

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Miss Susan Lawrence and East Ham North.

The forthcoming bye-election at East Ham North, due to the death of Mr. Crook, the Conservative member, gives an excellent chance for the return of Miss Susan Lawrence to Parliament, where her experience as former Member, as a member of the L.C.C., and as a Guardian, would make her a valuable addition to the present little band of women. Miss Lawrence has now fought East Ham on three occasions, being beaten by a few hundreds in 1922, having been returned in 1923, and being beaten by 1,057 in 1924. Mr. Crook had the advantage of being well-known and popular in the district. This time Miss Lawrence's own well-marked personal popularity should go far, as in 1923, to turn what was after all a small adverse majority into a triumphant gain. We understand that the writ will be issued about 18th April.

Family Allowances and the I.L.P.

Our readers, both inside and outside the Labour movement will hold divergent views concerning the wisdom of the economic policy adopted by the Independent Labour Party at its Easter Conference. That body has decided to demand immediately on behalf of the wage-earners, a "living wage" throughout industry. This "living wage" is to be regarded as a first charge on the national income, and any industry incapable of yielding it is to be regarded as condemned by its economic results, and therefore ripe for immediate reorganization on a socialist basis. But whatever the wisdom of this policy, there is no doubt that one aspect of it displays a certain realization of practical considerations which trade union politicians and labour theorists do not habitually display in their handling of wage questions. The I.L.P. realizes (a) that a family of six requires a larger "living wage" than a childless man; (b) that a living wage which is adequate for a large family cannot be reasonably demanded as an immediate universal minimum for everybody. Therefore its demand for a living wage is coupled with and inseparable from the demand for a national system of family allowances. Thus family allowances now stand as an integral part of the official I.L.P. policy, and we heartily congratulate Mr. Brailsford and Mr. Hugh Dalton, whose vigorous championship has led to this important and significant step.

Mine-owners and Family Allowances.

At the end of last week the mine-owners published their comments on the report of the Coal Commission. These amounted, as well they might, to a general acceptance. But on one item, we in our turn would like to add a comment of our own. To the Commissioners' recommendation in favour of a system of family allowances, either nationally or by districts, they reply: "This is mainly a question for the workmen. The owners do not express any view adverse to the principle of family allowances. The matter would have to be dealt with district by district as part of the subsistence wage arrangements." We greatly deplore the dogmatism of this statement. There is no reason whatever why the matter should be dealt with "district by district as part of the subsistence wage arrangements"—and not nationally as part of the minimum percentage addition, or on a statutory basis as part of an expanded conception of "miners' welfare." The mine-owners' comment shows a singularly small range of imaginative capacity as well as a distressing lack of enterprise in the wide field of social reform which lies open to those responsible for the ordering of our second largest industry.

Amalgamation is Strength.

We have received a circular signed by Major Hills, Capt. Wedgwood Benn, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Miss Constance Smith, and Lady Hall informing us of the emergence of a new organization in the sphere of international social reform. The International Association for Labour Legislation, the International Association on Social Insurance, and the International Association on Unemployment have pooled their work, their machinery, and their funds, and have reformed themselves as the International Association for Social Progress, with headquarters at Basle. This body will work in co-operation with the official International Labour Organization, from whose Director, M. Albert Thomas, it has received a warm welcome. Its object will be to stimulate equal progress by international action on such matters as factory legislation, social insurance, unemployment, etc., thereby putting a spoke in the wheel of those who argue that social reform must tread warily for fear of "foreign competition."

Women in the Churches.

The Yorkshire Congregational Union is to be congratulated on the presidency for 1926-7 of Miss H. Byles, of Bradford—the first woman to occupy the post of President in the history of the Union. In her presidential address, delivered on 23rd March, Miss Byles said that she had accepted the post because she was a woman, and because she thought it time that this door was opened to women. The emergence of women was, she suggested, one of her great grounds for hope for the future. It might be that there would be a pause in the onward progress of organized Christianity until women were emancipated from the mere serving of tables and began to take a wide and long view of the kingdom which Jesus so insistently preached. We quote one passage from a vigorous and fearless address—and once more, congratulate the Yorkshire Congregational Union on its new President.

Woman a Company President.

We hear from New York that Miss Dillon is the first woman to be appointed as Woman President of a big Corporation. Miss Dillon, starting as an ordinary clerk, rose to be branch Manager, General Manager, and Vice-President of the Brooklyn Borough Gas Company, of which she has just been made finally Head. She is to be assisted by two other women, one Secretary, and one Treasurer of the Company.

The Work of Women Police.

Readers will remember that at a recent deputation the Home Secretary stated that he would give careful consideration to any statement of the duties of women police forwarded to him by women's societies. At a conference attended by representatives of thirty-two women's organizations on 26th January, a statement was agreed to which it will be useful to print in full in another column of this paper. At this conference, a small sub-committee was appointed to report on the question of training for women officers.

The Isle of Man comes into Line.

At the end of last month the legislature of the Isle of Man passed the second and third reading of the Married Women's Protection Bill, which, by enacting a series of provisions identical with those of the Imperial Parliament's Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1925, brings Isle of Man law into line with English law. The debate revealed some difference of opinion on the definition of "habitual drunkenness" which the new Bill makes a ground for separation, and some grave fears were expressed that the measure puts "too much power" into the hands of the woman. For the rest, its passage appears to have been easy enough—and well it might be. For if ever a matter has been adequately discussed, it is the contents of this storm-tossed Bill.

Tribute to a Woman Barrister.

