

THE
WOMAN'S LEADER

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

AND
THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS

Trade Boards.

The action of the Portsmouth magistrates in dismissing, under the Probation of Offenders Act, a number of summonses against drapery firms for not paying the Trade Board rate of wages, will probably have serious consequences for other workers in industries controlled by Trade Boards. The facts were that in these cases employers and employed came to an arrangement whereby lower rates were to be paid to the girls, and, as far as the counsel for the prosecution knew, there was no suggestion that pressure was put on the workers to accept the reduced rates. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, with the dread spectre of unemployment facing them as the alternative to refusal, the girls agreed to work for 8½d. an hour instead of the legally fixed minimum wage of 10½d. For a forty-eight hour week the women will therefore only be entitled to receive thirty-four shillings, which may be all right for the girl who lives at her parents' home, but is in no way adequate as a living wage for a woman who is self-supporting, let alone a widow who may have children to support as well. The great victory which the Women's Trade Union League won in the past, and for which it fought so hard, is being undermined, and the position of working women is thus rapidly deteriorating. And for the equality of treatment of men and women in industry there is still a big and a long struggle ahead of us. At Montrose, a firm employing 750 hands called a joint conference of employers and employed, and it was agreed that there should be a reduction in wages of 10 per cent. for men and 20 per cent. for women. Do not women workers realise that they must do all they can to urge the retention of the Trade Boards, which alone stand between them and sweating, instead of giving evidence on the side of their employers and recording that they "are perfectly satisfied with the wages paid"?

The Cave Committee.

The Committee appointed under the chairmanship of Lord Cave, to inquire into the working of the Trade Boards Acts will earn the gratitude of all if it can think of a plan to make the machinery of the Boards work more quickly. From three to six months must now elapse before an amended rate can become operative. This provision, it is true, now seems to be in favour of the employed, who are thus saved from an immediate fall in wages which is justified by trade conditions. But when trade

improves the delay will deprive them of a rise till this is long overdue. Such tardiness naturally causes irritation and ill-feeling, and it is as truly "in restraint of trade" as many things with worse names. It is, however, an accident, and not a necessary feature of the Trade Board and the Minimum Wage.

Employment of Married Women.

The Corporation of Glasgow has decided by a vote of thirty-six as against twenty-five, that the married women in their employment whose husbands are wage-earning, shall be dismissed as a part solution of the unemployment problem. This decision will affect women in various departments—industrial workers, nurses, and doctors. The extraordinary feature of the voting was that the dismissal of married women was strongly supported by members of the Labour Party—a Party understood to hold the view that no employer has any right to inquire into the private life and concerns of his or her employee. The action taken is alike bad economics and a yielding to deeply rooted prejudice.

Women and Labour Exchanges.

A correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* criticises the value of the Labour Exchanges to women, taking as her text the very frank comments of Girls' Clubs in answer to a questionnaire circulated by their National Organisation. It is complained that the clerks at Exchanges have little knowledge of the industries of the district, or of the qualifications demanded by employers; and that they are ignorant of the special circumstances affecting women's work in particular. The Club girls, except in one district, report that it is rare for girls and women to get work through the Exchanges, and they confirm the finding of the Committee of Inquiry, published last year, that the work entailed by the administration of the Unemployment Insurance Act and the compilation of statistics leaves the staff little time for their chief duty, the placing of workers. They see the remedy for this state of things in the application to adult workers of the methods now common in dealing with young workers, who have at their disposal the advice of a Choice of Employment Committee, working under the local education authority, or of a Juvenile Employment Committee under the Ministry of Labour. We are of opinion that the Exchanges, as at present carried on, miss many opportunities of usefulness, and are in urgent need of reform, but we cannot join in the demand for their extinction.

A Woman Librarian.

