

# The Common Cause

The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The New Parliament .....	512
The Future Possibility for the Industrial Work of Women .....	512
The Pauperism of Widows, Fatherless Children, and Orphans .....	514
The Home I Want .....	515
Correspondence .....	516
Reports .....	517

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## Notes and News.

### Allied Women's Conference in Paris.

The N.U.W.S.S. delegates at the Inter-allied women's conference, which is to meet in Paris on February 10th, are Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Oliver Strachey, and Miss Rosamond Smith. Although the suffrage societies of allied countries which are to be represented at it are affiliated to the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, the Alliance did not call the conference; it was initiated by the L'Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes, of which Madame de Witt Schlumberger is president. The conference is to discuss how best to lay before the Peace Congress the importance, in the interests of peace, of widening the democracy of all countries so as to include women. The N.U.W.S.S. delegates are further instructed to press whatever points in the Union's programme can suitably be brought forward.

### A French Suffragist in England.

Madame Cruppi, a distinguished French Suffragist, who visited England at the time of the General Election, has written an extremely interesting account of her impressions in *La Française*. She has evidently studied the history of the Suffrage movement in England, and her grasp of the present position of feminism here is admirable. She not only gives a very good account of the women candidates and their constituencies, but also writes with knowledge and sympathy about the agitation against 40b D.O.R.A., which, as she explains, is "the decent and mysterious name of a very ugly thing." After describing Mrs. Fawcett's leading part in securing the withdrawal of 40b, Madame Cruppi expresses her regret that in France, where the legislation against prostitution brings with it "an assembly of 'Doras' a hundred times more hideous than the British 'Dora,' and where thousands of unhappy women live in the most revolting slavery, the women of the middle classes have, for the most part, taken the easy path of ignoring the whole matter." For our part, we cannot but remember that, till quite recently, large numbers of respectable Englishwomen have taken the same easy course, and that more would have done so if it had not been for the heroic labours of Josephine Butler and her little band, followed up, as they have been, by the wider efforts of the Suffrage movement. Mrs. Fawcett's work has linked these two stages of the movement for the emancipation of Englishwomen. It is pleasant to have this fact recognised by a French feminist.

We hope and believe that the valiant Frenchwomen who have in these last years borne so much for the freedom of mankind, will soon be abreast of us again in the struggle for the freedom of their sex.

### Endowment of Maternity and Infant Welfare in France.

A Bill to found a department of Infant Welfare was introduced in the French Chamber of Deputies, with the object of fighting the danger of depopulation. It is proposed that this Department (which the *Times* of February 1st calls the "Institute of Natality") shall have a civil standing and shall receive legacies and donations; from which we presume that it would not be entirely state supported. The premiums which the Bill lays down shall be paid to actual and prospective mothers as follows: conditional on the mother's abstaining from work four months prior to her confinement, a daily allowance of one and twopence in towns of two thousand inhabitants, two and six in towns of from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand inhabitants, and three and fourpence in one of from twenty thousand to a hundred thousand, and four and twopence in cities of a large population. Parents are to receive a premium of forty-eight pounds for the first two children, forty pounds for the third, sixty pounds for the fourth, and forty pounds for each additional child.

### The National Federation of Women Workers.

The National Federation of Women Workers is holding a mass meeting at the Albert Hall on Saturday, February 15th, at 7.30 p.m., on the "Unemployment of Women." Among the speakers will be Mr. Fred Bramley, Assistant Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, Mr. Ben Spoor, M.P., Mrs. Despard, Miss A. Susan Lawrence, Mr. Francis Meynell, representative of the *Herald*, and women shop stewards from London munition areas and the East End. They will demand that the women workers should have the right to work, the right to live, and the right to leisure. "The right to work" is interpreted by the National Federation of Women Workers as meaning "the immediate provision and organisation by the Government of suitable employment for all willing and able workers." "The right to live" is interpreted as "the statutory fixation of an adequate living wage sufficient for healthy and enjoyable existence," and "the right to leisure" is interpreted as "the limitation by statute of the working hours to forty hours a week, with a maximum of eight hours a day." Whether our readers agree or disagree with these proposals, we strongly advise them to go to the Albert Hall and hear the case put.

### A Typical Case.

There seems to be an impression abroad in some quarters that the demobilised munition workers, now unemployed, are for the most part comparatively wealthy people, who earned enormous wages which they spent chiefly on fur coats and pianos, and which they can now very easily do without. If any of our readers hold this opinion we would ask them to consider the following case, quoted to us by Miss Mary Macarthur as typical of numbers of others which have come to her knowledge. We omit the names of peoples and places, which are, however, in our possession. Mrs. H. is a demobilised munition worker, registered at a Labour Exchange of a northern town. She has worked not from choice, but from necessity, for she has been a widow for six years, and has three children, one suffering from a tubercular spine. On being demobilised, she was offered work at a restaurant at a wage of fifteen shillings a week and meals. The hours were from 7 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. Had she accepted this job, she would have had to pay an old woman three shillings a week to look after her children during

the hours she was away from them and would also have had to spend a shilling a week on tram fares. Only eleven shillings would have been left, and out of that she would have had to pay her rent and feed the three children (one of whom needed special care) and buy clothes and other necessities for herself and for them. This was plainly impossible, so she refused the place. She would get no unemployment benefit, because she had "refused suitable work." After some weeks of semi-starvation she applied to the Poor Law Guardians for help. They asked her whether she wanted poor relief, twenty-five shillings a week for doing nothing, or work. She said work. The sincerity of this reply was proved by the fact that when they offered her employment as a temporary cleaner at a workhouse infirmary six miles from her home, from 7.45 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. daily, at a wage of twenty-eight shillings a week without food, she at once accepted it. Such a case as the above is deeply and painfully interesting to us. It illustrates the cruel need to which widowed mothers are reduced in our present social conditions—a need which is dwelt on by Miss Rathbone in her article on page 514, and it also illustrates the reality of the present distress.

#### Town Council and County Council Elections.

The Women's Local Government Society has issued a leaflet containing information about County and Town Council Elections, which is much needed now that there are so many fresh Local Government electors, and that the intermission in elections caused by the war has made many even of those who were electors before forget the little that they knew. So few people are well informed about these matters that it may not be amiss to repeat one or two important facts here. County Councils are elected triennially, all members retiring on March 8th every third year. The election is usually held on March 8th. Town Council elections, at which a third of the members are elected annually, take place on November 1st. Nomination papers, which the Returning Officer supplies free of charge, and which have to be handed to him by the candidate, or his proposer or seconder, before five o'clock on the specified day, must be completely filled in before any signature is attached, and must be signed by two electors as proposer and seconder, and by eight other electors as well. Should the signatures not correspond exactly to the names on the register, the papers are invalidated. For further information, especially regarding the statutory rate of expenses allowed to a candidate, we refer our readers to the leaflet mentioned above.

#### L.C.C. Women Teachers.

The London County Council, having considered the report of the Education Committee on the teaching staff in the various schools and institutes now issued, has now made its decisions known. In technical institutes, schools of art, trade schools, and domestic economy schools, the scales will be as follows:—Class I. Commencing salary of £120 to £180, according to experience, with increments of £10 to £270 (previously about £80 to £150). Class II. Commencing salary of £160 with at least five years' industrial or commercial experience after twenty-one years of age, and increments of £8 to £224. Class III., £220 rising by £8 to £270. Teachers of domestic subjects will have a commencing salary of £120 to £168, according to qualifications and experience, rising by £8 to £216 and £9 to £225. Women heads of departments, Class A will have £300, rising by £15 to £390 and by £10 to £400. In special cases it may be agreed that the salary may increase by £15 and with a final increment of £5 to £450. Class B will have £400, rising by £20 to £600. Previously for men and women the salaries varied from £250 to £400, and in some polytechnics to £600. In the evening institutes whole-time responsible mistresses will receive £300, rising by £20 to £400 (previous rates, £200 to £250). Half-time responsible mistresses will have £225, rising by £20 to £325 (previous rates, £150 to £200).

