

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

An Important Announcement.

Like almost every other propagandist undertaking, THE WOMAN'S LEADER is feeling the pinch of widespread economy. It is therefore proposed for the next three months, during the Parliamentary recess, to publish only a monthly issue including (for those who take it) the *Townswomen's Guild Supplement*. We believe that many of our subscribers may find this arrangement not unwelcome, but any who object to it will be entitled to claim the return of their subscriptions for this period.

First-aid.

During the last week the eyes of the world have been fixed on Germany, and all other matters have paled into insignificance in comparison with her need of help. Although frank disappointment was felt everywhere—save perhaps in France—that the Seven Powers Conference achieved so little, at least we are told that during those meetings in this country relations between the delegates survived the strain. The proposals made at and since the Conference that the foreign banks should be asked not to withdraw the credits they still have in Germany, that a new bank should be established in Germany to relieve the present situation, will it is hoped have averted any immediate fear of collapse. The resolve of the whole of Germany not to yield to France's political form of blackmail will be reflected in the drastic economies the Government is proposing in all costs of production, including wages, in order that exports may be drastically increased. What will the creditor countries feel when their markets are flooded with cheap German goods sent as part payment of their debts?

Members One of Another.

The Macmillan Report on Finance and Industry has had the misfortune from a publicity point of view to make its debut under the shadow of the German economic crisis. Thus the importance of the general diagnosis has, as it were, suffered eclipse in the hurly-burly of immediate rescue operations for our newest economic catastrophe. But the Macmillan Report will hold its own as a permanent landmark in economic studies for some time to come, and those who have time to spare and are willing to devote some part of it to studying the background of our present discontents, will find much satisfaction in it—descriptive and analytic, as well as suggestive and provocative. For the present it may be peculiarly relevant to indicate the moral which exudes from almost every section and pervades

the final body of its recommendations. That moral is *internationalism*. The causes of our depression are international in their operation, the cure must be international in its scope. "We have," say the signatories, "concluded that a restoration of the international price level should be a prime object of international statesmanship. How far such a restoration of the international price level is in fact feasible is, however, a further question. We believe that the outcome is likely to depend in part on a complex conjunction of economic factors in the world at large of a kind which is not directly controllable at the centre. Nor can we give a confident answer to doubters in advance of an actual attempt to solve what is a practical problem . . . At the same time we see no great reason to doubt the feasibility of attaining the objective of a higher price level in due course, provided that the Central Banks will work together with this end in view . . ." But will they?

"Fair Field and no Favour"

The report of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service which has been sitting since October, 1929, was issued last week and we recommend readers to secure a copy for their more serious holiday reading. Its cost, 3s. 6d., is not prohibitive, and will bring it within the reach of large numbers of men and women who are interested in different aspects of the administration of the Civil Services. That those numbers are large is evidenced by the fact stated in a preliminary note that the sale of minutes taken before the Commission has already brought in a sum of £2,030, which can be set off against the 19,000 odd pounds which the Commission cost the country. We turn first naturally to Chapter XII, headed "Position of Women," with "Equal Pay" and "The Marriage Bar" as sub-headings. In our leading article we give our first impressions which we hope to supplement during the coming months by articles on different aspects of the Report. Next week Mrs. Oliver Strachey will deal with the reservation of Civil Service posts for women.

The Anomalies Bill.

By the end of this week the Unemployment Insurance Bill will have passed through all its Parliamentary stages. A small concession to exclude from the Bill those married women who have husbands unable to support them by reason either that they are ill or unemployed, was ably moved by Miss Jenny Lee, and supported by Miss Rathbone, Miss Wilkinson, and some other Members. It is much to be regretted that a Bill which in its truncated form is to do so little to remedy anomalies should have been used to make a new precedent of discrimination against married women in Unemployment Insurance.

Housing and Rent Restriction.

The Housing and Town Planning Bill is now likely to be hung up until after the Parliamentary recess. Nevertheless its future is secure as it is practically an agreed measure and one which is eagerly welcomed not only by local authorities to which it gives considerably increased powers, but also to the various bodies concerned in the preservation of rural amenities and places of architectural or historical interest. Housing experts at present are disposed to insist rather upon the more energetic pushing of housing schemes under existing Acts than upon fresh legislation. It is calculated that the new houses built since 1914 are barely sufficient to meet the increase of the population and allow nothing for improved standards and lessened overcrowding. Nor does it allow anything for the necessary wastage of housing space in housing areas which results from the marked decrease in the size of families. But the new report of the Departmental Committee on Rent Restriction Acts should result in a change which would greatly facilitate the operations of the other Acts since one of the Committee's recommendations agreed to unanimously is that houses now restricted should when vacated

no longer be exempt from restriction. This would remove one great difficulty standing in the way of that process of "filtering up" advocated by most students of slum clearance problems.

The Sarda Act.

It is rare that news of cases of prosecution for violation of the Sarda Act reaches us. One such case is reported from Noakhali, in Bengal, and recently in Bombay Province. Lady Vidyagowri Ramanobhai Nilkaith intervened in the capacity of Secretary of the Gujerat League of Social Reform, and with the aid of the District Judge successfully prevented a Hindu child marriage in spite of the parents' opposition. In the State of Mysore a Bill similar to the Sarda Act is to be proposed by Sir Puttanna Chetty, the oldest member of the Mysore Legislative Council.

The Romance of Peace.