Apart from the exhibition of a film on "American Library Work in France," by Miss Jessie Carson, the only paper advertised to be read by a woman at the Annual Meeting of the Library Association at Manchester, was that on "The Library of the International Labour Office (League of Nations), Geneva," read by Miss H. A. Lake, B.Sc. (Econ.), F.L.A. Miss Lake, who was formerly Librarian of the Ministry of Labour at its headquarters in Whitehall, is now in charge of the Library of the International Labour Office. The Library is organised on the workshop system, and aims at putting all new additions at the disposal of the members of the Office within a few hours of receipt, urgent matter being given precedence and nothing being delayed longer than twenty-four hours at the outside. This in itself is no mean achievement, since the average growth of the Library amounts to 3,600 items a week, of which seven hundred are books, pamphlets and official material, nine hundred are periodicals—largely issued by trade unions—and two thousand are newspapers from all parts of the world. In addition to this extraordinarily heavy growth, however, the Library has taken over, and is steadily absorbing, the material formerly contained in the Library of the International Association for Labour Legislation, of which the work is now being carried on by the International Labour Office. This Library consisted, at a rough estimate, of some fifty thousand items, this number not including a pile of about forty thousand unbound periodicals, which alone took the equivalent of one clerk's time for a year to enter up. Although the Library of the International Labour Office was entirely non-existent less than eighteen months ago, practically the whole of this vast accumulation, which arrived uncatalogued and unclassified last September, now occupies an orderly position on the main shelves of the Library, with author and subject references in the catalogue. The small remainder is sorted into close order and is instantly traceable on demand. This work has been done in addition to the heavy daily growth, in spite of continual shortstaffedness and such difficulties as supervising the work of a largely unskilled staff of six nationalities working on material in twenty-four different languages.

Women in the Church.

The Ecumenical Methodist Conference, discussing the status and work of women in the Christian Church, listened with interest to accounts of the work of deaconesses in the United States, where they number nearly 1,500. The need of women's work for temperance, foreign missions, housing, child welfare, and peace was strongly emphasised, but at least one speaker argued that only "exceptional women" should preach. If preaching were confined to persons, male and female, of exceptional gifts, the religious world would suffer an extraordinary upheaval, but whether for better or worse, who can say? In the meantime, the growing willingness of the established and free churches to make use of women's talent for organisation is a promising sign.

Blackmail.

Four women jurors were requested by Mr. Justice Acton to withdraw before the trial of a sordid case in which a girl was employed as a decoy by a gang of blackmailers. It is true, as the Judge remarked, that the details of the case were disgusting; it is true that the girl was mercifully dealt with by the Court as being rather a tool than a conspirator. Nevertheless, we deplore the Judge's ruling. It is a commonplace of Parliament to refuse to sanction measures of protection for girls and women because they are alleged to facilitate blackmail. This particular crime is therefore one in which women, who now have a duty to express an opinion on legislation, are especially interested, and to shelter them from unpleasant details is to rob them of the means of forming a rational opinion. Moreover, the chief weapon of the blackmailer is his appeal to ignorance and terror; secrecy is a forcing-bed for his particular iniquity. No woman worthy of the name wishes to be sheltered if the process implies danger for others.

Treatment of Child Criminals.

Dr. A. R. Abelson read an interesting paper in the Psychology Section of the British Association last week, in which he dealt with the psychological treatment of the delinquent child. Wrong-doing, he said, was often bound up with morbid conditions of health, and incarceration in an institution is often the worst possible method of dealing with the child. It resulted in a feeling of degradation, and left a stain on the soul which could never be effaced. The habitual criminal of riper years is often made by the unsatisfactory treatment of the child delin-

quent. Delinquency, said Dr. Abelson, is curable where there is no gross mental abnormality, and psychological treatment has succeeded in effecting considerable improvement when all other methods have failed. The method of dealing with these children is certainly improving, and the women magistrates should do much towards completing the reform.

Re-opening of Evening Classes in London.