A week or so ago the Recorder of London had occasion to commend the work of Miss Stephenson, a woman barrister who was briefed in his Court. Her speech was, he said, a model in forensic art, and showed what a valuable addition to the Bar the presence of women might become. It is interesting to recall that the Recorder of London is Sir Ernest Wild—to whom we are not accustomed to look for praise or encouragement for feminist aspirations. We congratulate Miss Stephenson on having provoked what we are convinced must have been a reluctant tribute!

The National Union of Women Teachers.

We have recently received the seventeenth annual report of the National Union of Women Teachers: an informative and readable document, which exudes the combined atmosphere of educational ambition and sturdy feminism which we always associate with that body. First and foremost, it records an expanded membership and a consequent financial strengthening. Second, it records two personal successes: the call to the Bar of its member, Miss Phipps, which secures for the Union its own Standing Counsel, and the achievement by the Union of direct representation in London government by the election of Miss Dawson to the London County Council. On the other hand, the report has some hard things to say about the new "economy" policy of the Board of Education, about the dismissal of married women teachers, about the lamentable retrogression of the recent Burnham salary award from the principle of "equal pay," and about the policy of the National Union of Teachers in connection with this award. We quote their indictment: "The Government and the Local Education Authorities, through the acquiescence of the N.U.T., have this year secured a considerable reduction in salaries, mainly at the expense of women teachers. For five years the N.U.T. has pursued a consistent policy of silence on the question of Equal Pay, culminating in the final betrayal of the principle when it decided not to submit 'Equal Pay' as a point for the consideration of the Arbitrator." We have ourselves commented in a similar vein in earlier issues upon this award. It is needless to repeat our comments. We will content ourselves with the offer of sympathy and good wishes to the N.U.W.T.

The Englishwoman's Home.

Meanwhile, the persecution of the married women teachers by Local Authorities continues unchecked. Both in Liverpool and Manchester (we quote at random two areas in which cases have come to our notice) individual women teachers have recently been subjected to the abominable ordeal of pleading "special circumstances" whereby in spite of marriage, their appointments should not be terminated. One teacher, employed by a Board of Guardians in the Liverpool area, is forced to explain the uncertainty of her husband's business affairs and the extent to which she supports the home. Another, appealing against dismissal on the eve of the Superannuation Act, describes the state of her husband's health. A third pleads an ex-Service

husband's unemployment. In Manchester the position and dependence of a teacher's invalid sister are subjected to similar investigation and discussion. It is sometimes difficult in these days to distinguish the minutes of an education committee from those of an outdoor relief committee, and we are led into sad meditations upon the inconsistencies of a social system which exalts the holy state of matrimony in all its words, but penalizes and degrades it in all its deeds.

Our Hundred Per Cent He-men.—

The National Association of Schoolmasters is labouring under a bitter grievance which has been the subject of private discussion at their Easter Conference in Hull. Should assistant masters be required to serve under head mistresses? The question gives rise to considerable heart burning. But there are other troublesome aspects of it. It appears that the work of sports masters and men teachers of physical training is sometimes supervised by women—since these gentlemen, however well they may know their job, lack official qualifications as physical training instructors. Thus "men who have trained soldiers" have to submit to the inspection of their classes by women. But there is worse to come. "A certain first-class county cricketer, who is also a teacher, is supervised by a woman when coaching budding cricketers." (We quote from the *Eastern Morning News*.) And in Hull "a woman is in charge of school sports, and Shaw, Hull City's former centre forward, has to apply to her for footballs for his boy pupils." Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear! To think that a man who has trained soldiers should be subordinate in status to a woman who has perhaps merely borne soldiers! To think that all these gentlemen who have such bitter indignities to complain of, may have had even this further indignity added: they may at some period of their lives have been slapped by their mothers—centre forwards, county cricketers and all. At any rate, the outcome of it all has been the following resolution, endorsed with acclamation in open conference on 6th April: "That this Conference is opposed to an assistant master serving under a head mistress. It pledges itself, further, to afford full financial support to any member engaged in the service of any education authority who may be called upon to serve under a head mistress, and who, acting on the advice and instruction of the Executive, refuses to do so."

—Win the Game and Keep the Candle?

Similar unanimity was achieved on behalf of a resolution offering uncompromising opposition to the principle of "equal pay for equal work." According to Mr. Kay, of Liverpool, such a principle "has no regard for the needs and responsibilities of family life." Here, at any rate, is a statement with which we can agree. But we would ask Mr. Kay where (outside the London School of Economics and the Wesleyan Church) he can put his finger on a system of salaries which has regard to the needs and responsibilities of family life? He cannot seriously believe that the existing system by which a childless or unmarried man is automatically paid more than a widowed woman with dependent children achieves this desirable end?

The Monstrous Regiment of Men.

The National Union of Teachers held its annual Conference at Portsmouth last week-end. It is interesting to note that of its 1,700 delegates, only 300 are women, although out of the N.U.T. total membership of 116,000, 75,000 are women. We have sometimes heard men teachers complain of the "monstrous regiment of women" in the teaching profession. We note, however, with mixed feelings, that the composition of the N.U.T. in no wise bears out their complaint. Indeed, fact after fact drives us reluctantly to the conclusion that men teachers in the mass are a peculiarly perverse and selfish race. Being in a minority, they nevertheless desire the lion's share of representation. They are prepared to monopolize the best jobs, refusing to yield seniority to those women whose training or experience should give them precedence. They expect to win the game and save the candle; for while demanding extra pay for equal work, they nevertheless bitterly resent the undercutting and substitution to which such inequitable arrangements must inevitably give rise.

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

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.