Those who ask if there is any work still remaining for women's organizations should turn their attention once again to Ashton-under-Lyne. This time the cause is not one of feminist concern, but one which should make a universal appeal: world peace. This energetic Association of Women Citizens found an empty shop in a frequented part of the town which they opened for publicity purposes at the time of the London Albert Hall demonstration, and in two days collected two thousand signatures to the Disarmament Declaration. A procession and open air demonstration was organized on 4th July, and loud speakers enabled the meeting to hear the speeches of the three party leaders in the Albert Hall.

Municipal Romance.

In the latter days of the Suffrage movement Mrs. Lees, now Dame Sarah Lees, of Oldham, helped to make feminist history by becoming Mayor of her own town, with her daughter, Miss Marjory Lees as Lady Mayoress. From that day to this, the civic traditions of the House of Lees have been gloriously upheld, and to-day Miss Marjory Lees pursues upon the Oldham Town Council the more active rôle which Dame Sarah has been forced by her great age in some measure to relax. What more natural, therefore, that this year the Liberals having the choice of Mayor, that choice should have fallen upon Miss Marjory Lees. There were real possibilities of municipal romance in the idea. With Miss Lees as Mayor, and Dame Sarah Lees in the revered rôle of Lady Mayoress, a peculiarly satisfactory and fitting precedent in the matter of municipal succession would have been created. But alas! Domestic preoccupations plus a great dislike of ceremonial turned the scale. Miss Lees could not undertake the new addition to her already considerable municipal activities, and the situation outlined above remains but a dream of what might have been!

Scientific Management in the Home.

We have before us interesting particulars of the Domestic Science Section of the Fifth International Congress on Scientific Management which will take place in Amsterdam in July next year. A British Committee has been formed with Mrs. Ethel Wood, C.B.E., as Hon. Secretary, to undertake the preparation of papers for this section. A questionnaire has been prepared which deals with incomes, dietary, labour and time-saving and similar matters relating to domestic management, and the Committee is anxious to secure the co-operation of women's societies in securing replies from housekeepers in this country, housekeepers representing every variety of scale of living. We propose to return to this subject in next week's issue as we believe that it will commend itself to the interest of the politically-minded woman and feminist as well as the woman whose preoccupations are mainly centred on her home life.

Lady Astor and Bernard Shaw.

British politics are from time to time enlivened by the unpremeditated utterances of Lady Astor in the House of Commons. These are sometimes a little inconsistent, sometimes pointedly witty, but almost always arresting, especially to the party among whose Members she sits. Similarly, from time to time the pages of British journalism are enlivened by the utterances of Mr. Bernard Shaw. There is an engaging quality of gay insouciance and daring about both these commentators on persons, policies, and principles. It is understandable that when they get together, being friends, their exuberance should receive mutual stimulation, for it is not invariably true that one and one make two, they sometimes make infinity. It is also understandable that being together and thus mutually

stimulated, that stimulus should receive added quality from the notoriously stimulating atmosphere of Soviet Russia where they are at present journeying. Certain it is that their public utterances, distilled back to us through the medium of the Press telegram, are up to and even beyond our national expectations. And when Mr. Shaw goes so far as to declare that he was a Marxian before Lenin was born—Mr. Shaw, interpreter of St. Joan and exponent of Methuselah—the cup of our expectation overflows. How very good for the dour and consistent materialists of Moscow to have these gay and irrepressible will-o'-the-wisps moving in their midst. But will they come out alive if Soviet Russia finds them out?

Next Week's Issue.

On 7th August we issue the usual monthly *Townswomen's Guild Supplement*. According to the arrangement above announced it will be the only number published in August and will include a final article from Cross Bench and the Parliamentary time-table up to date, so that readers may know where they stand with regard to the various Bills in which they are interested at the dissolution of Parliament. It will contain some light material suitable to the season, including some reviews of books for holiday reading.

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

Monday, 20th July.

MENTALLY DEFECTIVE CHILDREN.

Mr. Gordon Macdonald asked the Minister of Health if he will state the number of mentally defective children in certified institutions in England and Wales, at the latest date at which information is available, and for each of the five years ending 31st March, 1931.

Following are the figures from the official report:—

	In England and Wales.
1926	12,766
1927	13,342
1928	14,099
1929	14,840
1930	15,664
1931	17,200

It is regretted that separate statistics for children are not available, but it is estimated that of the total numbers given approximately 15 per cent are children under 16 years of age.

EQUAL RIGHTS.

Mr. Mander asked the Home Secretary if he will consider the desirability of appointing an inter-departmental committee to consider what changes in the law would be necessary for this country to comply with an international treaty for equal rights as between the sexes.

Mr. J. R. Clynes: No, Sir. The only proposals for an international treaty which I have seen do not afford any sufficient definite basis upon which a committee could usefully be invited to consider the question of changes in the law of this country.

PUBLIC MENTAL HOSPITALS (WOMEN NURSES).

Sir N. Gratton Doyle asked the Minister of Health whether he has any information as to the number of female nurses employed in the male wards of mental hospitals; and whether the question of this being a suitable occupation for women has been considered.

Mr. Greenwood: The number of women nurses now employed in the nursing of male patients in public mental hospitals is approximately 320, who are mainly employed in the infirmary wards. The general principle has been the subject of careful consideration by the central and local authorities for many years past, and the practice of employing women in the nursing of selected male patients is of long standing. The Royal Commission on Lunacy which reported in 1926 recommended the more general employment of women nurses in certain male wards.

