at 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Corbett Ashby will be speaking on the "Influence of Modern Women". Full particulars of the Conference, which is being convened by Mrs. Freeth, of 31 Broomfield Grove, Rotherham, were given in last week's WOMAN'S LEADER.

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS' LIST.

On behalf of the National Union we sent congratulations to Sir Willoughby Dickinson on his accession to the peerage, Miss Maude Royden, Miss Tuckwell, and Lady Bailey. As all suffragists know, Sir Willoughby was a staunch supporter during the hardest part of the struggle. Miss Maude Royden is a Vice-President of the National Union, and with Miss Tuckwell is a pioneer in her work for sweated women workers and for Maternal Mortality. Major Aman, who also received a peerage, was at one time in close touch with the Petersfield S.E.C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"WOMEN IN THE FREE CHURCHES."

MADAM,—There is yet another name I should like to mention in connection with the article in your paper on "Women in the Free Churches," i.e. the Rev. Hatty Baker, who was minister about twenty-four years ago at Horsted Keynes, a delightful old village in Sussex. Mrs. Martindale, a sister of Sir Albert Spicer, projected and built a beautiful Congregational Hall with library and reading-room; the hall holds about 200 people. Mrs. Martindale's name is remembered with affection and esteem by many connected with the women's movement. Miss Hatty Baker was appointed as minister and she performed all the duties pertaining to the pastoral work of the Church with much appreciation and success. After the war Miss Baker went to Devonshire, where she is now living, and was ordained. She is now preaching occasionally, writing for the newspapers, and helping forward Christian work among women and others.

I can speak personally of her Christlike service, on behalf of others, as I have known her for many years, and gladly give this testimony to her character and life.

(Mrs.) HULBERT POPLES.

St. Owen's, Burgess Hill,
Sussex.

THE PEOPLE'S POET.

MADAM,—A suggestive writer in the *Christian World* last week pointed out that while a noted evangelist was preaching to his thousands another more scholarly, more intellectual, was (until a newspaper gave him publicity) preaching to less than 100. The italics are mine, as the remark demonstrates my vague ideas with regard to the above. I am interested by the review of M. D. S. in your last number. No; your prose rhyme, M. D. S., is not inferior to hers, but it has not the advantages of a newspaper boom! and withal, such a newspaper! One that might be summed up as the People's Paper; the paper which giving snippets and scraps of news pleasantly, mostly by means of pictures, lays little strain on the intellect; so easy to read, so pleasantly does it tickle ear and eye. I know of one large school where the children are being taught to recite (save the mark!) and then to proudly strut to their middle-class homes repeating

the daily lines of Wilhemina Stitch. Sign of the times! These children are not taught poetry—they would know little or nothing of Robert Bridges' "Testament of Beauty", nothing of Browning; they will be the reading public of the future, while they and their relatives help form the "packed auditorium" of which M. D. S. writes. Truly a newspaper boom and that of a very popular newspaper will go a long way—a very long way to insuring success—of a sort.

H. B.

OBITUARY.

MISS ANNIE VILLIERS, J.P.

Annie Villiers, of Stevenage, who passed away quite suddenly on the night of 4th January, was a notable figure in Hertfordshire. She was a pioneer in her neighbourhood in the cause of Women's Suffrage, helping to form the first constitutional Society in the county in 1908. She was Secretary and Organizing Secretary, was the leader in starting many other Societies, gave unstintingly of time, strength and means to the cause, and developed rare gifts as a thoughtful and persuasive speaker. After the War she became an active member of the local Labour Party, for six years she was a member of the Urban District Council, she was also Chairman of the Infant Welfare Committee, and a member of the District Nursing Committee. She did much work for the Women's Co-operative Guild, and the Women's International Peace organization. She was a Justice of the Peace and a keen Churchwoman. Her high and noble character was a real inspiration to those who were privileged to know her, and especially to her fellow workers in the many causes to which she gave her life.

E. J. WATHEN.

MISS MARY CARR LEES, J.P.

With the passing last month in her 89th year of Miss Mary Carr Lees, J.P., was broken one of the few remaining links with the very early years of work in Scotland for the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women. Mary Lees had the privilege of working for this great reform under the personal guidance of Mrs. Priscilla Bright McLaren, Founder and President of the Edinburgh National Society for Woman's Suffrage—the first Society to be founded in Scotland, in point of time the third in Great Britain, having followed by only a few months those in London and Manchester.

As everyone knows, Mrs. McLaren was the sister of John Bright, the great figure in the Corn Law agitation—great in many ways, but singularly blind in regard to this fundamental act of justice to women. To sit as one of Mrs. McLaren's Committee, to listen to her beautiful voice vibrating with intensity of feeling as she sought to drive home to us the need for more and more strenuous work in the cause was to be inspired with at least a spark of her righteous hatred of injustice and oppression as well as of her large-hearted love of humanity. To this circle Mary Lees gravitated naturally for to her open mind even in her early years the question had never presented difficulties, and when some years later all British Women's Suffrage Societies determined to group themselves in one great National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies under the leadership of our great and greatly beloved Dame Millicent Fawcett, Miss Lees showed her courage and enthusiasm by joining in public demonstrations, marching in processions, speaking a word in season on and off the platform as occasion might arise.