The House adjourned on Thursday, 1st April. The three previous days were fully occupied. On Monday, 29th March, the Electricity Supply Bill came on for second reading. This measure was attacked from two sides. The Labour Party complained that it did not nationalize the industry. The Government scheme provided for the compulsory grouping and co-ordinating of the generating stations, and for a comprehensive system of supply covering the whole country, and aiming at reducing the cost of power by half. This, which did not go far enough for the Labour Party, went a good deal too far for a section of Conservatives who pleaded that the industry should be left alone, to work out its own salvation. Between this cross-fire the Government came through undamaged. No conceivable form of words could combine in the same lobby Socialists who would take nothing short of Government acquisition and Government operation, and stern individualists who found the control established by the Bill an infringement of Conservative principles. Thus the debate swayed to and fro, with a balance of advantage on the side of the Government.

Proceedings were opened by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Wilfrid Ashley, whose speech was hardly adequate to the occasion. He was answered by Mr. William Graham, who showed that he could make a combative and aggressive speech as ably as an argumentative and persuasive one. He was admirable, lucid, and destructive, speaking, be it observed, without a note, on a technical and complex subject. Both manner and matter reminded old members of Mr. Bonar Law. The debate, not finished on Monday night, was resumed on Tuesday, 30th March. The Conservative revolvers were marshalled by Mr. George Balfour: they numbered over forty, but they lacked that political necessity, a leader of distinction. They did not make much way. The case for the Labour Party was summed up by Mr. Snowden, in a short speech, and Sir Douglas Hogg replied for the Government. He stands in the great succession of lawyer-politicians, of whom the most notable examples in our day are Lord Birkenhead and Lord Hewart: and all that need be said of his speech is that it put the case for the Bill as well

CHILD WELFARE AT GENEVA.

BY OUR GENEVA CORRESPONDENT.

The child welfare section of the League of Nations Advisory Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People met after the close of the session (reported on in last week's issue of this paper) with the same group of Government delegates but different assessors. These have been added to since last year and now number ten, of whom six are women.

M. Henri Rollet represents the International Association for the Protection of Children, Dr. Humbert, the League of Red Cross Associations, Dame Katharine Furse, the International Organization of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, Miss Eglantyne Jebb, the Save the Children Fund, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, Women's International Organizations, Mr. Johnstone, the International Labour Office, and Dr. Norman White, the Health Organization of the League. The new assessors this year are Miss Julia Lathrop, well known as former head of the Children's Bureau, Washington, Mlle Burniaux, representing the International Federation of Trade Unions, and Miss Charlotte Whitton, of the Canadian Council of Child Welfare. The Chairman is M. Pedro Sangro, of Ros de Olano, the Spanish delegate, a kindly and courteous gentleman, almost too-tender in his handling of a remarkably loquacious committee, some of whom have a trying habit of beginning half-hour speeches with "I do not wish to keep the Committee long." No fewer than twelve important subjects figured on the agenda with an ominous final heading "questions diverses," and under this the Canadian assessor added another ten. The agenda, if adequately discussed, might well have occupied the Committee from Easter to Whitsuntide, but the discussion was wisely concentrated on those questions on which work had been done during the preceding year. The first item—the consideration of the laws relating to the protection of life and health in early infancy—was delegated to a sub-committee. The next was the age of marriage and consent. An excellent report on this subject, which might well be the subject of an article in this paper, was submitted, but as in the discussions on the traffic of women the Oriental

as it could be put. The division was taken at 8.15: in spite of some abstentions, the Government had a handsome majority.

Thereafter, from the Labour benches, Mr. Griffiths tried to persuade the House that inherited wealth is an evil to the State and a disaster to the receiver. Members spoke on this side or that according to their political affiliations, and a somewhat unreal debate ended inconclusively.

At the beginning of the session, the prophecy was risked in these notes that the sternest fights would come on coal and on economy. That prophecy, not a difficult one to make, seems likely to be fulfilled. The Prime Minister has made the weighty pronouncement that he will carry the report of the Royal Commission into effect, provided coal-owners and miners can agree. Opinion generally supports Mr. Baldwin, but no one doubts the magnitude of the task. In a subject so intricate, over which controversy has raged so fiercely, a subject, too, which vitally affects so many individuals as well as the nation at large, the working out of an agreement is a task of stupendous difficulty. Nothing can be said at the moment, except that the owners are not unfavourable. But on the other subject, economy, the clash has already occurred. The Economy Bill came before the House in Committee on Wednesday, 31st March, at a quarter to four o'clock, and members sat continuously till half-past nine on Thursday morning, when with the chamber flooded with spring sunlight, a haggard House adjourned, after having passed only one clause. That clause reduced the Government's contribution to Health Insurance from two-ninths to one-seventh. The Opposition was ably led by Mr. J. H. Thomas, and he, followed by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir John Simon, fell upon the proposal with unabated vehemence and unstinted vocabulary. The Government fort was held by Mr. Neville Chamberlain and Sir Kingsley Wood, not unequally: and thus, passed the first engagement in what will be a stern battle.

The adjournment motion was taken on Thursday, 1st April, when among other matters the coming disarmament conference, and two-seater taxi-cabs were discussed. Mr. Godfrey Locker-Lampson announced that Lord Cecil would be in charge of the British delegates to the disarmament conference, and that we should present a definite scheme. Parliament meets again on Tuesday, 13th April.

prejudices of the French and Japanese delegates intervened to prevent a definite decision and the matter was deferred until next year. It is to be hoped that Dr. Paulina Luisi, the delegate from Uruguay, who is not easily quelled, will then herself be present to prevent the closing of her chosen subject. Then came a somewhat indeterminate discussion on destitute and abandoned children, which was finally referred to a Sub-Committee of Jurists to draft an International Convention.