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 woman'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 FAIR FIELD AND NO FAVOUR"?

The headlines of the first Press summaries of the report of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service which appeared last week, "The Position of Women—A fair field and no favour" raised our hopes high. Alas, perusal of the Report itself dashed them to earth again. It is true that this proposed policy—just what women themselves ask for—is described as "speaking generally the best course to adopt", but it is subject to many modifications which are outlined. The marriage bar is retained; no decision at all is arrived at with regard to the question of equal pay for equal work. There is certainly no favour. Where is the fair field?

We must, however, give the Commission credit where it is due. It recommends that except in the three Defence Departments women should be in future eligible for the Administrative Executive, Clerical and Professional classes. It also recommends the abolition of the segregation of men and women and the extension of the policy of "aggregation" (men and women working side by side with the same ideas and duties but not the same remuneration) to all Departments. But it excludes from these recommendations the Customs and Excise Departments, believing that the time is not yet ripe for the appointment of women officers and the Diplomatic and Consular Service on the grounds that such appointments "raise issues of high policy which can only be determined by His Majesty's Government". Why this should be so we cannot understand. Nevertheless, even with these limitations there is some evidence of a desire to give women a fairer opportunity of entrance into the service of the State.

But what happens when they do enter? The label of sex is once again firmly affixed and the value of the work is assessed accordingly. We are told that the Commission was almost equally divided on the question of equal pay for men and women and that for this reason they were unable to make any recommendation. They were also, it is stated, divided though apparently more unequally, on the question of married women's work, but on this an agreement was reached. The regulations at present in force prescribing the exclusion of married women from appointment and requiring the resignation of women on marriage were retained, but it is proposed that the discretionary powers granted to Heads of Departments, the Civil Service Commissioners, and the Treasury with regard to exceptions under existing regulations be strengthened so as to permit the appointment or retention of married women with special qualifications or experience. This is we suppose in the nature of a compromise and we are not ungrateful to those members

on the Commission who championed the rights of the married women. But it does not alter the pernicious rule that normally marriage terminates paid public service.

Upon the question of family allowances, which we naturally expected to see treated in its relation to Equal Pay, to say nothing of its possibilities as a method of securing the highest attainable standard of life for the workers without imposing excessive burdens on the taxpayer, the Commission is completely silent, save for a passing reference to the Irish Free State. And this despite the fact that the evidence placed before it included a memorandum from the Family Endowment Society tightly packed with facts and reasoned arguments. That the method of family allowances obtains in the Civil Service of nearly every country in Europe as well as in the Australian Commonwealth cannot have been unknown to the Commission if they studied this document, but it does not seem to have been considered worthy of their attention—surely a curious proof of the excessive insularity of the British mind.

Another instance of the narrow outlook of the Report is the short shrift accorded to the representations submitted by various Universities urging that more avenues of entry to the Service, especially to the executive class, should be open to University graduates. The Commission are satisfied that the present method of recruitment from secondary schools calls for no change, though they quote the recommendations of the Reorganization Committee which reported in 1920 that the work of this class "covers a wide field and requires in different degrees qualities of judgment, initiative and resource . . . and in its upper ranges is concerned with settlement of broad questions arising out of business in hand or in contemplation and with the responsible conduct of important operations". No allusion at all is made to the need for special recruitment for the social services which are so rapidly extending their influence over every department of social and industrial life and cost the country many millions a year.

Altogether the Report is one which must bring disappointment to all who hoped that it might mean a landmark in the progress of the public service from the era when government was restricted in theory and in practice to a narrow range of functions mainly aimed at the preservation of order and property rights, to the present when it has become almost co-extensive with the whole life of the people. Instead, its recommendations if carried out will merely mean a few more steps on a well-trodden high road. This, after all, was all that could have been expected by those who have followed the proceedings of the committee and noted the attitude of its Chairman to every piece of evidence that threatened to lead the Commission into untrodden ways and unfrequented valleys. It is not for nothing that reports of Commissions usually become and remain known to the public by the name of their chairmen.

NOTES FROM WESTMINSTER.

It has been a dull week in Parliament, in the sense that there have been no spectacular debates or fencing bouts between star performers. On Tuesday we had the final stages of the Unemployment Insurance Anomalies Bill, which revealed the fact that over the question of short-time workers the I.L.P. group through its all-night activities had won a greater practical success than was apparent at the moment. The clause dealing with these workers has now been replaced by one which permits special regulations to cover only the very limited class of workers who habitually receive for a short intensive period of work earnings actually larger than the normal earnings of persons in the same occupation for a full week. It is true that the new clause was represented as a mere clarification of the original meaning of the old clause. But certainly this had been generally interpreted as covering the far larger and more important category of persons working short time at normal rates. The latter form of short time employment is that adopted deliberately in many depressed industries as a way of sharing out the available work in such a way as to enable the workers to live partly on earnings and partly on insurance pay, instead of a portion of them on full earnings and the rest only on "the dole". The practice is a dangerous one and open to many abuses. But it is also possible to make out a good case for it during this exceptional period and in fighting it the Minister would have had the employers to fight as well as the workers. A minor concession made

by the Minister of Labour under pressure from several women M.P.s concerned the clause relating to married women. Women who are in fact the chief wage earners of their households owing to the death, invalidity or unemployment of their husbands are now to be exempted from the "special regulations". The strain of the fusillade she has had to endure over this Bill has evidently told on Miss Bondfield, who throughout the debate looked harassed and answered more irritably than is usual with her. She has, however, on the whole gained in the estimate of the House by her pluck and vigour in discharging what, to anyone of her experience and sympathies, must have been a peculiarly unpleasant duty.