#### Committee of Inquiry of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

The Committee of Enquiry into Sexual Morality, initiated by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, about which we wrote in our issue of January 24th, is vigorously at work. Sir Charles Tarring, presided at a meeting on January 27th, when Miss Costyn, now Assistant Superintendent at Copehall Colony, Newbury, and previously a police-constable at Oxford (with full powers of arrest), gave evidence as to her experience of the working of the solicitation laws, and the administration of

40D D.O.R.A. Her view was that special laws were of small avail, and that the general laws against disorderly conduct were quite sufficient. The second witness, Mr. E. Basil Wedmore, who had been associated with the Committee of Social Investigation and Reform, expressed his objection to homes. He said that girls who had begun to lead an immoral life ought to be treated in the same way as a young man whose conduct was in need of reform. He advocated the raising of the age of consent to twenty-one; and the enforcement of present laws rather than the making of new ones. The next meeting of the Committee will be on February 10th, and once a fortnight subsequently. Persons who can give useful information on subjects within the terms of reference should communicate with the Secretary of the Inquiry Committee at the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene. The terms of reference are "to inquire into the laws and their administration, and other methods for dealing with sexual promiscuity, and to make recommendations thereon."

#### The Home Office on "Substitution."

The Home Office has issued a very interesting blue-book on the substitution of women for men in factories, other than munition factories, during the war. The first part reviews "the nature of the work done by women and their capacity for doing it." The second part deals with each industry in which women have been substituted for men in detail, dividing them into three groups, in the first of which are included all "trades which from their nature and the conditions of work involved appear unsuitable for female labour, in normal times," while the second and third are made up of trades suitable for female labour, and in which their labour has been either extended or introduced for the first time during the war. The blue-book is based on the reports of the Factory Inspectors, which show that substitution in our munition factories has proceeded on two main lines:—On the one hand, in the trades in which women were largely employed before the war, they have now been introduced into skilled and semi-skilled processes normally reserved for men, as well as into a number of subsidiary labour operations; on the other, it has been found necessary to employ them in important industries from which custom or the nature of the work carried on had hitherto entirely or almost entirely excluded them.

#### Nature of Work Done by Women.

In spite of the fact that there has been no large expansion of trade during recent years in industries that are not munition industries, or in some way connected with war work, there has been a very considerable substitution of women for men. The work done by women has included management, supervision, scientific work, process work, and labouring. It is only gradually that women have been able to take their place in management, but the report quotes instances of a woman assistant manager in a general engineering shop, a woman Works Manager in aero-engine work, a woman Manager of chemical works, a woman Managing Director of glass manufacture, and so on. As supervisors, there is a growing tendency to choose women in cases where women are employed in large numbers and organised apart from men. In scientific work it appears likely that there will be more and more openings for University women as works chemists and research workers in factory laboratories, and for intelligent working women in routine laboratory work. The processes of various industries in which women have been employed are examined in some detail in the report, both in regard to the heaviness of the work entailed and to the skill required for the employment. The extent to which women have replaced men in sheer hard labour, indoors and out, will probably come as a surprise to many readers of this blue-book. It is not only in packing, cleaning, store-keeping, &c., that women have replaced men in large numbers, but also in shipyards, brick yards, and chemical works, gas-works, and breweries; in loading and unloading trucks, railway vans, waggons, barges; in painting, lime-washing, "breaking up oxide iron," &c., &c. It is noted that "in light semi-skilled work replacement value is frequently equal, and, where the operations call for fineness of touch or deftness of handling as distinct from the skill due to long training and experience, women are preferred to men. Where heavy operations are in question, their successful performance by women may, and frequently does, depend on the provision of lighter implements of labour, lifting tackle, and such facilities as runways: in these cases replacement value is economically unequal and may remain so. This consideration appears likely to be unfavourable to the continued employment

of women in particular operations when normal conditions of industry are re-established. At the same time, the value of many labour-saving appliances in promoting rapid production, husbanding the energy of the operative, and preventing congestion of masses of raw material or finished goods in the factories is becoming so generally appreciated that they will hardly be lightly scrapped by the manufacturer, and while they remain in use they facilitate the retention of women's services. The question seems likely to be reduced to a balance of advantages, in which the general 'handiness' of the male labourer, man or boy, who can be sent to any sort of job, must be allowed for. Where subdivision is a necessary condition of the women's retention in labouring operations which call for no special skill it seems probable that the decision will be in favour of the man."

#### General Review of Substitution.

The blue-book then sums up its review of the question: "The Inspector's reports show a steadily increasing volume of substitution in all those non-munition trades which have not had their output so reduced by war conditions that they could carry on with the remnant of their normal staff—as was the case with some of the minor metal industries until their plant and labour were diverted to the manufacture of munitions. They show also that in a great preponderance of cases substitution has proved satisfactory. It is clear that in certain trades already largely employing women, such as the clothing and boot and shoe industries, women have shown capacity to take up, and to carry out, completely and satisfactorily, many of the more skilled processes hitherto reserved for men, and have acquired mastery of the whole range of operations in other trades, like light leather tanning, which they had barely touched before the war. Moreover, they have displayed unexpected readiness for work which at first sight seemed highly unsuitable for them, carrying out hot, heavy, wet, and dirty operations with courage, steadiness, and success. Large numbers have acquired a certain skill, even if it be skill in one process only, fit to be turned to national uses under normal conditions, and have received at least so much training as should enable them to learn kindred operations rapidly and intelligently. Setting aside those trades in which the lesser physical strength of the average woman as compared with that of the average man sets her at a disadvantage, and the small group of processes dealing with certain poisonous materials from which women are normally excluded, there remain a body of industries and operations offering a hopeful field of fresh employment to women, where their war experience can be turned to account, and should prove a national asset of great value."

#### Method of Substitution.

We again quote the blue-book:—"Into many of these industries and operations women were introduced in accordance with agreements concluded with Associations of Employers and Operatives' Trade Unions (drawn up, in a number of instances, under the auspices of the Home Office) which hold good only for the duration of the war, or 'till such time as sufficient male labour shall be again available.' Such agreements usually provide both for the reinstatement of individual men whom the women may replace on their return from military service, and for the safeguarding of the claims of the male worker in general to employment at the end of the war. The question of the future employment of women in all industries under agreement, whether national or applicable to a single trade or operation, hinges therefore on the arrangements to be made on the return to normal conditions between organised labour, the employers, and the nation; it is part of that larger question of the restoration of Trade Union conditions and the problems arising out of it touching the solution of which no forecast is attempted here. Two considerations, however, arise at the present stage. First, there would appear to be a fairly new field of possible future activity for women in trades into which they have been brought during the war without agreement. Secondly, it seems clear that if the country's industries are to be maintained and its wealth increased (matters of vital importance in view of war losses, expenditure, and debt), the employment of women must be much more extensive than heretofore. Large numbers of men have been incapacitated for their previous industrial occupations; others may not resume their pre-war work. Moreover, great extensions of factory premises and plant have taken place during the period of the war, and it may reasonably be expected that, for many years to come, there will be a demand for production from British factories in excess of the pre-war output. To meet this demand fresh supplies of labour will be needed, and the only

considerable untapped reserve of labour existing before the war was the labour of women. It is, therefore, to women that the nation must look to supply any largely increased demand for workers. The definition and regularisation of women's position in industry should be assisted by the remarkable increase during the war of women's organisations, and opening to women, in a number of trades, of men's unions which had never previously accepted women members."