Two reports submitted by the International Labour Office followed—the first on laws relating to child labour, and the second on the effect of family allowances on the well-being of children. It was decided, on the motion of Miss Julia Lathrop, to ask a liaison sub-committee of the representatives of the Child Welfare and Health sections of the I.L.O. to lay down the lines of a future inquiry into the training of adolescents. Family allowances received the general benediction of the Committee, which noted that though the system was too recent to permit of precise conclusions, it appeared to have reduced infant mortality in certain districts. A lengthy discussion followed on the cinematograph, and certain proposals for a unified international censorship and regulations relating to the admission of children were referred back for further consideration next year. A proposal made by the Italian delegate that mothers of families should be placed on the censorship committee caused some amusing discussion, which manifested the reluctance of some of the male delegates to admit that there was any subject on which men could not adequately represent women, and their oblivion of the extent to which the growing paraphernalia places fresh burdens on the mother. The point pressed by several of the women assessors: "But if the young children are excluded from the cinemas, the mother must either stay at home with them or make arrangements for someone to do so," appeared new to some and irrelevant to other delegates, of which nationalities we leave our readers to guess. The same difference of view showed itself in the struggle successfully

made to ensure that women members or assessors should be included in both the sub-committees set up to prepare the work for next year. The brilliant and amusing speeches of the new Canadian assessor, Miss Whitton, and the great authority of Miss Lathrop added weight to their plea for transatlantic representation on the judicial sub-committee which was to consider the next subject—the preparation of a draft international convention for the execution of orders of affiliation or maintenance on persons who have evaded their family responsibilities by going abroad.

An interesting report by Dame Katharine Furse on recreation, a discussion on alcoholism and the question of "biological education" (the euphemism for education in sex matters, adopted to satisfy French delicacy) have paved the way for fuller discussion at a future session, and concluded an interesting if somewhat prolonged meeting, and the delegates separated, leaving the work during the following twelve months to be carried on by Dame Rachel Crowley and her staff and the two appointed sub-committees. It is satisfactory that Dame Rachel—the only woman head of a section, on whom the main burden of the Committee's work rests—has the assistance for this year of Miss Wall (temporarily lent by the Home Office), whose excellent work as secretary of the Committee on Child Assault has given her experience in the art of crystallizing general discussions into concrete proposals.

"NURSING IN THE HOME."

This is a distinctly useful book for the amateur nurse, and as each one of us is sometimes more or less willingly forced into this rôle, it should have a wide appeal. The directions are clear and practical, and the style simple and vivid—who, for instance, would ever misplace a pneumonia poultice after being warned "never (to) put a heavy poultice on to a lung which is already fighting for its breath"? The directions for treating convulsions, and for dealing with an emergency confinement could with advantage have been given in more detail, and the advice to hold an asphyxiated new-born baby head downwards, and to flick it with a warm towel, though practised by one school of obstetricians, would be extremely dangerous in unskilled hands. The inclusion of bread under "protein" foods on page 12 is, of course, an oversight, and, to be merely flippant, the recommendation to "dust" a patient (p. 53) might lead to curious conclusions in the literal-minded.

Having now indulged in enough criticism to convince the editor that the book has already been read, we return to the more congenial task of administering praise. Dr. Churchill's consistent upholding of the modern theory of prevention of disease is admirable, as is also her insistence on very early treatment, and the necessity—still so often given lip-service only—of adequate ventilation. One trenchant remark we cannot forbear to quote: "... we no longer suffer from great epidemics of cholera, typhus, or smallpox; but the problem of controlling the spreading of the common infectious fevers has not up to the present been attacked in quite the same way. One reason for this is that the commercial loss to the community is not so severe in these diseases, as they attack chiefly children and young people; but this is taking a very narrow view of what is a loss to the community because children who have been injured in childhood by an attack of measles or scarlet fever cannot become such efficient and healthy citizens as if they had escaped these diseases." Those in authority please note.

C. U. F.

¹ The Modern Health Books—general editor, Dr. D. Fraser Harris. Published by Faber and Gwyer, Ltd. (The Scientific Press). *Nursing in the Home*, by Stella Churchill, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. Camb., late Assistant and Deputy Medical Officer of Health, St. Pancras. 2s. 6d.

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HERTHA AYRTON.¹

Hertha Ayrton was a woman of large mind and manifold achievement. There are, however, two chief aspects in which she is best remembered, one as a scientific inventor, and the other as an impassioned Suffragist. Her work in each of these capacities sprang from something fundamental in her nature, something that was bound to find expression in whatever circumstances she lived. Miss Evelyn Sharp's able and sympathetic biography makes us feel this; it makes us feel, too, that there was another part of her which was equally essential though known only to her intimates. This was her power of devoted affection lavished first upon her family, then upon her many friends.

Very touching is the picture of the little Jewish girl, daughter of a refugee from Poland, struggling towards light and knowledge through difficulties which would have crushed a less ardent spirit, and always striving to take her family with her. She was seven years old when her father, who had carried on a small watch-making business in Portsea, died leaving only debts, and a family of small children. She seems at once to have shared responsibilities with her valiant overdriven mother, and when another delicate baby was born she took it as her special charge. Later on when some of the leaders of the blossoming woman's movement had recognized Hertha Marx' promise of genius and were anxious to give her all the just opening opportunities for girls, they were perplexed and troubled to find a sickly, spoilt, troublesome little sister always hung round her neck. We can imagine what they must have said to each other, when Hertha could not go to Girton because she had to continue work as a governess, (she had begun at sixteen!), in order to send home money for Winnie. It was still worse when she insisted on taking the difficult child-invalid to live with her, and not only attended to her education but cooked for her and waited on her, and earned money for her by embroidery, when she could not leave her to go out teaching. But if her friends protested they also understood and admired; and through their efforts Hertha did at last go to Girton, though not until she had been keeping herself and helping her family for over seven years.