The remainder of the week was largely given over to "Supply". These debates on the expenditure and administration of the various Departments seldom end in a division. Hence they are rarely well attended and tend to be somewhat academic. Nevertheless, they frequently contain much interesting material for those who care to study the actual working of existing legislation and administrative methods. For example, on Wednesday we had a really interesting discussion on Export Credits, mostly concentrated on credits to Russia. Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister made the official attack on conventional political lines, voicing the general objections of his party to anything which helps the Russians to develop their industry and thus make themselves more effective competitors with this country. Perhaps the most interesting

speeches in reply came from a back-bencher of his own party, Major Glyn, and a Liberal, Mr. E. D. Simon. The latter dwelt on the importance to the export trade of securing its fair share of the custom of Russia as the largest buyer of machinery in the world. In his view the question was not whether Russia was to get the machinery it wants, but whether it was to get it from ourselves or from the United States, or Germany, or Italy; even now these countries were giving more favourable terms to Russia than Great Britain, which started under the handicap of the breach with Russia that occurred during the last administration. This brought out the reply that orders for the Russian market were being booked at the rate of £100,000 a day and that arrangements had been made for £6,000,000 worth of these orders this year. To this Mr. Simon retorted that the Germans had recently made an arrangement for £15,000,000 worth of orders and that "every £1,000 order that we get from Russia means a saving of £250 in unemployment insurance". Major Glyn's speech came strangely from his quarter of the House, in its frank recognition that we are faced with "one of the greatest experiments of modern times" and in his demand that we should "study the psychology of young Russia, the outlook of these young people, who one day will be the competitors of our children in world trade" and who belong to "a new generation growing up in Russia which will know no other circumstances than those which exist to-day". Still more interesting was his proposal that the great State monopoly existing in Russia could most successfully be met by a grouping of firms in different industries and by sending more of our own people to Russia to guide its industrial development along British lines and to secure a fair share of its custom.

"It is more foolish for us to sit in this island and maintain that Russia will not work out her own destiny than it was for King Canute to forbid the sea to lap round his feet."

This deliverance from one of the younger Tories was greeted by a still younger Labour Member (Mr. Strauss) as "one of the greatest speeches on the subject of Russia delivered in this House for many a long day".

Another informative debate of considerable interest was that on the Ministry of Transport Vote. The aspiring but timid motorist learns with satisfaction that motor accidents had diminished by 10 per cent in the Metropolitan area since the coming into force of the new regulations. His mouth was made to water by various enticing suggestions for improved safeguards which fell from some of the speakers; as, for example, Sir W. Brass, who wants stiffer regulations to prevent dangerous parking "on corners, over bridges, and on the top of undulations on roads"; a restriction on the size of public vehicles allowed to travel over narrow roads; double roadways on big trunk roads; the banking of corners; better signals for cross-roads; the adoption of the French system of code lamps to prevent dazzling; and the equipping of the mobile police with cameras—and a number of other sensible-sounding improvements which other experts may possibly condemn as impracticable.

CROSS BENCH.

VACANCIES EXIST for posts of HOUSE MATRON in the Borstal Institutions for young offenders between 16 and 21.

Candidates should be between the ages of 35 and 50 on 1st August, 1931, and must be physically fit. Among the qualifications desired are experience in duties similar to those of a School Matron, and a personal knowledge of the life and interests of working class lads. Previous experience in reformative work is not essential, but House Matrons are expected to co-operate in the difficult task of re-education of the young offender.

Successful candidates will be appointed on a scale of pay 38s. rising by annual increments to 41s. per week with an allowance of 3s. per week whilst serving in a Borstal Institution plus the temporary Cost of Living Bonus as paid to Civil Servants which is at present 20s. 10d. per week on 41s. Free quarters with light, fuel and washing, and an allowance in lieu of uniform are provided. The post is subject to the usual Civil Service superannuation scheme on establishment.

Application forms may be obtained from the Secretary, Prison Commission, Home Office, Whitehall, London, S.W. 1, and should be returned to him with copies of testimonials.

BREAKING FETTERS IN ASIA AND AFRICA.

Reading *The Dawn Wind*¹ is like seeing a News of the World film. A series of pictures are given which sketch lightly certain aspects of the lives and position of women in Africa, India, China, Korea, Japan, and of the Muslim women of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Persia, and Central Russia. Material has been collected by means of a questionnaire, but little attempt has been made to produce solid and comparable facts or statistics. Probably these were unobtainable in most of the lands surveyed, and in any case so vast a field could not be dealt with exhaustively in a book of this size. The impression left is suggestive but kaleidoscopic. Though here and there the writer admits that the progressive element in the country described is as yet a small one, far too rosy an impression is conveyed of the rapidity of progress towards freedom and well-being of the vast masses of African and Asiatic women. Insufficient stress is also laid upon the incalculable suffering inflicted on women throughout the ages by ancient and barbarous social customs.