#### Unsuitable Trades.

Twenty-one industries or processes in which women have taken part during the war are classified in the second part of the report as unsuitable for women in normal times. This opinion is based sometimes on the heavy nature of the work involved, and the great muscular effort required, as in the manufacture of heavy edge tools, and of cement; sometimes on the fact that the work is poisonous, as in work on the raw material of indiarubber, and in the manufacturing of lead colours; sometimes on the dangerous machines used in the trade; sometimes on the fact that workers have to be alone in a building or part of a building; and often on the fact that night work is required. In one case, that of the manufacture of heavy chemicals, it is stated that women workers have shown "unwillingness to accept responsibility, even after very careful training." On the whole, however, women seem to have been fairly successful even in these "unsuitable occupations." Here, again, we think that students of the blue-book will be more surprised at realising all the things that women have done during the war than at the limitations. It will probably be a shock to some to see how far, and how often, the Factory Acts have been "relaxed" in recent years; and some passages seem to suggest much cause for thought, as, for instance, the following, referring to the "wetters off" and "takers in" in the glass bottle-making trade: "As the work requires agility, only quite young women are suitable, and the difficulty of inducing girls over eighteen, who can easily find more agreeable and remunerative employment in munition works, to undertake a boy's job in the glass house, has made it necessary to relax Section 77 of the Factory and Workshop Act, which prohibits the employment of girls under eighteen in the part of a factory in which melting and annealing of glass is carried on, and also to allow the employment of women over eighteen at night."

#### Extension of Women's Work in Suitable Trades.

Sixteen trades are grouped together in which women were employed before the war, and in which their employment has been extended. Among these are the cotton trade, in which the substitution has proceeded gradually, and unequally in different districts; and the woollen and worsted trade. In both these trades large numbers of married women are employed. In the hosiery trade there has been much substitution; the female membership of the different hosiery unions rose from 3,657 in 1914 to 17,217 in 1917. One of the trades in which the extension of women's work has proved unexpectedly difficult is the manufactured lace trade, in the Midlands and in Scotland. The difficulties seem to have been partly due to opposition on the part of some of the skilled men, and partly to the opinion of the employers. In all branches of the clothing trade and in the boot and shoe trade there has been much extension of women's work, and it is likely to be permanent. In these trades there has also been a considerable advance in the organisation of women.

#### New Trades for Women.

Seven trades in which women have only taken part since the war are grouped together as suitable for their continued employment. These are light leather tanning; solid leather case and fancy leather box making; packing-case making; furniture; scientific instrument making; flint glass cutting and decorating, and cutlery. The report examines each of these trades, and summarises the changes in methods of work and the special conditions that are desirable if women are to go on working in them. In several modifications of the factory acts would be required. We advise all those of our readers who are interested in the subject of women in industry to get and study this blue-book (which can be had through any bookseller for the price of ninepence). Parts of it are specially interesting read in conjunction with the article by Doctor Rhoda Adamson, which we have the pleasure of publishing to-day.

## THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

THE new House of Commons which is meeting this week is one of the most interesting that has ever gathered at Westminster. It meets at a time when the whole world can be made afresh, and it has all the problems of peace and reconstruction before it. Its task is on a gigantic scale, and its failure or success may well involve the whole future of Parliamentary government in this country. For the problems that face us have got to be solved, and if Parliament does not do it, and do it soon, some other method will undoubtedly be tried.

The House is new in many senses. It is filled with new men, and they belong to new parties. The old groupings have gone, and many of the familiar people with them. The traditions of the House are likely to be as rudely trampled on by the present M.P.s as are the customs of the old Universities by the undergraduates back from the front. The Party Liberals have almost disappeared: the Nationalists have vanished, and no one yet knows what is to take their place. Labour, the official Opposition, is indeed a definite party; but Labour lacks its left wing, and its leader himself is among those who were not elected; while a number of independent or opposition Labour men have found their way into the House. The Irish seem likely to stay away, and with them the only woman M.P. the new House possesses; but with the Irish it is not safe to prophesy, and almost anything may happen. The "Coalitionists" themselves, who hold such a sweeping majority, can hardly be said to be a concrete party. They comprise men of very different ideas and ideals, and the large number of real Tories among them makes their permanent allegiance to Mr. Lloyd George seem improbable. And all these groups are gathered together under a system that was originally based upon the existence of only two definite and opposing parties, and no one can at all foresee how they will get under weigh.

To Suffragists the meeting of this new Parliament is very significant. It is the first time that the members represent both men and women, and although they do as yet only represent the women over thirty, it still makes a marked difference in their position. They know now that they must render their account to the housewives as well as to the householders: that they must satisfy the mother as well as the ratepayer, and they are not likely to be allowed to forget it. Housing is an immediate and a foremost question: health is another: with women among the electorate we should see these questions more practically treated than in the past, and we hope the same may be true of all the new legislation there will be. Not only the women but also the new M.P.s are to be congratulated on this position. If it is a harder thing to represent all your constituency, it is, nevertheless, a finer thing, and though the burdens that democratic government puts upon its servants are heavy ones, they are glorious ones too, and the true and satisfactory representation of the people is a task that no statesman can afford to neglect.

There is another source of satisfaction, for Suffragists, in the meeting of this new Parliament, in that for the first time all parties and all groups are committed to establishing the equality of men and women before the law. Mr. Lloyd George and his

Coalition followers have said it; the Liberals have officially adopted it; and the Labour Party are preparing the bills necessary to carry it into effect. If something real is not done in this next session it will be strange indeed.

With all this, however, Suffragists cannot look with complete satisfaction upon this new House of Commons. Not only are there no women in it, but also so many of their friends have gone. Of the men to whom the passing of the Reform Act was really due, only two remain in the House—the Prime Minister himself and Lord Robert Cecil. The others are gone. Sir John Simon, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Sir Willoughby Dickinson,—the men who were the champions of our cause in its last year of Parliamentary life, have not been returned to the new House, and in the work and the careful watching that lie before us we shall miss them bitterly. Many of our other friends have gone too: men who helped us all through their political lives, and who were staunch through all the storms; men who were indeed "tried friends," whom the new voters might well have trusted. We cannot but regret their absence. But the swing of political life goes not on one cause alone so much as on a balance of opinions, and these friends are for the moment out. They are no less our friends for that, nor are we less theirs. We hope to see them back some day, and meanwhile we are glad for each one of them who has been returned in safety.

There is one problem before the new House that may at first sight appear to concern us little, and that is the problem of the procedure of the House itself. As citizens, the machinery of government is our concern, but as people with a special set of causes to promote this question affects us even more closely. For the congestion of Parliamentary business is a great hindrance to special causes, and has been the reason for the delay of such a simple and obvious measure as the opening of the legal profession to women. It is clear that some method of devolving work will have to be found, and we cannot but hope to see it done quickly. And yet it behoves us to be careful, for if too much is passed over to "experts" and "bureaucrats" many of the advantages of enfranchisement will be lost. The day has not yet come when women play their full share in the life of expert and bureaucratic bodies, and until they do Parliamentary discussion is, perhaps, a safer and a sounder thing from our point of view. We do not want to see too much detail in the new House; but neither do we want to leave too much to machinery, and the balance will be hard to strike. Whatever happens, however, it is clear that the Civil Service will soon play an even more important part in actual government than it does already, and since this is so, the time is here for the opening of the doors of the First Division to women. The Government are pledged to the principle, the Royal Commission and Lord Haldane's Committee have pointed out the way, and the war has shown where the women are to be found. Let us hope that side by side with the change in Parliamentary procedure may go the admission of women to the executive and administrative functions of government. The new House will have plenty to do, but it must not forget to do this.