The L.C.C. evening institutes re-opened on Monday, September 19th. There will be classes in every district in London for practically all commercial, trade, and technical subjects. Courses are being arranged in Literature, Languages, Science, Technical subjects, Music, Arts and Crafts. No matter what occupation a Londoner follows, a class will be available which will go a long way towards meeting his or her requirements, either for work, leisure, or citizenship. From the young City typist to the expert craftsman and business manager all are being catered for in one way or another. A number of special institutes for men or women only are being opened, and these will provide opportunities for studying questions of general educational interest as distinct from vocational subjects. The instruction at the evening classes will meet the syllabus of many examining bodies, such as the Civil Service Commissioners, the Institute of Bankers, Chamber of Commerce, Royal Society of Arts, and others which issue technical and professional certificates. The attendance last year established a record. Two hundred thousand students attended evening classes in London, and over ten thousand separate classes were held. Each year the "persistence" factor steadily rises. In other words, Londoners are not only attending evening classes in greater numbers than hitherto, but are doing so with greater determination. The cost of the 201 L.C.C. evening institutes this year will be £458,000, which, after deducting fees and government grants, is equivalent, roughly speaking, to one shilling per head of London's population. The cost to the rates is about one penny in the pound. Intending students should write to the Education Officer, New County Hall, Westminster Bridge Road, S.E. 1, for further information, or should interview the Principal of the nearest institute if they are in doubt about the particular kind of class best suited to their needs.

Boy Messengers' Prospects.

With the abolition of the grade of assistant postman, the prospects of the boy messengers have brightened. They are required to pass an examination in the half-year in which they attain the age of sixteen, and they will then be transferred to suitable grades. The actual training for the different branches does not necessarily start immediately, and a period of waiting may ensue, during which the boy continues his messenger work. If he fails to pass into any class he is given the option of remaining as a messenger for two years, but as the boys attend classes for four hours a week during the first two years of their employment, and as the tests are not abnormally severe, there should not be much chance of failure. Under an agreement with the Admiralty, a quarter of the vacancies in the wireless telegraphy branch of the Navy are reserved for boy messengers.

The Sussex Scheme.

Three London hospitals have adopted the "Sussex Scheme," which will come into operation on November 1st. It is a practical adaptation of the device of payment by patients which takes into account the fact that the end of an expensive illness is the worst moment to ask for subscriptions to hospital work. In fact, the number of patients unable to pay at all has been disappointingly high. The Sussex Scheme provides that an annual subscriber shall obtain hospital facilities free of charge and without question. The only limitation is that the income of the subscriber must not exceed a given limit. The London, St. Thomas's, and the Royal Free are the first London hospitals to adopt a scheme which has been successful in the provinces; we hope that others will soon come into line.

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.

THE INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK.

It is impossible to read the daily and weekly papers at present without receiving an impression of the deepest gloom. To take only one among many black outlooks, the employment position appears to be as bad as it can be. Not only does trade continue to slump, but, apparently, it cannot do anything else for a long time to come, and the chances of the normal re-absorption of workers are very remote. There is, therefore, bound to be a considerable volume of unemployment both of men and women, and of young persons, and no prospect of work enough for all. This situation, which existed last winter, was then tied over by the out-of-work donation; but for the coming one nothing seems to be on foot, except the out-of-work insurance which will be available to those who have been lucky enough to have had six months of work. The sudden flurry of excitement which has taken hold of the public in the last month is very well justified, but it is not doing very much good. Schemes such as those proposed by the Cabinet Committee are months too late to be more than fractionally effective; and in any case they could touch only the edge of the problem. Relief work of public utility might use up the sort of unemployed youth who has no trade and makes disturbances in the streets; but for the real bulk of the unemployed, the men and women whose normal job has gone because of the collapse of trade, arterial road-making and drainage is not going to help. We do not mean to imply that these works of public utility should not be undertaken; far from it. But they are not the whole solution of the problem by any means, even if it is practicable at this late date to get them on foot in time for this winter at all.

Now all these are depressing considerations; the employment problem is one which needs infinite care in detail, and which beyond certain limits cannot be solved. We must, therefore, face up to the truth and admit that since there is not work for all, the extra people must be supported. There is no getting away from this, and the Poplar Councillors in their prison cells, and the bands of unemployed who make such a stir, and the unhappy Boards of Guardians who have such a heartbreaking task, all realise this truth which the Government has not as yet accepted. But it is one thing to accept a truth such as this, and quite another to agree how it is to be carried out. While in the large towns there is not enough work, there are often cases where, in the small, there are not enough workers; and we are not any of us rich enough to want to subsidise people who will not take work. Among women this fact stands out most singularly in regard to domestic service, where the position is as paradoxical and as unsettled as it can well be. We have always had, in this paper, the greatest sympathy for the woman worker whatever her trade, because we know well how difficult is her lot, and we have always believed that domestic work should, as far as possible, be a trade like any other, with a recognised training and status, and conditions which are subject to some control on the part of the workers. There are many things needed to improve the general status and terms of domestic work (we speak here of the average and not the exceptional home), but, when all allowances are made for that, it is still a very strange thing that the shortage of domestic workers continues.