The keynote of the book is to emphasize a point likely to find wide acceptance to-day, even in quarters far removed from missionary circles, that of the impact of Christian ethics and their influence, both direct and indirect, upon the position of women all over the world. The writer also brings out a secondary and more recent factor in the movement towards the emancipation of women, the intimate connection between this and nationalistic movements. The desirability of mobilizing to the national cause the hitherto politically inert half of the population is recognized in most countries where the nationalistic spirit is stirring. This is shown strikingly in the case of India, China, and Egypt, and also in Turkey, where the Ghazi has insisted upon the emancipation of women as an essential part of the nationalistic programme of reform. Here "a women's movement as such does not exist; it is unnecessary" and it is dangerous in Turkey to be an anti-feminist.

Probably only in a few of the countries surveyed can there be said to be a women's movement, but elsewhere "the women are moving". In Japan (where we almost seem to leap from Asia to Europe) the Federation of Women's Societies have nearly three million members; the movement is closely associated with Labour, probably owing to the acute industrial problems. Women are flooding into industry and into the professions. In India, China and Egypt there are definite organized women's movements much smaller in scope than that of Japan. In Russian Central Asia, and "nowhere was the use of the veil more universal", there is a cruel and bloody fight for the freedom of women. The Central Government is on their side and regards the murder of an unveiled woman as a "counter revolutionary" act.

The inarticulate subjection of women seems to reach its high water mark in Korea and amongst the Muslims of North Africa and Asia Minor, with the exception of Egypt and Turkey. The Muslim feeling that a free woman is a bad woman appears to die hard. Far too little attention in this book is given to the horrible malpractices of native midwives, the curse of primitive life throughout the world; the age-long agonies of women from this cause alone would fill volumes, and it is beginning at last to be tackled constructively. In Africa reference is made to the custom of the "bride-price" or *lobola* by which the child-bearing services of the woman are purchased by the husband in "cattle, goats, money, cloth, cowries or ivory". In the writer's opinion this chattel-like position of the wife has points in a primitive society. It acts as a kind of insurance and provides some security to the woman in the event of her husband's death. The barbarous custom in parts of Africa of female circumcision, a ceremony of tribal initiation, intended to prove the chastity of the woman, is also touched upon. Here the writer is content to wait for the gradual process of education, and is clearly not in sympathy with the strong stand, at considerable cost to their work, of certain missions where the toleration of such cruel and revolting practices was felt to be utterly incompatible with Christian teaching.

In the section on India the writer is on more solid ground than in most countries as regards facts. Statistics are given in reference to educational progress but are, however, omitted in connection with social problems, e.g. the proportions of early marriages, the number of widows, etc.

In the section on China it is good to hear that the new family laws of the Legislative Council of Nanking assert the equality of men and women and the abolition of concubinage.

The slow awakening of the world to the sufferings and inferior position of women, and the amazing force behind this great new

¹ By Olive Wyon. (Student Christian Movement Press, 2s. 6d.)

wave, however confused with cross-currents, which is washing such strange and far-off shores demand the attention of every thinking woman; but facile optimism is to be avoided like the plague.

A. R. CATON.

FILM CENSORSHIP.¹

We are indebted to the Cinema Committee of the National Council of Women for this illuminating report on the puzzles of Film Censorship in Great Britain. To most people it seems strange that a film which has been banned by the Board of Film Censors can be exhibited in the cinema of their choice. The report in a concise historical survey makes it clear that the censorship of films may be undertaken by two bodies—the County and County Borough Councils (or delegated bodies) and the Board of Film Censors. Hence where the Local Authority takes an active interest in the censorship of films it may override the decision of the Board as to theatres in its own area.

The Local Authorities were empowered by the Cinematograph Act of 1909 to grant licences for cinema theatres. Their terms of reference indicate that at first they were only intended to ensure that the theatres in their area complied with the statutory provisions as to safety. The Board of Film Censors, paid by the Trade, was formed three or four years later, when it was felt that censorship should be voluntary and not statutory. The Board's decision has never been influenced by the trade and its high sense of public duty is shown in the open letter from the President, published recently, in which he warned producers that gross and brutal films will not receive the Board's approval.

In this connection it is encouraging to note that interchanges of views between voluntary societies in London and the American Motion Picture Producers and Distributors led to the publication in March, 1930, of a "New Code for American Producers". In this code is embodied an undertaking "to produce no film which will lower the moral standards of those who see it". At the same time the code enumerates certain tendentious subjects which will not in future be presented. As America is the virtual "Film Dictator" of the world the effect of the new code should be widespread.

The reformed type of film has not yet reached us, although the code was made as long ago as March, 1930. Why films are given a preliminary run and then packed away in tin boxes until they are old-fashioned and pointless remains a mystery. Londoners hardly realize the trials of the film enthusiast in the provinces. In London the film is given its first showing; we can see it fresh from the camera, the critic's advice hot in our minds. Provincial towns, particularly the small ones, provide the eternal problem: "How can I be sure of finding the intelligent film when it does come to my district?" The Report explains that cinemas are divided into runs—first, second, third, and fourth. The first run theatres book the film immediately on release by the renter, and smaller theatres at dates further and further removed from the first issue. On general release every small theatre in the district will have your film for the same three days. The report goes on to say that an exhibitor has extreme difficulty in arranging his programmes owing to the complications of theatres controlled by "circuits" which take a fixed percentage of certain renters' products. I take back all the hard things I have thought and written about managers of cinemas, and apply them to the pernicious American business methods of film renting.

This system accounts in large measure for the difficulty of finding programmes of films passed for "universal exhibition". The Board classifies films "A" and "U"; the former for exhibition to adults only. Most programmes include both types of film and to "A" films children may only be admitted if accompanied by adults.