The chief of all her friends was Barbara Bodichon, ("Madame", as Hertha always called her). "It is not the least charm of Miss Sharp's book that she gives us a fresh picture of this wonderful woman, whose lustre, so brilliant for her contemporaries, has grown a little dim for their descendants, because she wrote so few letters and left no great books. She was one of the chief influences in Hertha's life, the other was her husband, Professor Ayrton. His intellectual relation with her was not, however, what has been sometimes supposed. He did not write her books, or make her discoveries for her, he did not lead her, nor even go hand in hand with her along the same scientific path. He himself was always passionately anxious to make it clear that her work was entirely independent of his, and that he often did not even know what she had been accomplishing till he heard about it in one of her public lectures. He admired her wholeheartedly and thought that while he was a useful student of science, she was a genius. It was a perfectly happy marriage. Hertha was stimulated by his unselfish sympathy, and she made what was probably her most noted discovery when she was watching over his health at Margate. Though she was not behindhand in the love of pure science, her intellectual life had a strong human element in it, and it is significant that the invention by which she is known is one for saving life in war. The chapter in which Miss Sharp describes the invention of the Ayrton Fan and the immense difficulties its inventor had to overcome before she could get it used, will rouse very mingled feelings in the reader. Though invented in 1915, it was not taken up by officials with any enthusiasm till 1918; and in the meantime how many precious lives had been lost! One reason that those in authority found it so difficult to believe in it was because it was so very simple, one cannot help suspecting that another was because its inventor was a woman.

If this was the case and Mrs. Ayrton knew it, she can have felt no surprise: she had all her days been up against the obstacles which are still set before women as women in so many forms of work and so many paths of life. In her girlhood she had lived among the early Women Suffragists and had found that their opinions came as naturally to her as mother's milk. In 1906 she had joined the Women's Social and Political Union, and had

(Continued at foot of next page.)

¹ Hertha Ayrton, 1854-1923, by Evelyn Sharp. (Arnold, 15s. net.)

"THE APPLE OF DISCORD," 1892-1926.

Mrs. Arthur Johnson, first principal of the Oxford Home Students, recently turned eighty, and her old students decided to celebrate the occasion by acting a play by a lady as old, as distinguished, and her life-long friend, Miss Wordsworth, of Lady Margaret Hall. In subject the play was equally appropriate to both. It was the "Apple of Discord," an academic skit on the Judgment of Paris, written for the Lady Margaret Students in 1892. The golden apple is knowledge, guarded in the garden of the Hesperides (located somewhere between St. Aldate's and Logic Lane) by a chorus of Conservative Dons, and by Argus (a proctor) with a hundred eyes on his gown. The three goddesses, moved by the universal passion of their sex for Higher Education, come to Oxford to steal the apple. They are forestalled by Paris (a young and gallant history tutor) who snatches it off the tree while the guardian dons, whose port is of too excellent a quality, sleep profoundly round the roots. There follows the Judgment of Paris—Juno by her dignity and Pallas by her intellectual superiority, frighten the poor history tutor badly, and Venus blarney him out of the apple, with a speed hardly excelled by the Tennysonian prototype. Venus bites the apple, but knowledge does not agree with her digestion—nor her complexion—and she throws it away, where it is picked up by a couple of Extension students (period 1892), one English and æsthetic, one transatlantic and practical. They are immediately arrested by the enraged Argus, who has previously accused the chorus of Nymphs of the theft, and has only been convinced of their innocence by their disarming ignorance of English history. The goddesses intervene, in the proper classic style, and the Nymphs and Dons dance off in pairs, thus reconciling female education and the domestic virtues.

Miss Wordsworth wrote an epilogue by request (in a few days) to bring the play up to date—rhymed, witty and topical, like all her productions. Both epilogue and play were performed entirely by old Home Students; the cast ranged from the Principal and Mrs. Matheson, one of the earliest Home Students, down to lately gone down students. It was preceded by a birthday tea, attended by one hundred old students, and Mrs. Johnson accepted a cheque for her scholarship fund, and a hail of congratulatory letters and telegrams.

Side by side in the front row of the audience there sat the guest of the evening, aged 80—her husband, 81, Mrs. T. H. Green, 83, and the author, 85. Your correspondent makes no apology for reciting these facts. Years can be worn as becomingly as War decorations.

EPILOGUE TO THE APPLE OF DISCORD.

FIRST STUDENT (in Victorian Dress).

SECOND STUDENT (in Modern Dress).

1ST STUDENT.

And so you have seen the play?

2ND STUDENT.

The Play—oh, yes!

A quaint, old-fashioned thing one must confess,

It pleased your generation I suppose,

But now is obsolete as last year's snows.

1ST STUDENT.

Strange what a difference forty years reveal!

2ND STUDENT.

Things really were like that, then?

Why, I feel

That world of which it tells is hardly less

Remote than good Queen Anne's, or good Queen Bess'

—Why, you'd few aeroplanes, or none, no tanks . . .

1ST STUDENT.

No paper pound-notes issued by the Banks,

And no six shilling income tax, alack!

The penny post, ah! when will it come back?

2ND STUDENT.

No broadcasting, no wireless, then was known,
No cinemas, and scarce a gramophone.

1ST STUDENT.