To some people this simply leads to abuse of the girls who do not go into service. To others, and we are among them, it leads to thought. What is wrong with this home trade that girls will rather run the almost certain risk of want than go into it? One thing and another thing and another is wrong—we can name detail after detail, from living-in to evenings out, latchkeys, uniforms, and all the rest; but the root of it all surely is that the work itself is despised. There is something very wrong with that Englishman's castle which is his home. And it is the business of the women of to-day to find out what is wrong, and to set it right. For until our staple trade of domestic work is on right lines it will be very hard to solve any of the other employment difficulties of women workers.

AN INDUSTRY WHICH SHOULD BE DEVELOPED.

A NEW PROFESSION FOR WOMEN.

By MRS. C. S. PEEL, O.B.E.

Until war changed our domestic habits, we were for the most part content to buy tinned, bottled, and dried fruits and vegetables at considerable expense, and to let much of the contents of our gardens go to waste. Then, with scarcity and high prices, came the "Stock your Larder from your Garden" propaganda, inaugurated by the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Agriculture. Trained teachers gave demonstrations throughout the country to highly interested audiences.

This year the Board of Education, with the help of the Ministry of Agriculture, has moved still further in the matter, for it has arranged for certain diploma'd teachers of domestic subjects to take a "refresher" course in fruit and vegetable preservation at the Ministry of Agriculture's Experimental Station at Chipping Campden, a delightfully situated village in the Cotswolds.

All the teachers who are attending this "Canning Camp" already knew a great deal about the subject: they are finding out how much more there is to know, and that the study is a live study.

The numbers admitted are necessarily small, because of the nature of the practical work, and of the Board's determination that every teacher should get good value for the month that she is giving up to the course. Part of the time is spent in practical bottling, canning, and drying of fruits and vegetables, part in the Science laboratory studying the particular moulds and fungi that prevent the fruit from keeping, part in visits to gardens and orchards to study conditions for growing fruit, and the kinds of fruits best suited for preserving.

A delightful feature of the course has been the camp where the eighteen selected teachers live; it is close to the Experimental Station, which provides a dining room, rest room, and kitchen, as well as class-rooms and a laboratory; and, the best of all, bath-rooms and dressing-rooms. Life in the open air during this wonderful summer has been ideal, and it is little wonder that students say, "If there were seventy applications this year, there will be seven hundred next year."

The instruction given is thorough, scientific as well as practical, and including lectures on book-keeping and the organisation of village depôts. And here we come to an aspect of the subject which seems to me of widespread interest, for does not the preservation of home-grown fruits and vegetables afford an opening for women?

In these days of quick motor transport, supplies may be gathered from a wide area, to be dealt with in a conveniently placed canning factory. There are certain fruits which, owing to climatic reasons, could not be preserved in this country, but there are many others, together with a large choice of vegetables, which could be put on the market at reasonable cost.

With the development of the preserving industry will go, hand in hand, the development of market gardens, and such country industries carried out under modern social conditions must be of great value to the nation. With such knowledge of fruit and vegetable preservation as is now at our disposal, there surely are women who have the power to do so who will open to their own sex an industry which should be a suitable outlet for their energies.

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BURNING QUESTIONS.

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

PROHIBITION: THE NORTH AMERICAN VERDICT.

By DR. C. W. SALEEBY, F.R.S.Edin.

Returning from a tour of over five thousand miles within Canada alone, including three weeks in the three great prairie Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, I find myself again in my native land, where Prohibition is still a "burning question," even amongst women, incredible though that statement must sound to the women of that great Dominion beyond the seas. It is, of course, an obvious move on the part of the Liquor Trade to represent Prohibition as a piece of Yankee humbug, wholly alien to British ideas; and our pitiful, insular ignorance of the Canadian nation, which I regard as the hope of the Empire, allows us to be without the remarkable facts which I will briefly summarise here, before attempting to submit any arguments of my own.