It is a matter for surprise that the Cinema Committee did not take a stronger line on the subject of excluding children altogether from the exhibition of "A" films. The Report reads: "The Enquiry Sub-Committee, while sympathizing with the desire to restrain children from attending 'A' films, felt that the only really satisfactory line of advance was to endeavour to keep up the standard of 'A' films themselves."

The difficulties of Local Authorities are, of course, enormous.

¹ Report of an enquiry into Film Censorship. (Cinema Committee of the National Council of Women.)

If they insist on banishing children from an "A" film, "Adults only" is plastered over the posters and gives great advertisement to the piece. Liverpool Licensing Justices are to be congratulated on their stand; licences for cinemas are only issued on condition that "A" films are not shown to children under 16. The usual method of allowing the child to attend if accompanied by parent or guardian seems quite useless if the object is to protect the child. I confess to having little faith in the reform of "A" films to a decent artistic standard for many years to come. At the present time there is much to be said for the policy of certain German States in excluding persons under 18 from cinema theatres, except for special programmes. I am convinced that if this rule prevailed in England the general level of taste would be far higher.

The film is admittedly one of the most vital factors in education, but use it to portray the concrete life around us, not the false emotions and false ideals which are at the base of most films to-day. Small wonder that a recent questionnaire revealed that both boys and girls place "nature films" last in order of preference. Our own film industry could find material everywhere for special films for children; the nation's tools, the nation's heritage of natural beauty, the marvels of science and of nature.

The German dye industry has produced "Das Blumenwunder", a simple record of the growth of plants and the unfolding of flowers. It is one of the most thrilling and amusing films I have ever seen. Seeing it, the glorious adventure of growth in all its beauty should burst upon a child's fresh mind. Yet I have grave doubts whether it would grip the imagination of a child fed on the Hollywood "eternal triangle" dramas.

The Enquiry Committee has done most valuable work in indicating the means by which exhibition of films can be controlled by Licensing Authorities and in recommending that they should all adopt such "model rules" as those issued by the Home Office.

MARIAN COOPER.

"AFTER TEN YEARS."

Constance Malleon, whose first sustained essay in prose this appears to be, is perhaps better known as Miss Colette O'Neil, especially to those sections of the public who have watched her across the footlights of provincial and West-end theatres. The opportunity for this has been rare in recent years and her excursions into dramatic authorship have not met with all the success that one could wish her. But this personal record of hers, now published by Jonathan Cape at 7s. 6d., gives every promise of considerable future distinction in the realm of realistic fiction. It is to be hoped that she makes a bid for it, for she has a bold and passionate sincerity in the telling of a story or the pleading of a cause; she has the courage to reflect upon the lessons of experience—the artist's faculty to see and to say.

The book covers a long period of the author's life from childhood in aristocratic Irish family surroundings and youth spent amid the crudities of a war-time generation in London. The events and personages incident to travel, marriage, work, illness, friendship, isolation and reunion are often remarkable and exceedingly well observed. In this respect the book has all the vividness of the best biographies, its occasional lapses into triviality and bathos notwithstanding. The pictures of such widely different types as King Christian of Denmark, Miss Sybil Thorndike and "Mr. Bertrand Russell," the descriptions of South Africa, of Ireland, or of the Mendip Hills all carry the reader from page to page without a hint of weariness.

Through all this runs the tide of a personal romance, but its emotional ebb and flow are revealed with a restraint unusual in modern memoirs and in contrast with the unhesitating candour of the narrative when it deals with the author's marriage and divorce. It is here that the book strikes unmistakably the modern note; indeed, one wonders near the beginning whether the heroine is not about to prove herself merely another of those shallow Bloomsbury experimentalists of whom we have all grown rather tired. "We wanted to put our multitudinous theories to the test, to make our contribution to the fight for personal freedom which was still in its infancy. In those days nobody had any time to bother with personal freedom. . . ." That might almost have been said by one of Mr. Wells' earlier sociological heroines.

But the character of Colette O'Neil expands and softens with the passing of years and her narrative takes on a profound

and philosophic melancholy. Not its least remarkable feature is its recognition of the essential loneliness of human life. That is a realisation which seems to come less readily to women than to men. The virtue of loneliness, the absolute isolation of the soul, its importance, its inevitability even for the recognition of the true quality of life. This is what is unusual in the feminine make-up and this is what the writer of *After Ten Years* has achieved and expressed.

The book is excellently presented in coarse canvas binding, and contains a photographic frontispiece which detracts nothing from the interest of the text.

R. O. R.

RELIGION AND LITERATURE.¹

In a disarming preface Miss Macaulay says that she has done no more than dip into her "enormous subject". The title of her book is indeed so vast as to be almost meaningless. If religion be taken in its wide sense as the attitude of human beings towards life eternal, and temporal, and if literature be taken in its wide sense as the written thoughts of human beings about life; then how can one disentangle "religious elements" in a national literature? As well might one pick out the elements of light in a landscape.

Miss Macaulay has not been content to take religion in the narrow sense and discuss the writings of theologians alone, so her only possible course was, as she says, "to dip". She brings up some precious things, transcendental quotations, moving glimpses of human life, illuminating observations; and if she reminds us at times of the little child whom St. Augustine saw on the seashore, we know that she is the last to expect to empty the ocean with a small bucket.