RAY STRACHEY.

## The Future Possibilities for the Industrial Work of Women.

By RHODA H. B. ADAMSON, M.D., B.S. (LOND.).

The employment of women in occupations outside their own domestic sphere has for many years been a recognised feature of British civilization. The character of industries in which women have been employed, and the status of the women engaged in them have gradually undergone evolution. Up to the latter half of the nineteenth century there was practically only one direction in which a woman might turn to earn their living outside their own houses—namely, in some form of domestic service. With the introduction of machinery into factories women were engaged to a gradually increasing extent as machine minders, and in allied subordinate positions, as well as in subordinate clerical posts.

Up to the outbreak of the great European war there was one characteristic in common in all employments open to women, namely, a surplus in the number of women needing employment over the number actually required by the employers. This led

to two evil results—first, the payment of low wages, as women asking for more money could always be dismissed and replaced by less argumentative ones; and, secondly, the lack of promotion to higher responsible positions since an employer did not appreciate the true value of an ill-paid servant, and therefore passed her over as unworthy when such vacancies fell to be filled. Up to the year 1915 women in industry were tolerated by men who worked at the same trades as long as they did not aspire to equal positions and equal pay, but were content to undertake the unskilled, poorly paid, drudgery. With a few notable exceptions women were not admitted to membership of the men's trade unions, and, therefore, they did not benefit in any way from the reforms introduced as the result of the men's collective bargaining. The trade unions objected to admit women because they were unskilled—i.e., had not served an apprenticeship, and also objected to women being taught skilled trades as apprentices.

Certain trades were entirely closed to women as they were, by men, considered to be physically harmful.

Early in the great war it became apparent that British military strength could not reach the required degree unless some form of compulsory service was introduced for men, and it also became apparent that the manifold industries of the country could not be carried on without the men taken into the army unless their places were filled by other available labour—namely, women's labour. Also, over and above the normal peace time industries, a large new national industry—the munition industry—appeared in all districts of the country. Owing to the national need the trade union officials conferred with the heads of the government and waived for the duration of the war their rights of the retention of certain occupations to union members only. This agreement between the Government and the trade unions made it possible to replace skilled men who had joined the army by unskilled men and women—this process being termed dilution of labour. Now, from the outset, it should be clearly understood that these dilutees, not having served an apprenticeship, were not trained in all the processes of any given trade, and therefore could not be expected to carry out the manufacture of any article through all its stages. Therefore these processes were divided up, and one single repetition process was given over to one woman who was taught that process thoroughly, and might be considered in the non-technical sense as "skilled" in that process. Later, when some of these women had learned several processes, they were actually promoted to supervise other women, and were termed charge hands and assistant charge hands. Women who rose to this level were found to be capable and level headed, and in every way worthy of the confidence of their employers. Factories which were staffed by this unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled labour were found to attain the same excellence and degree of output as they had done previously with a staff of skilled employees. The women were found to be painstaking and quick at their work. So that one could honestly feel that, given the opportunity, they could quite well be taught the whole of the skilled trade equally with men.

At about this time a wave of public opinion came over the country giving voice to the conviction that although these women were working in the interests of the country and practically saving it from destruction, yet they were doing this patriotic work at the cost of permanent injury of their own health, and of the health of the children that should follow after them. When closer enquiry was made into the nature of the processes which would lead to physical damage from overstrain, it was found that these were always the more highly-paid and not necessarily the more strenuous—there was no general outcry against retaining women in such laborious occupations as casual charring and laundry work—occupations entirely left to women, and acknowledged to be extremely strenuous and badly paid.

The writer had the privilege of supervising the physical health of several thousand women engaged on various processes of engineering work, from April, 1916, until after the termination of hostilities in November, 1918—processes which in the ordinary course of events would have been carried out by men. To safeguard the health of these women who were undertaking men's work, the writer made a complete physical examination at the outset of their employment, and graded them for different processes according to their physical strength, any defect found at the time of this examination was noted on their records, and where remediable, treatment was suggested, and in essential cases insisted upon, as a condition of the retention in employment of the defective woman. Having once been accepted for work they were subject to further medical examination during employment if complaint was made of work being too heavy, if there was much broken time for illness, or if there had been an injury liable to be the subject of a claim for compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

The writer insisted before undertaking this work that she must have free access to the workshops to study any given process at any time to help her to form an opinion as to the degree of mental and physical development required in a woman working at it. As the idea of medical examination and grading of women was entirely novel, this stipulation was readily acceded to, and the grading based on these two considerations of strain and endurance demanded, and physical strength to cope with it, were never disputed by those responsible for the actual placing of the women in the workshops.

After a few months of experience of grading new workers and regrading of old workers who had failed physically at the level of work expected of them, the writer began to acquire a certain degree of acumen in differentiating between those

workers who were absolutely sound and fit to undertake any work and those who had defects which barred them from certain processes and yet left them able to fill a useful position in some lighter capacity. In this way scarcely any were entirely refused work on account of physical incapacity, and the number needing regrading became progressively less.

In passing women for heavy work, one of the first questions that had to be considered was the presence or absence of previous childbirth, and if the woman had at some previous date given birth to children, whether they had suffered any permanent physical defect as a result of pregnancy or childbirth. Other considerations of health being satisfactory, women undamaged by childbearing, were found to be capable of undertaking heavy, strenuous work without any harm resulting from it. Women suffering from defective abdominal and pelvic support, as a result of childbearing, were unfit to carry out processes involving long standing, heavy lifting or sudden strain. Therefore, however well an applicant was at the time of her initial medical examination, if she had at any time been the subject of uterine prolapse, she was passed as fit for light work only, to obviate any recurrence. Apart from the question of childbirth a certain number of women were the obvious sufferers of chronic pelvic inflammation which was venereal in origin. These women were totally unfit for heavy standing work, or work which gave any risk of getting the feet or clothing wet. But they could quite well perform fine sedentary work without any lighting up of their chronic trouble. A large number of women passed for work were found to be suffering from minor defects which, through ignorance, they had never sought to remedy. The local hospital undertook the examination of eyes, and prescription of suitable glasses in cases needing them. As a result inaccurate work was lessened, and chronic headache, due to eyestrain, was practically eliminated. Dental treatment was also kept very prominently before their consideration, so that, at the time of the Armistice, the general condition of these women's mouths would pass a very fair muster.

During this period a certain number of the employed women gave birth to children, so that the writer had the opportunity of watching the effect of pregnancy on the output of work, and the work on the pregnancy. Later on, as these women returned to work, there was also the opportunity of observing their capacity for work within a few weeks of childbirth.

Taking also into consideration the amount of energy expended on travelling to and from work, and the amount of homework carried out in addition to the work undertaken at the factories, it was possible to form a very fair estimate of the amount of work in all that a woman was capable of performing.

After an experience of this nature, the writer formed certain very definite views as to the fitness of women for the engineering trade. A trade by general lay consent considered to be unsuited to the physical strength of women, and a trade which by Government pledge was not to be diluted by unskilled labour, and in which the trade unions refused to admit women. Provided the women were found to be absolutely fit when they began work in an engineering shop they were in no way damaged as a result of their work. In four thousand seven hundred medical examinations during the year 1917 there were two cases of hernia due to strain at work. These were demonstrated on a second medical examination and paid for under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Other cases attributed to strain by the women were found to be due to other medical causes entirely unconnected with their work, and when suitably treated disappeared. Uterine prolapse never occurred at all in these previously sound women. Cases of cardiac strain in previously sound hearts were also extremely rare.