During the war, and long before the United States, Canada enacted war-time Prohibition in order to save from the Food-Destroyers—all brewers and distillers, of course, are primarily that—the grain for which Canada is world famous, and which Britain, France, and Italy needed scarcely less than the magnificent men of Vimy Ridge. Thus, an experiment in Prohibition was set going, and after the war the various Provinces were called upon, by popular vote—Prohibition being only possible by the will of the people in such actual and highly educated democracies as those of Canada and the United States—to decide upon their future action. It was my privilege to be in Ottawa and Toronto in 1919, when Ontario was about to vote, and to hear the evidence publicly adduced by leading citizens of the Province, responsible for the various aspects of its life, as to what Prohibition had done for them. The Province went "dry"; but importation from Quebec, which is French-speaking, Roman Catholic, wine-drinking, was still possible. I visited Canada only very briefly last year, but this year I was in at the end of the campaign, which resulted in an overwhelming popular vote for a "bone-dry" Ontario. In this respect, the Province has simply followed Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, which voted "bone-dry" last autumn. We must clearly understand that these were popular votes on a specific issue, such as we do not have in this country.

British Columbia and Quebec are now experimenting with various methods, the least stringent of which would be an almost measureless advance upon anything even contemplated in these islands; the other seven Provinces have Prohibition. The power of the Liquor Trade has been smashed in Canada. The Churches and the women have been the chief agents of this achievement. The politicians represent public opinion on this matter. Thus, in Edmonton, the superb capital of Alberta, the Premier, Mr. Stewart, whom I met with the members of his Cabinet, said to me, before them and my friends, in words which I recorded at the time, and now transcribe, "Prohibition has been of immense benefit. It is the finest thing that ever happened in the Province." One was invited to speak to many meetings of men, at Canadian Clubs, Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, to the Canadian Council of Women, and in Toronto I addressed the National Public Health Convention in the Physics Theatre, and hundreds of people were turned away. The fighting has been done; there is no heckling, there are no interruptions; people merely wish to hear new arguments and facts to support them in what they already believe and practise. Quebec and British Columbia will come into line some day, though the former has a racial, religious problem of her own, and the latter is cosmopolitan-maritime, like New York; but they will have to move, because the British folk (very largely Scottish) who have made Canada great, are decided on this matter, and are determined not to allow the United States to stay ahead of them in this or any other factor of national power and glory.

Never was there any drinking worth mentioning amongst women in Canada. Neither was there any large or even appreciable degree of what Dr. W. C. Sullivan has here taught us to call "industrial drinking" as distinguished from "convivial drinking." At the very highest level of liquor consumption in

Canada, the total volume of alcohol flowing through the national blood, in proportion to population, was never as much as one-fourth of our pre-war quantity; and of that an extreme minimum was flowing through maternal blood, so that the action of alcohol as what I call a "racial poison" can never have been formidable. To find an English-speaking Canadian woman of any standing who would openly, or even in private, ask for the return of the saloon would be impossible. Canadian women in general are dumbfounded at the attitude of English women, including most of their leaders, on this subject. They cannot get their minds to conceive any explanation of the facts in our country. Especially is this so since countless Canadian soldiers have told their mothers what the vicinity of Waterloo and Victoria, and the Strand, were like, when they were over here, even under the regulations of the Control Board at their most stringent. It is generally known, throughout Canada and the United States, that the public-houses of London and their natural age-long association with the brothels of London were such that, at last, the American soldiers had to be sent from Liverpool to Southampton without passing through London at all. I spent several weeks in Illinois this summer, and can abundantly confirm the recent statement of Mr. Harold Spender in the *Daily Telegraph*, that every European sneer about Prohibition which reaches the ears of women in the Middle West, confirms them in their resolve never again to allow their boys to be sent as soldiers to this Continent.