I. B. O'M.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Miss de Montmorency, chief librarian of Deptford Old Town Library, is one of the few women to have charge of a London library.

Mrs. S. G. Champion, of Tenterden, is the only woman in England to hold the post of Deputy Clerk of the Peace for the Borough. She was the first woman advocate in the Thames Valley town.

It is reported that Madame Kolontay, Soviet Ambassador in Stockholm, is to receive a similar appointment in Paris.

Alderman Mrs. Sands is to be the first woman Mayor of Smethwick. The one woman councillor in the Borough, Mrs. Sands, is Chairman of the Health and Child Welfare Committee.

Miss E. M. Sutton is to be Reading's first woman Alderman.

Miss Beatrice M. H. Thompson, M.A., Librarian of St. Hugh's, Oxford, has won the Ellerton Prize for the best essay for 1931.

Miss Rosin Walsh, secretary to the County Dublin Libraries Committee, has been recommended by the Appointments Board for the position of Chief Librarian of the City of Dublin. This is the most important position of its kind to which a woman has hitherto been appointed.

Two young women, Madame Jacque Danne and Madame Gaston Danne, read papers at the Third International Congress on Radiology, which opened at the Sorbonne last week. They have a laboratory at Gif, near Paris, and carry on the research work started by their husbands, both of whom fell victims to radium.

¹ *Some Religious Elements in English Literature*, by Rose Macaulay. (Hogarth Press.)

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LADY [DORABJI] TATA.

Lady Tata's death in June is a great blow to the women's movement in India. It will be almost as much felt in women's international groups in other lands, where for some years past she has been increasingly looked to as India's spokeswoman.

Lady Tata was admirably fitted to play the part of India's representative to the women of other countries. She had great force of character which, combined with real kindness, and singular graciousness of manner, made her presence immediately felt in any conference. Women in many lands formed their impression of the modern emancipated Indian woman from her forceful speech, her beauty and wise tolerance. Her life of constant travel and her husband's wide industrial interests would in any case have given Lady Tata experience of many lands, but she was, as well, essentially international in outlook and unaware of the barriers of race and colour which present such insuperable barriers to smaller minds.

This characteristic in her mental make-up made her peculiarly fit to be the organizer and moving spirit of the National Council of Women in India. It is largely owing to her enthusiasm and initiative that the Council is now doing valuable social work in five provinces of India, in Bengal, Bombay, Burma, Delhi and Bihar. Social work in India is generally organized on communal lines, and Lady Tata's benefactions to her own community, the Parsees, were as ceaseless as they were unostentatious. But she never confined her service to her own community, and intensely believed in the need for women of all creeds and classes to work together for the good of India. In this belief an increasing body of her countrywomen share, but Lady Tata belonged also to the much smaller group which believes also in co-operation with women of other lands. In the political field she was a keen Nationalist, but believed in the British connection and in steady and constitutional advance towards self-government.

Because Lady Tata's judgment was so sane, balanced and kindly, her mediation at the present crisis will be sadly missed. People who went to her for advice always received careful consideration and a frank and outspoken statement of her point of view. Lady Tata had an infinite capacity for taking pains and never gave a hasty or unconsidered judgment. Whenever she promised to help a person or cause she did so to the last ounce of her strength, and beyond it, as her all too early death has proved.

At a meeting held in London on 20th July, many tributes were paid to Lady Tata. The Marchioness of Aberdeen took the chair, spending two nights in the train in order to show her love and admiration for her late colleague. All the speakers spoke of the affection in which Lady Tata was held by those who knew her, either as a hostess or as a fellow worker. The speakers included Sir Leslie Wilson, H.H. the Maharaja of Burdwan, the Kumar of Cooch Behar, the late and present High Commissioners for India, Lady Pentland, Lady Hartog, Dr. Ogilvie Gordon. Emphatic testimony was given to her enlightened judgment, her power of inspiring affection, her unceasing devotion to tasks undertaken, and her great generosity to those in distress. She was in touch with many Ranis and more or less secluded women of India, and they willingly accepted her as their trusted mouthpiece. Some of her most devoted service was given to the most needy of her fellow countrywomen, to the unfortunate inmates of the Bombay tolerated area, to *bidi*-workers in wretched conditions, and she was heart and soul committed to the amelioration of industrial conditions in India, both for men and women, and to more widespread and enlightened education of women. It would be difficult to say which of these causes lay nearest to her heart and which of them will suffer most by her passing too early from our midst.

H. GRAY.

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BANK HOLIDAY.

The Office will be closed from Friday evening, 31st July, at 5.30 p.m., until Wednesday morning, 5th August, at 9.30 a.m.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

PETERSFIELD S.E.C.

In memory of their former President, Mrs. Hanna, and her sister, Miss Harvey, the Petersfield S.E.C. and friends presented the town with a handsomely designed wooden seat.

The presentation was made on behalf of the Society by Miss Macadam, who spoke of the magnificent work done by Mrs. Hanna, and her unflinching interest in the N.U.S.E.C., of which she was a Vice-President. The gift was received on behalf of the town by Miss Nora Tonkins, the only woman member of the Urban District Council.

The ceremony was concluded with the singing of "Jerusalem", conducted by Mr. E. L. Gimson, and was followed by a meeting held by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Morris, at Sandy Lee, when Miss Macadam spoke on the Parliamentary work of the National Union.

The President, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, had hoped to have been at the ceremony and to have spoken at the meeting herself, but she was detained at Geneva by a Committee on Nationality of Married Women.