Therefore, after this experience, the writer is entirely at a loss to find the site of the strain which may be expected to undermine the health of these women and their future offsprings for the rest of their lives. Women in any way damaged by childbirth, if treated with consideration and given suitable work, have not been harmed by it, and in many cases have actually improved in general health as a result of regular hours, good food, and exercise. The disabilities they suffer should be laid at the door of the real cause—namely, defective recovery from a difficult childbirth, or from poor obstetric attendance, and not to their subsequent work. Women who were expectant mothers, or who had recently given birth to a child, were found to need a degree of extra consideration, they were improved by being removed from night work on to day shifts only and by being given light sedentary work after the first four months of pregnancy. With this degree of consideration they were capable of good work right up to the time of childbirth.

If these generalisations can be taken as being correct for women engaged in the engineering trade, such as the making

of 6-inch, 9.2-inch and 15-inch howitzer shells, may they not also be assumed to be correct for other trades where such routine medical examination has not been carried out. The wild statements of those interested in excluding women from certain well-paid trades should not be credited unless they can give some rebutting proof to support their contention that there are any trades which are entirely unsuitable for all women.

It is also a question whether the grading of all workers, male or female, might not lead to better output of work, and a lessened tale of accidents due to work. If this grading on medical grounds becomes a recognised procedure then it seems absurd to close any trade to women on the grounds of sex.

### The Pauperisation of Widows, Fatherless Children and Orphans.

By COUNCILLOR E. F. RATHBONE.

John Morley speaks somewhere of "the world's inexhaustible patience of the wrongs that only torment others." As a matter of fact, the world, or rather groups of people in it, do sometimes work themselves into a fever of impatience against wrongs that only torment others; but this only happens when first the wrong presents itself to the consciousness of the group as a new fact; or, secondly, is committed by another group or individual of whom the first is jealous or afraid. Of the wrongs to which we are accustomed, which we have ourselves perpetrated or tacitly compounded, we are indeed inexhaustibly patient.

Of this trait in human nature, the attitude of the British public towards its own treatment of widows, fatherless children and orphans is a most striking instance. For centuries before the beginning of Christianity, the widow and the orphan stood as the embodiment of all that should stir the bowels of compassion and arouse the instinct of chivalry. It is said to be an attribute of God Himself that "He is a Father of the fatherless and defendeth the cause of the widows" (Psalm 68). According to the practical but somewhat conventionally minded apostle, St. James, to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction is part of the very definition of true religion. We have all been brought up on these and similar texts, and can hear them quoted without even a qualm at their incongruity with the facts of the established order for which we are jointly responsible—so complete is the lack of any relation of any kind between the theories which we believe ourselves to believe, because we have inherited them ready made, and the theories on which we really base our practice. According to the former, widows and fatherless children should be a first charge on the good services of the community; they should be comforted, protected, cared for. According to the latter they are probably the most undeservedly humiliated, the most unnecessarily distressed, the most completely unbefriended and forlorn of all the many victims of our clumsy, shambling, blundering, haphazard social system.

Those who think this statement a melodramatic exaggeration are invited to study the following facts and figures:

Under existing conditions the sole resources of a widow with young children, other than her own earnings or the charity of relations and neighbours, is to apply to the Board of Guardians for relief under the Poor Law. It is the object of this discussion to make plain what this method of meeting the needs of widows implies in theory and what results it leads to in practice.

The underlying theory of the English Poor Law through its various phases has always been that the State recognises its obligation for the livelihood of the individual citizen to the extent of ensuring that no one shall be condemned by poverty to death by starvation. Those reduced, whether by their own fault or otherwise, to the extreme of destitution are granted the right of free maintenance by the State. In this way the instinct of pity is satisfied and the citizen released from the necessity of indiscriminate almsgiving. But for fear lest the provision of State aid should weaken the motives towards exertion and self-reliance and lead to certain sections of the people becoming willing parasites upon the community, it is provided that the conditions under which the aid of the State is given shall be "deterrent" and that the situation of those in receipt of it shall be distinctly less eligible than that of even the poorest normally self-supporting citizens. In other words, it is intended that the position of the pauper shall be humiliating and disagreeable, in order that no one shall be tempted to remain a pauper a moment longer than he can help.

This general principle is in its working out made subject to qualifications and modifications; the conditions under which relief is given being made more or less "deterrent" according to the classification to which the applicant belongs as well as according to the temper of the individual Board of Guardians. But amid all the changes in the theory and the chances in the practice of the Poor Law, the principle of deterrence has never been wholly lost sight of, and the traditions and associations which have grown up round it have made "the stigma of pauperism" a very real thing. This is so well recognised by public opinion that there has been a growing rebellion against the injustice of treating all forms of distress as though they were due to the fault of the sufferer, and relieving them through the machinery of the Poor Law. There are, in fact, four principal causes which may compel men or women, through no fault of their own, to seek the aid of the community: sickness, old age, unemployment, and widowhood. For the first three a machinery of relief—inadequate, indeed, in each case, but clearly destined to be widely extended in the near future—has already been provided altogether outside the Poor Law. For sickness there is the Insurance Act, Part 1, and the growing powers of the local health authorities. For old age there are old age pensions. For unemployment there is the abortive Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1908; the Insurance Act, Part 2; and the recent provisions, almost munificent by comparison with anything that had gone before, for the relief of demobilised war workers. For the widowed mother and her fatherless children alone the Poor Law is apparently still thought good enough.

Yet it surely is incontestable that of the four classes her claim to be emancipated from the Poor Law is the strongest, and that which could be granted with least risk of undermining the self-reliance and energy of any part of the community. With regard to the other three, it is at least possible to argue with some plausibility that if the State had left them alone, only offering the aid of a deterrent Poor Law as a last resort, their need could conceivably have been met by the exercise of co-operative thrift, and that, indeed, in thousands of cases it was being so met,—for the unemployed through trade unions; for the sick through friendly societies, and for the aged through savings and insurance and the help of grown-up children.

But the widowed mother of young children!—Did anyone ever hear of a practicable scheme for enabling a thrifty young workman to provide, not only for unemployment, sickness and old age, but also for the contingency of his own premature death, by leaving such a sum as would keep his widow and children until they have all reached wage-earning age? Would not such a scheme without State aid be a sheer actuarial impossibility? Surely, if anyone's poverty and need is "the Act of God" it is the poverty and need of a widow with young children, and to make the grant of public assistance to such a one "deterrent," and surround it with humiliating conditions, is as irrational as it is cruel, as contrary to public policy as it is unjust. Many women, the best of their kind, are indeed "deterred" from seeking the help thus grudgingly offered. Rather than make themselves and their children paupers, rather than rub shoulders at the workhouse gate with loafers and vagrants, derelicts and failures of society, they will work their fingers to the bone and (in their own crude biblical phrase) "pinch the children's bellies and their own." But the future of the community depends on its children, and it is not to its interest that their strength should be thus undermined.

The results in practice of the system of relieving widows through the Poor Law can most easily be studied in the reports of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law and the Relief of Distress, issued in 1909. The Majority and Minority Reports differ as to many things, but they are unanimous in their condemnation of the conditions which they found prevailing among the widows and children subsisting on relief. Their general survey was supplemented by two special inquiries. One dealing with England and Wales, by Dr. Ethel Williams, Miss Mary Longman and Dr. Marion Phillips, is contained in Appendix to Vol. 18 (C. D. 5037, price 2s. 4d.), the other dealing with Scotland in Appendix, Vol. 23.