I have now paid prolonged visits to the United States in three successive years, the first being just before the coming of war-time Prohibition. During this period, the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution, giving the Suffrage to women over the age of twenty-one, has been achieved, despite the bitterest and most unscrupulous hostility of the liquor interest, as every American woman knows. It is a commonplace that the Nineteenth Amendment would assure the Eighteenth or Prohibition Amendment, were its security in doubt, which America knows very well it is not. The women were the pioneers of Prohibition in the United States, when very few men were any braver or more enlightened than the overwhelming majority of well-meaning men yet are here. We think of Carrie Nation as a fanatic, but liquor had ruined her home: the windows she smashed with her axe were those of saloons which were open in defiance of the law, and her crusade had the result that the law was enforced. She was only one of many brave women who gave or risked life, health, comfort, friendship, all they had or were, to fight the "home's greatest enemy." I never recall their record without personal shame that I, knowing far better than any of them how strong is our case, should have dared and risked and done so little.

In this country the liquor traffic is doing, I believe, and has long been doing, immeasurably more harm, especially to women and children, than it ever did in Canada or the United States. The attitude of our women in general towards this subject is, to me, as incomprehensible as it is to the women of English-speaking North America. Where have our women been? What have they seen? Do they remember the saying of Florence Nightingale that one cannot learn social truth when one lives in a fine house in a fine park? Most of our women seem to me to be as *academic* and *doctrinaire* in this matter as our Labour leaders, who believe that the evils of liquor are due to its capitalist sale, and that when poison is sold by the nation it will poison no longer.

For years I have reiterated the suggestion that a deputation of Labour should visit North America to see what Prohibition has done and is doing for Labour. The time has now come when a deputation representing the women of Britain should visit Canada and the United States to study and report on the results of Prohibition upon the lives, health, physical and moral, safety, and happiness, especially of women and children. They will return with a unanimous verdict; that the women of Britain must demand for themselves, and, as trustees of the future, for their children, the manifold blessings of Prohibition.

THE NURSING PROFESSION TO-DAY.—II.

GENERAL NURSING.

A probationer entering one of the big general hospitals is required to give her services for a preliminary period of trial varying from one to three months. During this time she will receive no salary, and must provide her own uniform; but if she is subsequently accepted the trial period is counted in with her four years' training.

Her pay will vary according to the hospital she enters. Some of the best-known hospitals give the smallest salaries; considering that the prestige of having been trained within their wards will compensate the nurses for this disadvantage. In one or two cases she will even be required to deposit a sum of money upon entering, which will be forfeited by her should she prove unsatisfactory, and returned to her if she is accepted for full training. She must pass a strict medical and dental examination at the hands of the hospital doctors; must produce two references from non-relatives, and must also produce her birth certificate; and must state her father's profession, her height, weight, religious denomination, and numerous other details before she is allowed to enter the wards at all. Her uniform, or materials for it, will be provided for her after the first month or so, but she is generally required to buy her own collars, cuffs, and belts; and, of course, must provide such accessories as scissors, forceps, thermometer, &c.

How she will loathe that uniform! The stiff, tight-fitting dress of thick, heavy print, with coarse seams and lined bodice; the tight cuffs, that serve no earthly purpose, and must be removed before any serious work is done; the prickly, uncomfortable cap, always in the way, and a truly maddening thing when starched strings are worn with it; the stiff, shiny apron fitting close up to the neck; and the unspeakable collar that does, literally and truly, cut a long open wound in the throat of every unaccustomed wearer within the first twenty-four hours. Remember that the nurse's work involves a great deal of stooping and lifting; that much of it is extremely messy work; and that it must all be carried on either in artificially heated wards or in an artificially over-heated operating theatre, and you will begin to understand how she loathes that uniform.