KENSINGTON AND PADDINGTON S.E.C.

A very well attended meeting on Housing was organised by this Society, and held, by kind permission of Lady Hartog, at 5 Inverness Gardens. Lady Stuart presided, and Mr. Currie gave an outline of the conditions in Kensington and Paddington, and was followed by Dr. Hislop, who spoke of the very serious effects on health of bad housing. The discussion was opened by Councillor W. H. Raffles. Many questions were asked and keen interest shown. Proceedings ended with a hearty vote of thanks to Lady Hartog and the speakers.

MALVERN S.E.C.

At an At Home kindly given by Miss Farmer, at Lambourne, Mrs. Priestley gave an interesting talk on Mrs. Strachey's recently published book, *The Life of Dame Millicent*. All those present were made to feel that it was a book which should be read by everyone interested in the growth of the Movement for education and political power of women during the last seventy years.

Hearty thanks were given to Miss Farmer for her generous hospitality and to Mrs. Priestley.

KINGSTON MALDEN, SURBITON AND DISTRICT W.C.A.

Several interesting events have taken place during June. A luncheon was held at Kingston on 12th June, when Miss Haslett gave a very interesting speech on Electricity. On 17th June the Malden branch went by coach to Pyrford, where they were shown over St. Nicholas' Hospital and Old Church, Pyrford, and spent a very enjoyable afternoon. The Kingston and Surbiton branch are extremely pleased that their candidate, Dr. Elspeth Oldfield, has been elected for the Canbury Ward, Kingston.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CIRCULATING LIBRARIES AND NEW BOOKS.

MADAM,—A good many people have complained to me that they are unable to get my book, *Florence Nightingale*, from their respective circulating libraries as quickly as they wanted it. I think the reason for this is probably that the libraries, like the rest of the world, are economising and that they do not care to get a large number of copies of a guinea book by a comparatively unknown author until they are assured that it has permanent value. The best libraries (I will not give their names!) study the reviews of new books carefully, and are always able to provide their subscribers quickly with books which have been judged to be valuable by the serious critics. The others wait to see whether the demand continues, and meanwhile their subscribers wait too!

The remedy, of course, is in the hands of the subscribers, and in theirs alone. They must insist on their right to have new books which have been well reviewed, and if the library to which they belong will not provide them they must join another.

I hope your readers will do this in respect not only of *Florence Nightingale*, but of several other good new books.

6 Steele's Road,
N.W. 3.

I. B. O'MALLEY.

AN APPEAL FOR HELP.

MADAM,—Financially, in common with many other organizations, we are in really straitened circumstances, and we must ask all our friends to stand by us to the best of their ability.

What we really need is an increase in our annual income of at least £900, i.e. our present income requires to be almost doubled.

The present moment is most propitious for all that we stand for. It is not only India that needs our assistance, but also, owing to the joyful fact that regulation everywhere is proving its futility and is breaking up, more help than ever is required from us to give this dreadful side of things its final death blow.

What can you do to help?

JANE WALKER,
Hon. Treasurer.

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

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A few Appreciations

Sir Philip Hartog. (Review in "Nature," 23rd January, 1931.) "Miss Caton and her collaborators have produced a book which is indispensable to the student of Indian problems—social, religious, educational, sanitary, industrial, and political."

"Punch." (Review, 10th December, 1930.) "Miss A. R. Caton has edited, under the title 'The Key of Progress,' a small volume presenting the main facts concerning women in India and the various reformative activities at work. This book forms, in fact, a kind of Women's Supplement to Part I of the Simon Report."

Mr. K. T. Paul, Member, India Round Table Conference. (Review in "The British Weekly," 15th January, 1931.) "An Indian edition should be immediately issued and sold at one rupee each. Translations in all the chief Indian languages should be immediately arranged for and sold at four annas a copy. Millions ought to read it without delay."

Mrs. Underhill. ("Starr.") "It is full of valuable information, for it states facts rather than opinions, and the apt title proves the importance of those facts."

Mr. M. R. Jayaker. "I have no doubt that the book will be a very valuable addition to the literature on the question."

Mr. J. A. Richey, Formerly Educational Commissioner for the Government of India. "I have read the book with great interest. The Editor is to be congratulated on the amount of material she has managed to condense into so small a compass without destroying the interest of the reading matter. I am sure the book will be great value."

Dr. Ogilvie Gordon. "The successful outcome of a project daringly conceived and brilliantly brought to completion."

Mr. Isaac Foot. "The book is most opportune, dealing as it does with questions which touch the root of many social problems in India. It seems to me to be an excellent summary of the position."

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WENSLEYDALE.—Board - Residence, comfortable Georgian house; near Aysgarth Falls; centre unspoilt scenery; sunny garden, own vegetables; garage; annexe to let as bed-sittingroom; motor-coach or rail to Aysgarth.—Smith, Warnford, Thoralby, Aysgarth, Yorks.

LAKE DISTRICT.—Comfortable; good cooking; inside sanitation; electric light; very moderate terms; highly recommended; excellent centre.—Davies, Priory Boarding House, Cartmel, Grange-over-Sands.

CORNISH COAST.—To let, Furnished Bungalow; 8 minutes sandy bay, lovely views; 4 bedrooms, sitting-room, kitchen, bathroom; 6 gns. weekly.—Write, Hawke, Kosikot, St. Merryn, N. Cornwall.

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