But it was not in her nature to attach herself or devote her whole time to any one cause and she was among the earliest women admitted to take a place on the old Edinburgh Parochial Board, and when in 1894 this Board was amalgamated with the Parish Council, she represented for twenty-four years the ward of St. Giles. Her other activities embraced the British Women's Temperance Association of which she was a keen supporter and bright and witty advocate. Perhaps the work of the Edinburgh Magdalene Asylum lay as near to her large heart as any and to the very last of her long life she shared in its management. Of the Edinburgh Branch of the National Council of Women she was an original member and for the last few years an Hon. Vice-President as she was also of the large and active Edinburgh Women Citizens' Association. Notwithstanding her many activities Miss Lees was never too absorbed to receive her many friends in her own pretty house in Lyndoch Place or to pay cheery visits to the lonely or delicate amongst her acquaintances. Her rich contralto voice that had given help in so many charity concerts never entirely failed her, and even as an octogenarian she could occasionally charm one with its deep organ-like tones.

Miss Lees' was a full, rich life, and her quaint, witty remarks added the salt so often missing in earnest lives.

S. E. S. MAIR.

COMING EVENTS.

B.B.C.

Mondays. 10.45-11 a.m. "The Future of Domestic Service." 20th January. Mrs. Emmett: "How the Mistress of a large household sees it."

Tuesdays. 10.45-11 a.m. "The Countrywoman's Day." 4th February. Dr. Stella Churchill; "How Welfare Centres can help you."

Wednesdays. 10.45-11 a.m. "Current Events." 22nd January. Mrs. Oliver Strachey.

Fridays. 10.45-11 a.m. "The Townswoman's Day" (in the Home). 7th February. Miss J. Williams: "Fruit and its place in Diet."

Saturdays. 10.45-11 a.m. "Saving the Countryside." 1st February. Lady Trevelyan: "A Problem for Everyone."

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

21st January. 1 p.m. Lyceum Club. Luncheon. Speaker, Lady Simon: "Slavery." Chair: Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Miss Nina Boyle, Mr. John Harris, Mrs. J. Jones, J.P., and others will take part in the discussion. Tickets from 17 Buckingham Street, Strand.

COUNCIL FOR THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

12th February. 4-6 p.m. Caxton Hall, S.W. 1. Conference on certain forms of Slavery affecting Women under British Administration throughout the Empire. Speakers: The Duchess of Atholl, M.P., Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., Miss Nina Boyle. Chair: Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon.

ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN.

23rd January. 3 p.m. Club Room, 46 Kensington Court, W. 8. New Year Social.

MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.

17th January. 8 p.m. Miss Fox: "Mental Deficiency."

24th January. 8 p.m. A. Rose, C.I.E., F.R.G.S.: "China." Chair: Sir Frederick Black.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Barnsley W.C.A.—29th January. 5.30 p.m. St. Mary's Parish Room. Mrs. E. M. White: "First Things First."

North Kensington Townswomen's Guild. 22nd January. 2.30 p.m. St. James' Parish Hall, Wilsham Street, W. 11. Mrs. Gun: "Sweden." Music. Competitions.

Petersfield S.E.C.—28th January. 7.30 p.m. Tea Shop. Annual General Meeting.

Preston W.C.A.—30th January. 7.30 p.m. Reunion in St. John's Ambulance Hall.

Rotherham.—30th January. 2.30 p.m. Davies Tudor Café. Conference. Mrs. Corbett Ashby will speak on "The Influence of the Modern Woman". Convenor: Mrs. Freeth, 31 Broomfield Grove, Rotherham.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

18th January. Jumble Sale in St. Patrick's School. Goods should be sent to Mrs. Loughton-Matthews, 57 Carlton Hill, N.W. 8.

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AU PAIR. Russian lady (refugee) studying dentistry would be glad of house-keeping or similar post, with time off for studies. Highly recommended. Her friend (Russian) seeks post in family in order to improve English. Domesticated; fond of children; good languages; excellent references.—Write, Mrs. J. Brants, 32 Russell Square, W.C.

WANTED, situation in a good family for refined girl (16) as Under-Nursemaid or Children's maid (no experience).—For particulars apply, Mrs. Foster, Greenbank, Ilkley.

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FOR SALE AND WANTED.

SECOND-HAND CLOTHING wanted to buy for cash; costumes, skirts, boots, underclothes, curtains, lounge suits, trousers, and children's clothing of every description; parcels sent will be valued and cash sent by return.—Mrs. Russell, 100 Raby Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. (Stamped addressed envelope for reply.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Expert advice on Openings and Trainings for professional women; interviews 10-1 (except Saturdays) or by appointment.

EDUICATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1, requires and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Holiday engagements. Registration: Employers, 2s. 6d.; workers, 1s. Suiting fee: Employers, 10s. 6d.; workers, 2s. 6d. (Victoria 5940.)

SLAVERY.—British Commonwealth League open luncheon to Lady Simon. Lyceum Club, 21st January, 1 o'clock.—For tickets apply, British Commonwealth League, 17 Buckingham Street, W.C. 2.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 19th January, 6.30 p.m. Maude Royden.

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