Well, well, we were contented with our lot!
Without our help, how little you'd have got!

You've got the suffrage: do you feel repaid?
And day by day are fresh concessions made.

What cannot woman do, or be, or think?
She's mistress of the realms of pen and ink,
She types, she rides astride, she smokes; enough!

I only hope she'll never take to snuff.

She paints, she sings, the fiddle-bow she wields,
She haunts the golf-links and the hockey-fields,

She's lawyer, doctor, sure she'll be content,
Now that she's got a seat in Parliament.
Indeed her only source of grumbling soon,
Will be, she's nought to cry for but the moon.
And now I hope, my dear, you won't forget,
That you to us are somewhat deep in debt,
Without our aid, do tell us, if you please,
How you'd have got those coveted degrees?
How moved good Alma Mater's heart to grace
You with your caps and gowns, and find a place
Ungrudgingly, in her august abode,
Where ne'er before a woman's foot had trod?
And if you cherish many a grateful thought
For all the gains these forty years have brought
You won't look down upon us, nor despise
The humble ladder which helped you to rise?

2ND STUDENT.

Despise! Forget! A shame it were, in truth,
If we forgot your generous aid to youth,
Your faith, your foresight, your convictions firm,
Your steadfast toil through many a weary term,
The mother heart that beat without a pause,
And ne'er forgot the woman in the cause,
The slow, unflinching vigilance and care,
The patient will to bear and to forbear,
The Heavenward aim, the all-pervading love,
That dared sometimes to blame and disapprove,
Th' unflinching truth, that never felt a fear,
And since it loved must always be sincere,
All comes to mind, and in a flash we see,
What years and years have brought in bounty free,
And on this happy day, we'd fain express,
Although too feebly, love and thankfulness.

WOMEN IN CASUAL WARDS.

A correspondent calls our attention to the following information returned by Mr. Neville Chamberlain on 25th March, in reply to a question concerning the number of Poor Law Unions in which the sleeping accommodation for female casuals consists only of plank beds. Such accommodation is provided by Easthampstead, Ely, Bodmin, St. Germans, Cockermonth, Ashbourne, Shardlow, Exeter, Shaftesbury, Gateshead, Chipping Sodbury, Kingston, Ledbury, Berkhamsted, Bridge, Cranbrook, Dover, Elham, Faversham, Gravesend, Milton, Bury (Lincs.), Garstang, Lunesdale, Prescot (Lincs.), Ashby, Billesdon, Boston, Glanford Brigg, Louth, Edmonton, Peterborough (Northants), Hexham, Thame, Drayton, Ludlow, Havant, Ringwood, Romsey, Whitechurch (Southampton), Plomesgate, Stow, Battle, Lewes, Midhurst, Marlborough, Pewsey, Reeth, Sedbergh, Cardiff, Pontardawe, Haverfordwest, and Narberth. In reply to a further question as to unions in which no night clothing is provided for female casuals, the following were named: N. Witchford, Camelford, Liskeard, Penzance, St. Columb, St. Germans, Tavistock, Winchcomb, Royston, E. Ashford, Milton, Market Harborough, Grantham, Blofield, Depwade, Downham, Loddon and C., Banbury, Chipping Norton, Thame, Cleobury M., Church Stretton, Ringwood, Stow, Cricklade and W.B., Tenbury, Shipston-on-Stour, Holyhead, Lampeter, Lampeter, Tregaron, Llandilofawr, Hawarden, and Bedwelty. Mr. Chamberlain added that his inspectors are constantly pressing for improvements, and that some have been made since October, 1925, the date to which the above information relates. Our correspondent points out that in respect of sleeping accommodation, casuals are in worse plight than criminals serving a sentence of hard labour, to whom plank beds are no longer given. He adds that according to the Casual Poor (Relief) Order of 1925, Cl. 7, Guardians are expressly required to provide night clothing.

HERTHA AYRTON.

(Continued from previous page.)

accepted the obligations thrown upon her by the militant movement in the same spirit in which she had accepted family obligations in her girlhood. Whatever the reader may think of the wisdom or righteousness of the way in which the W.S.P.U. made use of its greatest adherents, he can hardly fail to admire the generous courage with which Mrs. Ayrton met its claims. She did not repine even when her much-loved daughter became an organizer and went to prison, though this troubled her far more than anything that could have happened to herself. In this as in other things she showed the magnanimity which her biographer makes us feel was, throughout, the chief characteristic of her life.
I. B. O'MALLEY.

FORCED LABOUR AND KENYA COLONY.

The question of forced labour does not arise in countries like our West African Colonies and Uganda, where the land is owned and worked by the Africans themselves—a system insisted upon by our Governors out there and in the last few weeks by Mr. Ormsby-Gore, who is investigating conditions there. Forced labour is only mentioned in connection with countries, like Kenya Colony, where Europeans own large areas of land which they can only develop by means of native labour. As the majority of the European owners of land want to make money quickly, there is constant pressure—both conscious on their part and unconscious—to keep the labour cheap and docile.

In Kenya Colony from early days of settlement, some of the more articulate and politically-minded of the settlers have advocated that the native population shall be taxed so high that they shall necessarily work for wages on European farms, that also they shall not have so much land that the cultivation of it would make them financially independent of the European, and there has been a constant attempt to influence the local Government and its officials to persuade chiefs to send out men to work away from their homes.

This constant pressure culminated in 1919 with a Government proclamation, sent to all district commissioners (magistrates and tax collectors), telling them that it was the wish of the Government that chiefs should be told that they were to turn out their men to work on the estates of white employers. Even women and children were to be turned out also, when harvests came with their extra need of labour. This document roused a storm of opposition at home, and was eventually withdrawn at the command of Mr. Winston Churchill when he became Colonial Secretary.