So far as I know the remarks of the main report on the portion of their subject and the two supplementary inquiries attracted very little attention. Indeed, I have rarely met anyone who had heard of the latter. Yet these two stout blue books will always be associated in my mind with Lord Bryce's report on the violation of Belgium as the most painful books I have ever read. The latter is, of course, infinitely the more sensational; indeed, there is nothing in the former that is sensational at all, and not very much that is vividly descriptive. Persons who cannot visualise facts from tables of statistics will probably find comparatively little in it to ruffle their complacency; but

on those who read with imagination it leaves an impression of gloom deeper and more permanent than the Belgian blue book. This is so, first, because the agony of Belgium was short and is over, while the sufferings of British widows and children have been going on for generations, and are going on still. Secondly, because a short oppression, however cruel, injures only the bodies of its victims; but it is impossible for women to be subjected to years of penury, drudgery and humiliation, or for children to be reared from infancy to adolescence with insufficient food, clothing or warmth, without their minds becoming atrophied and their characters warped. It is so thirdly, and chiefly, because we English are not responsible for the wrongs of Belgians; but we are all responsible individually and personally for the wrongs of the widows and children of our own race so long as we do nothing to bring them deliverance. The facts are plainly before us. No one, I think, will dare to justify them; it only remains to remove them.

(To be continued.)

### The Home I Want.\*

By MRS. C. S. PEEL.

On the cover of the book which bears this title are three pictures—that of the ideal home of the worker; that of the worker himself in full fighting kit as he arrives from overseas ready to take up his civilian life again; that of the mean and dispiriting street in which is situated the "home" for which he has fought so bravely.

In just such a street is the home of a soldier who is also the father of a soldier. It boasts one basement living room, lighted by means of a narrow strip of glass, protected by iron bars, and set just above the pavement level. A dank backyard and two bedrooms, one of which is so damp that the wall-paper hangs in tatters, and both, despite every care of the housewife, bug-ridden. In this dark living-room-cum-nursery-cum-washhouse-cum-kitchen and in these two miserable bedrooms, a good and brave woman has passed her married life and given birth to ten children, succeeding by ceaseless toil and care in keeping seven of them alive.

And all over the country there are thousands of homes such as this!

Of a truth Captain Richard Reiss's interesting and informative book appears at the right moment, for at last the public is beginning to understand the importance of the housing question and to realise that the well-being of the nation will depend upon the manner in which it is treated. As the author truly says:—

"Many Acts of Parliament have been passed, giving wide powers to Local Authorities, and it is safe to say that, if these powers had been properly exercised, the Housing Problem would have been largely solved. But it is useless to pass Acts of Parliament if the individuals whom they concern do not see that they are carried out. Housing is, after all, largely a local matter. . . . Direct responsibility . . . has rested hitherto and will rest in the future, upon the Local Councillors. But as these are themselves elected by the people generally, the ultimate responsibility for effecting housing reforms rests upon their electors."

This is a statement which cannot be repeated too often, for many of us, alas! are content to dismiss such matters from our minds in the vague and pious hope that "the people who are there to look after such things will look after them"—which in some cases they assuredly will not.

The great value of Captain Reiss's book is that in it he puts before the public (which, remember, includes you and me, and does not consist merely of other people) a brief but clear statement of the position. He shows why this great need for new houses exists (it was estimated that in 1917 the shortage of houses due to the war alone would amount to 300,000 by the end of 1918. But there was a shortage of houses before the war, and since the end of 1918 that shortage has still further increased), and draws attention to the fact that of the houses which exist a large proportion are defective or insanitary, a statement which applies as much to rural as to urban housing.

The result of bad housing on human life is insisted upon. "Bad housing affects health . . . insanitary homes make their occupants unfit, and diminish their powers of resisting disease. . . . In a certain district of Liverpool, when a slum area was cleared and the population re-housed in new houses in the same area the proportion of deaths from tuberculosis was halved. . . . All authorities now agree that it will be impossible . . . to put an end to the unnecessary waste of child life . . . unless the housing question is dealt with in a drastic fashion."

The report of the Adult Education Committee is quoted: "Wretched housing conditions are a great hindrance to students. Wretched surroundings so damp a man's aspirations that his whole outlook is dull and sordid."

\*The Home I Want. By Richard Reiss. (Hodder & Stoughton. Price 2s. 6d.)

HALF A MILLION WOMEN are or will be OUT OF WORK. Domestic Service is no Solution. LAUNDRY SWEAT SHOPS NO REMEDY. Come and hear

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Miss Mary R. Macarthur will preside.

Speakers: Mr. Fred Bramley, Mr. Ben Spoor, M.P., Mrs. Despard, Miss A. Susan Lawrence, L.C.C., Mr. Francis Meynall, and Women Shop Stewards from London Munition Areas and the East End.

Tickets free on application to WOMEN'S FEDERATION, Dilke House, Malet Street, W.C.1.

No seats reserved after 7.15 p.m. Collection to defray expenses

### Women's International League.

#### MEETING

In Support of President Wilson's Policy

CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER

Wednesday, February 12th,

At 8 p.m. (Doors open 7.30.)

Chair: Mrs. SWANWICK.

Speakers: Mrs. DESPARD, Major H. J. GILLESPIE, D.S.O. Mr. GEORGE LANSBURY, Mrs. PETHICK LAWRENCE Mr. H. W. NEVINSON.

ADMISSION FREE. COLLECTION.

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And as Captain Reiss shows, housing must of necessity have a great effect on agriculture and village life. The Reconstruction Committee dealing with agricultural policy after the war has stated: "There can be no hope of a satisfactory development of agriculture as long as the demand for cottages remains unsatisfied." The report of the Commission of Inquiry into industrial unrest shows that bad housing is one of the chief causes of industrial unrest, while there is proof after proof of the intemperance, immorality and general unhappiness caused by bad homes, and finally Captain Reiss instances "the necessity for providing employment on demobilisation" as "one of the strongest arguments for inaugurating a great housing scheme as soon as possible in every area." Having proved that it is urgently necessary that numbers of new houses should be built, and shown that every citizen is responsible for seeing that they are built, he proceeds to give that citizen information which will enable him to carry out his task with intelligence.

Chapters are devoted to the house, the surroundings of the house, who should build the new houses, municipal housing, state assistance, rural housing, by-laws, building societies, town planning, house management, conversion of old houses, and most useful lists of books and reports on housing schemes, and a list of national housing organisations form an appendix. In addition the book is well illustrated by plans, and by photographs of bad and good houses, while a concise description is given of a good method of procedure by which citizens may arouse public opinion in the matter and use it to support Local Authorities who are carrying out their duties properly, and to stimulate those who are hanging back.

Captain Reiss concludes:

"The war has brought about vast changes in our social life and mental outlook. It is for us to decide as to whether peace, when it comes, shall not bring with it changes even greater. It is within our power to create a new world if we but have the faith to realise it and the courage to take the necessary steps to bring it into existence."

Our Outlook. (Fourpence Monthly.)

The "blue triangle" magazine has been reorganised. It has an attractive cover and a varied contents. Lady Portsmouth contributes an article on "Our Opportunities," and Malcolm Spencer one on "Neighbourliness Up-to-Date." Professor Spurgeon's notes give one a tantalizing glimpse of how interesting her lecture on *Poetry of To-day* must have been.

### Correspondence.

(Letters for publication should reach the Editor by first post on Monday.)

#### UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG WOMEN.

MADAM,—In the paragraph in this week's issue of THE COMMON CAUSE under the above heading you state: "It is an important question whether the unemployment donation is to be withheld from a woman who has been doing skilled engineering work because she refuses to enter domestic service." This sentence, as it stands, might easily convey an erroneous impression to the general public, the words "if that had been her occupation prior to the war" should have been added to complete the sentence and make it correct. Even then it is only partially correct.