But though forced labour for private employers is no longer legal in Kenya Colony, it is essential that British people at home should realize that those dependent on African labour in Kenya are constantly bringing pressure to bear upon local government and officials, that they shall use their influence to "persuade" labour out of the Reserves. The African scarcely knows how he stands—he still does not know clearly that he is free to choose whether he will work on his own land or whether he must work for wages on the land of another. Hardly any of the large amount of taxation which he supplies to the revenue of the colony (£560,000 in direct taxation compared with £24,000 from the Europeans and Indians) is spent on agricultural education in the Reserves, and until that is done on an adequate scale, native production will mean the minimum of food supply for the tribes, and no crops for export at all. Without exportable products, the majority of natives cannot pay their hut and poll tax, and therefore are forced to earn wages by working for Europeans.

There is another form of forced labour in Kenya, which is still legal, namely, that for public works, but the local government has to have permission from the Colonial Secretary in London before such labour is used. That form of labour is supposed to be used for works which are of utility to the natives who labour on them, and under those circumstances the African would not object to it, so long as conditions are good, but he does object to it when the public work is only for the benefit of Europeans, and when the conditions are such that his health suffers, as for example when he is made to work in a malarial district because no volunteer labour is forthcoming for it. Lately instances of this form of forced labour have occurred in the case of railways built through the estates of Europeans. It is only right that when a loan for East Africa is being discussed in the House of Commons, as will be the case soon, it should be insisted upon by all those who desire the true development of the African, and not his exploitation, that the loan should not be spent on railways for Europeans only, but on services to the Africans. To build more railways and at the same time to attract more Europeans to settle in Kenya, will decrease still more the very limited supply of labour that at present exists, and will increase enormously the difficulties of native production, and will almost certainly lead to an insistent demand for legalized forced labour for private employers, and for imported indentured labour. In that case, the labour market will be permanently spoilt, the good employers will be sacrificed to the bad, and our British Empire will be countenancing a state of affairs closely allied to slavery.

The demand by some Europeans for cheap forced or imported labour has given rise in many countries to some of the gravest problems of statecraft to-day. It is for the British Parliament to see that these are not repeated in the case of East Africa.

ISABEL ROSS.

THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL INSURANCE.

In an article in the *Co-operative News* of 27th March, Mr. J. L. Cohen, who is familiar to our readers as an authority on various aspects of Social Insurance, reiterates a forcible appeal to his countrymen to "sit up and take notice" of the dawning possibilities of our existing machinery. Indeed, he quite openly sympathizes with Mr. Winston Churchill's complaint that the newest addition to that machinery, the Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act has not received the recognition that it merits. There is a good deal to be said for an indictment of public opinion in this respect. Social reformers are apt to look too closely at legislative achievement, neglecting the significance of the contemporary growth of administrative machinery which lies behind it. Not every teacher of economic history, for example, remembers to stress adequately the importance of the growth of our civil and municipal services, of our expanding local representative democracy, as factors in the progress of material civilization during the nineteenth century. What the new Pensions Act attempts to do, would, Mr. Cohen points out, "have been impossible a decade or so ago." "Our administrative machinery is said to be efficient, and our civil servants reveal a consciousness of a new, an adult, strength to deal with these problems. Contrast with this the feeble, experimental machinery and lack of experience of 1911! It is a tribute to the new scheme that no one has suggested that it will not work because it is too complicated." It is, however, sometimes assumed that the ordinary citizen cannot criticize it, or suggest the lines of its future expansion because it is too complicated. And we join with Mr. Cohen in urging our active women citizen readers to discard any such assumption, for the future of social insurance is a matter which profoundly affects their lives—and we all know what happens to the interests of women if for one moment widows, wives, and spinsters cease to be importunate on their own behalf!

OUR NATIONAL DRINK BILL.

Mr. George Wilson, writing in the *Observer* of 4th April, displays some striking comparisons relating to the statistics of the drink trade. Our aggregate national drink bill for 1925 amounted to £315,261,000—as compared with a total expenditure during the same period of £307,700,000 on the social services of education, old age and widows pensions, unemployment, poor relief, public health, and housing. Meanwhile, our national bread bill during 1924 amounted to £80,000,000, our national milk bill to £76,000,000. It is true that our swollen drink bill does not represent the actual money value of our expenditure of labour and material upon the production of alcoholic liquors—since some 44 per cent of it goes straight to the National Exchequer in taxation. (It is, as Mr. Wilson points out, small comfort to Mr. Jones to know that 2½d. out of every missing 6d. thus enriches the taxpaying community.) But even so, the sum which remains is sufficient to suggest a very perverse apportionment of economic and social values—one which doubtless has its roots in certain inequities of distribution. We refer not merely to vertical distribution as between rich and poor, but to horizontal distribution as between childless persons and large families.

AN OFFICIAL VIEW OF THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTES.

In a report on the Educational Work of Women's Rural Institutes, published by the Stationery Office (price 6d.), H.M. Inspectors pay a glowing tribute to the success of these bodies, and to the wide range of subjects and interests which they have introduced into the lives of women in the villages of Great Britain. Perhaps the most significant feature of the report, however, is the conclusion of its authors that the most progressive local education authorities have been stimulated by the work of the Institutes to undertake educational activities among women and girls, which had hitherto been stultified by local apathy on questions of higher education.

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HELP FOR MISS SUSAN LAWRENCE.

Miss Susan Lawrence has accepted the offer of the N.U.S.E.C. to help her in every possible way during the bye-election she will shortly be contesting in East Ham North. Miss Lawrence's work on the L.C.C. and as a former Member of Parliament will be familiar to our members, as is also the fact that she is one of our Vice-Presidents. Those willing to help are asked to communicate with Headquarters. Members are reminded that our election policy enables them to offer help either under the colours of the N.U. from a non-party platform on the basis of the need for more women in Parliament, or—for those who are members of, or sympathizers with, the Labour Party—individually under Labour colours. Mrs. Wintringham constantly testifies that her first victory was largely due to the squad sent down by the N.U. Let Victory repeat itself in the present instance. A turnover of rather more than 500 would send "Susan" up.

WORK FOR WOMEN POLICE.

The following statement to the Home Secretary of work regarded as suitable for women police was drawn up by a conference of women's organizations on 26th January. Pressure of space has prevented its being published before.

STATUS.—We recommend that women police should be appointed with the same powers as men (as already approved by the Home Office) and the same rates of pay, hours of work, and opportunities for promotion.

Note.—These powers should enable them to perform without interruption all police duties that may fall to their share. A woman will have more confidence if she knows that she is a responsible member of the Force, and she will be more readily accepted by men members as a fellow-worker if she has the same standing as themselves.

CONDITIONS OF WORK.—We recommend:—

1. That women police should be available for work in any department in which their services are specially needed.
2. That in larger Forces women police should work under a woman officer of superior rank directly responsible to the Chief Constable.
3. That women police should have suitable office accommodation in or attached to the Police Stations.
4. That uniform should be provided for wear on patrol duty and on all such other duties as require it (Police Courts, etc.).

DUTIES.—We recommend that women police should undertake the following duties:—

A. Police Stations.

1. To act as Station Sergeant to women and girl prisoners in Police Stations—to receive complaints from and to interview women, girls, and children making inquiries.
2. To search women, girls, and children.
3. To take sole custody of and responsibility for female prisoners in lock-ups.
4. To take escort duty for women, girls, and children.

B. Courts.

1. To attend in Court with women prisoners.
2. To attend on women, girl, and child witnesses, especially when giving evidence in indecent cases.
3. To attend in Court to give assistance and advice to all women, girls, and children.

Juvenile Courts. To undertake general duty and escort.

C. Warrants.

1. To execute Warrants and serve Summonses upon women, girls, and children.
2. To escort women, girls, and children.

D. Criminal Investigation Department.

1. To investigate cases and take statements from women, girls, and children in such cases as:—
 - (a) Indecent assault;
 - (b) Indecent exposure;

(c) Rape and attempt to ravish;
(d) Criminal assault and all other offences under the Criminal Law Amendment Acts;

(e) Bigamy;

(f) Abortion;

(g) Concealment of pregnancy (Scotland) and concealment of birth;

(h) Child murder;

(i) Making inquiries as to the circumstances, etc., of female prisoners awaiting trial.

2. To search women, girls, and children, and their premises where this is the duty of the Police.

3. To escort women, girl, and child witnesses for medical examination when needed, and presence thereat.

E. Streets and Public Places.

1. To patrol streets, parks, and open places, and to deal with loitering and soliciting.

2. To undertake observation of theatres, dance halls, music halls, cinemas, show grounds, railway stations, markets.

3. To take observations in the vicinity of schools re the molestation of children.

4. To undertake observation duty for the prevention of larceny, betting, touting in connection with prostitution and brothels.

5. To give assistance in raiding betting premises, brothels, etc.

F. General.

1. To investigate and supervise in cases of attempted suicide by women.

2. To investigate in cases of common assault.

3. To investigate all offences relating to the Children Act.

4. To investigate in cases of sudden death of infants.

5. To give assistance in the supervising of children's street trading licences.

6. To find shelter for and to give advice to stranded women, girls, and children.

7. To take information from female prisoners or witnesses in hospitals or other institutions.

8. To give general advice in cases of women, girls, and children about whom the Police are appealed to for help.

9. To investigate cases of Fortune Telling and Palmistry.

10. To inspect Common Lodging Houses, Registry Offices where under Police Control, and Pawnshops.

11. To deal with inquiries for the Ministry of Pensions relating to the behaviour of women pensioners.

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COMING EVENTS.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Exeter S.E.C. APRIL 15. 3.30 p.m. At the Deanery. Lady Balfour of Burleigh on "The Immediate Programme of the N.U.S.E.C."

Rotherhithe Guild of Women Citizens. APRIL 13. 8 p.m. Southwark Park Hall. Miss Lillian Barker on "The Work of the Borstal Institute."

NORTH SURREY LABOUR WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL.

APRIL 13. 3 p.m. At Forester's Hall, Epsom. Mrs. Le Sueur on "The Widows' Pensions Act."

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

APRIL 20. 8 p.m. Caxton Hall, Westminster. Public Meeting to demand Equal Franchise. Speakers: The Rt. Rev. William F. Brown, Bishop of Pella, Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., Sir Robert Newman, M.P., Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and Miss Barclay Carter. Chair: Mrs. V. M. Crawford.

SIX POINT GROUP.

APRIL 10. 5 p.m. 92 Victoria Street, S.W. 1. First of series of meetings in connection with Equal Political Rights Demonstration. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle.

WOMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE GUILD, HOLLOWAY BRANCH.

APRIL 21. 3.30 p.m. 129 Seven Sisters Road, N. Mrs. Tamplin on "Employment of Married Women."

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 11th April; 3.30, Music, Mr. Montague Fordham, M.A., on "The Rural Problem and its Solution." 6.30, Maude Royden, "The Meaning of Easter Sunday."

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