For instance, if a woman had been a cook prior to entering a munition factory, she would certainly not lose her unemployment donation for refusing a situation, say, as housemaid or parlourmaid.

As a member of one of the Reconstruction Sub-Committees which have been set up by the Ministry of Labour in connection with the demobilisation of women, I can already see that we are to be faced with a vast, difficult, and intricate problem.

The principle which, I understand, is to be applied is that if work of the kind which a woman has been doing in munitions, Government service, &c., is not available, then an effort is to be made to place her in the occupation in which she had previously been engaged.

The case of those who have been doing skilled engineering work will, I think, present the least difficulty, for as soon as our peace industries can revive these should be able to find work, although, of course, this cannot be for some months; but the majority of women with whom the Committees will be called upon to deal cannot be described as skilled workers, and we know from past experience at the commencement of the war how difficult it is to find work for excessive numbers of unskilled persons at any given moment.

One of the reasons why the average wage in domestic service remains so low is that, unfortunately, it is still considered the refuge of the unskilled worker, and even to-day there are utterly inadequate facilities to enable a working woman to acquire the skill which will enable her to demand a really good wage. Another handicap is the entire lack of organisation of domestic workers.

Failing a sufficient demand in shops and factories to absorb the vast number of women seeking work, one is obliged to consider every avenue of employment that is open, and of these domestic service at present offers the largest number of vacancies; but, in my opinion, these vacancies will remain largely unfilled, in spite of the prevailing unemployment, unless two conditions can be fulfilled, namely: (1) that the status of the domestic worker be raised; (2) that the wages and conditions of domestic service be improved.

The first of these conditions can only be brought about by the working class, who at present themselves often look down upon, and even openly jeer at, domestic servants. The second condition can only be brought about by the general agreement and determination of the employers.

To meet the emergency of war, public money has been available for the training of women. Is it too much to hope that public money may now be available to meet the emergency brought about by peace, so that with as little delay as possible every opportunity may be given to provide training for women in the many skilled domestic and other occupations and industries which will be needed for the building up of the permanent well-being and prosperity of the country?

HELENA AUERBACH.

MADAM,—There are editorial remarks in THE COMMON CAUSE on the unemployment donation to women, asserting that it should not be withheld from one who refuses to enter domestic service. I know personally of a woman who entered domestic service at 16s. per week, with entire keep and lodging provided, on the stipulation of being free to go out every afternoon. It now transpires that the outing is for drawing unemployment pay of 25s. per week. Her mistress finds herself in the unpleasant position of being unable to get a servant unless she agrees to this dishonest course, and learns that hundreds are doing the same.

If women wish to refuse domestic service, let them do so, but with the understanding that they cannot "have it both ways," and let the employers also understand that such an arrangement will be penalised. Your kind insertion of this letter may throw light on the situation.

M. D. SCOTT MONCRIEFF.

MADAM,—Mrs. A's husband is a clerk in a Government office. He earns £7 a week (his education having cost over £1,000). Of this, £1 is taken in rates and taxes, and £1, at least, in rent. Mrs. A works from dawn till dark to feed, dress, and educate her two children on the remaining £5. She offers Miss B the equivalent of 35s. a week to help her, and to take off a little of the strain. Miss B, however, prefers 29s. a week out-of-work donation as a "skilled engineer" though she is just as good at housework as Mrs. A. Result—a bit added to Mrs. A's burden of taxes and no help in her burden of work.

Mrs. C's husband is a "skilled engineer." He can get home if there is a place waiting for him. But in deference to Miss B's sensibilities it is given to her. Result—further service abroad for Mr. C and more of the burden of struggling along alone for Mrs. C (as if they had not both borne quite enough already)!

I understand from your notes of January 31st that you consider this reasonable. What I ask is—is it right?

MRS. A'S SISTER.

#### A WOMAN CANDIDATE FOR THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

MADAM,—I have been adopted as one of the Municipal Reform candidates for Shoreditch at the approaching L.C.C. election. It is a large constituency—nineteen thousand women alone being on the register—and I shall need a great deal of help. I shall be most grateful for any assistance, for however short a time that any of your readers can give me. There may be some who, while unable entirely to support the Municipal Reform Programme, may be willing to support a fellow-Suffragist from a desire to promote the increased representation of women on public bodies. Speakers, canvassers, and clerical workers will be needed, as well as the loan of motor-cars on polling day, March 6th.

Offers of help should be sent to the agent, Mr. J. L. Cooke, 27, New North Road, N.W.1, which is easily reached from Victoria Station by omnibus No. 76 (via the Bank, Moorgate Street, and Finsbury Pavement).

ROSAMOND SMITH.

### Reports, Notices, etc.

#### WEEK-END SCHOOL ON HOUSING.

A very successful week-end lecture school on Housing was held by the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association on January 17th-20th. The School opened with an inspection of the Hampstead Garden Suburb, and this was succeeded by a series of lectures on various aspects of the Housing Movement, which were given in the Institute at the Suburb. Whether it was the enthusiasm of the promoters of the school or the thoroughly human interest of the subject, or possibly the unusual excellence and charm of the lectures, which produced the delightful atmosphere of the school, with its spirit of co-operation in the scheme, it is difficult to say; but it is certain that there was a real desire to learn shown in the concentrated attention of the audience and the long and spirited debates which formed the conclusion of each lecture. A visit to Letchworth concluded the meetings. The party were personally conducted over the First Garden City by its founder, Mr. Ebenezer Howard, and spent a busy and enlightening day, quite undeterred by heavy rain.

Among other subjects discussed during the lectures were opportunities for recreation and the fostering of the communal spirit by co-operation in such matters between the tenants on an estate. In this lecture, as in all the others, it was emphasised that housing cannot be dissociated from general local problems. Another lecture by Capt. Reiss gave the audience a mass of useful information concerning the extent of the need, the reasons for the shortage of houses, the laws dealing with housing, both as regards existing and prospective buildings, and the methods to be pursued in planning a building scheme on sensible lines. Further lectures from the architect's point of view were by Mr. Raymond Unwin and Professor Adshead. The former emphasised the effect of housing on the spiritual and mental outlook of the inhabitant. He explained that overcrowding is unnecessary in the interests of economy, as the saving of expenditure on road-making in a scheme of the Garden City or Suburb type is sufficient or nearly sufficient to give everyone light, air, and space for a garden. Professor Adshead dwelt chiefly on town planning, in some ways a technical subject, but in this case it was made not only simple but of thrilling interest. Mrs. Baker told the school what the working woman had decided that she needed in her home, and later on Captain Reiss lectured again on what could be done to help the problem by the members of the school. Now a local scheme might be criticised, now a local voluntary committee could be formed, and many other interesting suggestions, and finally, Mr. Culpin gave a 'model' lecture as a help to those who intended to use the powder and shot with which they had been so liberally supplied.

R. S.

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

There appears to be a mistaken impression in the minds of the general public as to the effect of the appointment, with the sanction of the Home Office, of a new force of Women Police Patrols by the Commissioner of Police has had, or will have, on the voluntary work of the Women Patrols. We are anxious to state quite definitely that it has not affected the Voluntary Patrol work, which will continue in every particular as heretofore, under precisely the same conditions on which it was initiated in October, 1914. Under the auspices of the National Union of Women Workers (now National Council of Women), Voluntary Patrols received the official recognition of Scotland Yard, the Home Office, Admiralty, War Office, and other authorities, and further, the then Commissioner of Police not only gave his official recognition, but signed the authorisation cards which the Women Patrols carry. The present Commissioner continues this recognition and continues to sign the cards, which are returned every six months to New Scotland Yard for inspection and renewal.

LOUISE CREIGHTON, GERTRUDE S. GOW, M. G. CARDEN.

Women Patrols Committee, Parliament Mansions, Victoria, S.W. 1.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE UNMARRIED MOTHER AND HER CHILD.

A successful meeting was held at the Mansion House on Tuesday, January 28th, under the above Council. The chair was taken by the Lord Mayor, who expressed his sympathy with the aims which the Council was seeking to promote. He was followed by the Bishop of Birmingham, who urged that the public attitude towards this problem should be more in harmony with the principles of Christianity than had been the case heretofore. In his experience, a forced marriage was not by any means always a wise solution, but there was no doubt that the responsibility of paternity should be brought home to the father, and that mother and child should be kept together wherever possible.

Sir Charles Wakefield, Hon. Treasurer of the Council, explained how the action on the lines proposed by the Council had tended to reduce the illegitimate birthrate in those countries where it had been adopted, and had also had a very beneficial effect on the high illegitimate infant mortality rate. In this country the illegitimate was at present twice as high as the legitimate infant mortality rate. In view of these facts, Sir Charles made an urgent appeal to the public for funds to enable the Council to continue in its work.

Mrs. Barnes, O.B.E., made a very eloquent speech pleading the cause of the unmarried mother. She said that her work brought her into constant touch with these poor girls, many of whom were, with their babies, already being actually touched by starvation—not merely seeing it looming in the distance. She drew a vivid picture of the contrast between the wife who, however poor she might be, was surrounded by an atmosphere of love and care during the weary months of waiting, and the unmarried mother who, filled with shame and fear, was left to face her agony alone. She said that it was scarcely to be wondered at if the mother was glad to be separated from her child, but, so wonderful a thing is motherhood, she had been again and again confronted by half-starved girls who came to her hugging a tiny bundle, and blurring out: "I won't be parted from 'im, whatever happens." Mrs. Barnes said that the Council was not aiming at making vice easy, but rather that it wished to make virtue not impossible.

The point of view of Labour was ably put forward by Mrs. Baker, of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations. She spoke on behalf of the organised working-class women of the nation, and said that they were strongly in favour of the proposals put forward by the National Council; they were particularly desirous that the responsibility of fatherhood be brought home, and that the taking of paternity proceedings should be facilitated in every way. She expressed the hope that the attitude towards the illegitimate child, conveyed in the words: "Poor little thing, it would be a blessing if God would take it," was dying out.

Dr. Sequeira emphasised the necessity for ante-natal treatment in cases of syphilis, and gave a most interesting account of his experience at the London Hospital, where diseased pregnant women, treated in time, had given birth to healthy babies. This proved the necessity for facilities for ante-natal treatment for unmarried as well as for married mothers.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Hon. Secretaries: MISS MARGARET JONES. MRS. OLIVER STRACHEY (Parliamentary). Hon. Treasurers: MRS. H. A. L. FISHER and MISS ROSAMOND SMITH. Secretaries: MISS INEZ M. FERGUSON, MRS. HUBBARD (Information and Parliamentary).

Offices—Evelyn House, 62, Oxford Street, London, W.1. Telegraphic Address—Voiceless, Ox, London. Telephone—Museum 2668.

Headquarter Notes.

A few of our Societies have responded warmly to the suggestion that they should promote the candidature of women on local governing bodies at the forthcoming elections. From many parts of the country, however, and especially from the West of England, we hear that there is great apathy shown in the question, and that women are not coming forward to any appreciable extent as candidates. In view of the great need for the experience and service of women on these bodies, we do once more most strongly urge our Societies to do what they can to help in the matter. For another month at least no society can say there is nothing for it to do. Find suitable candidates, form election committees, organise meetings, speak, canvass, and, at the end, bring a long list of duly elected women members!

Pamphlets dealing with the need for women candidates and election procedure can be obtained from the Women's Local Government Society, 19, Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. 1, or from Headquarters.

Contributions to the General Fund.

Table with columns for names, amounts, and categories like 'Winchester W.S.S.', 'Subscriptions', 'Common Cause Fund', and 'D.O.R.A. 40 D PROTEST FUND'.

N.U.W.S.S. Scottish Women's Hospitals.

Subscriptions are still urgently needed, and should be sent to Mrs. Laurie, Hon. Treasurer, S.W.H., Red House, Greenock, or to Headquarters, 2, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh. Armistice has now been declared, but the Sick and Wounded are still on our hands, and will need to be cared for, for some time to come. The Committee therefore urge the necessity of continued and even greater support from the public, to meet the many demands that are still coming from the various Units. Cheques should be crossed "Royal Bank of Scotland." Subscriptions for the London Units should be sent to the Right Hon. Viscountess Cowdray, or to Miss Gosse, Joint Hon. Treasurers, 66, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, S.W. 1.

Forthcoming Meetings (N.U.W.S.S.)

FEBRUARY 12. Chester—Haswell's Café—Speaker: Miss Macadam (Liverpool University School of Social Science)—Subject: "Problems of Health and Disease"—Chairman: Miss Tomkinson 7.30 p.m.

Coming Events.

FEBRUARY 9. Covent Garden—First performance of the 8th session of Pioneer Players—Programme will include two short plays "Trifles," by Susan Gaspell, "The Home of Vision," by Constance Holme.

FEBRUARY 12. Westminster—Central Hall—Women's International League—Meeting in support of Pres. Wilson's Peace Policy—Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Major H. J. Gillespie, D.S.O., Mrs. George Lansbury, &c.—Admission Free, reserved and numbered seats, 2s. 6d. and 1s., from the W.I.L., 14, Bedford Row, W.C.1.

FEBRUARY 13. Horney Rise—Blenheim Hall—Young Women's Meeting—Speaker: Miss Ruth Young—Subject: "Queen Elizabeth and Women's Work" 8.15 p.m.

Advertisement for VALKASA THE TONIC NERVE FOOD. An Invigorating Nutrient for BRAIN FAG, DEPRESSION, LASSITUDE. 1s. 9d., 5s., and 9s. of all Chemists. James Woolley, Sons & Co., Ltd. MANCHESTER.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MISS A. MAUDE ROYDEN preaches in the City Temple next Sunday at the 6.30 p.m. service. Subject: "The Kind of World we Want: IV.—The Work we Ought to do."

**TO ROBERTINA ISABELLA ROBERTS.**—WE, the undersigned, HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that ISABELLA ROBERTS late of 4 Manville-road Lisard Cheshire Widow died on the 22nd September, 1918, after having by her Will given the residue of her real and personal estate to her Executor Matthew Henry Jones of 51 North John-street Liverpool Solicitor upon trust for her daughter Robertina Isabella Roberts who went to reside in London about 25 years ago and had not been heard of for several years on condition that the said bequest was claimed in accordance with this notice before the expiration of three years from the death of the said Isabella Roberts AND FURTHER that unless the said Robertina Isabella Roberts shall within the said three years give notice of her claim to the said Executor she will forfeit the said bequest. DATED this 24th day of January 1919.

Matthew Jones & Lamb,  
51 North John-street, Liverpool,  
Solicitors for the Executor

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9, Grafton-street, Piccadilly, W. 1.—Subscription: London Members £1 1s. 6d., Country Members £1 5s. per annum from date of entrance (Irish, Scottish, and Foreign Members 10s. 6d.). Weekly Lectures; House Dinners; Valuable Feminist Lending and Reference Library available to Members; Excellent Catering; Luncheons and Dinners à la Carte.—All particulars, Secretary. Tel.: Mayfair 3332.

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