The actual ward discipline of a first-class hospital—that cause of such endless and profitless grousing amongst thoughtless or inefficient probationers—though certainly strict, must be necessarily so. An unpunctual, lazy, careless, or forgetful nurse is a source of so much discomfort and even danger to her luckless patients that she will thoroughly deserve the "straining" she will undoubtedly receive from her ward sister. No big public institution can be run in a slack, easygoing fashion; although in a hospital, as elsewhere, the noisy bully is never the best disciplinarian. But it is impossible to imagine that any sensible woman would dream of objecting to reasonable regulations laid down for an obvious and essential purpose, any more than she would dream of objecting to the tyranny of that law which forbids her to drive a motor-car at thirty miles an hour on the wrong side of the road. None the less, absolute power is a very dangerous thing to put in fallible human hands; it is always a temptation to those set in authority to exercise their authority for the sheer love of proving it. Junior nurses are peculiarly apt to be victimised in this way, because of their singularly helpless position during the four years of training. If they leave the hospital for any cause whatsoever, they stand a very remote chance of being accepted anywhere else, and the training which they have already undergone is thrown away. Nor have they any "court of appeal" to which they can bring a grievance, except in most unusual and serious cases. A nurse who believed herself unjustly accused of some grave moral or legal offence might conceivably bring the matter before the House Committee; but all those minor troubles, the sum of which may make her life appear, at times, quite unendurable, are, as a rule, far too petty, too difficult to explain, to be referred even to "Matron" for her arbitration. Especially when she has a strong premonition that Matron will be inclined to support Sister!

However, the general "tone" of hospitals is rapidly improving in this respect; and the probationer who enters upon her duties with her soul strung up to resist the anticipated storm of fault-finding may even be pleasantly surprised by the forbearance and good nature of the other workers in her ward. The worst thing she will have to endure, at first, will probably be the extreme loneliness of institutional life; slipping, unnoticed and unregarded, into her place at the end of the long table at meal times; going off to bed, dead tired, with no one to give her a kindly good-night or a word of encouragement for to-morrow; committing innumerable small solecisms from sheer ignorance of hospital etiquette, and being publicly reprimanded for each one; undergoing once again, in short, all the most painful sensations of the new girl at school.

She will soon discover, moreover, what is meant by the evils of the "living-in system" of which she may have heard a good deal without realising precisely what it means. Not only her work, but her food and drink, her clothes and her shoes, her baths and her laundry, the light in her bedroom and the number of pillows on her bed, are all prescribed and regulated by the same authority; and if she doesn't like it she can lump it.

The food, though by no means dainty, is plentiful and nourishing; but no set time is allowed for meals, and as these are taken in relays, "dawdling" is not permitted. The nurses go straight to the dining-room from the wards, only pausing to wash their hands, dispose of their food as rapidly as possible, and go straight back to the wards again.

Each nurse has two hours off duty daily; and this is the only time she will have for attending to all her own personal affairs—shopping or visiting her friends, writing letters, reading, resting, going out into the fresh air, or studying for her annual examination. Twenty minutes to half an hour may fairly be deducted for getting to and from her wards, removing or resuming her uniform, &c. Her normal day's work only ends when the night nurses come on duty, at 8.30 or 9 o'clock, the return to work *after supper* being perhaps the most trying moment of the day; and she must be an energetic young woman indeed if she is anxious for further occupation before bed-time. Two or three times a week, also, she must attend the lectures on nursing and physiology given by the Matron and members of the staff, and it is not uncommon for these to take place after the day's work is over—in which case it is surely a tribute to the lecturer's powers of fascination if any member of the class remains awake. Once a month, at least, a nurse is entitled to a whole day off, and time is allowed, on Sundays, for attendance at church, either in the morning or evening.

The sleeping accommodation is commonly very bad indeed. There are, of course, notable and praiseworthy exceptions; but it is quite an unusual thing for a probationer to have a room to herself, and since most large hospitals are set in the industrial district of a big town, and frequently near the railway station, the nurses' quarters are very noisy: the day nurses find it difficult, and the night nurses find it nearly impossible, to sleep at all, no matter how tired they may be. Hot baths are provided, but there is so much competition for them that it is often necessary for a junior nurse to take her bath in her off-duty time, and not in the morning or at night.

I have said nothing about the technical side of the work, because I cannot imagine that any woman who found it unpleasant or uninteresting would be such a fool as to enter the nursing profession at all. It is only necessary to say that the bitterest thing for any really keen worker to discover is that she is not able—one might say is not *allowed*—to do as much for her patients as she would like to do. If she is to get through the long day at all, she must save some of her energy for those routine duties which come so thick and fast upon her; and all the little extra attentions which mean so much to the helpless patients, and which it is so impossible to refuse, must come out of the nurse's already overcrowded hours and overburdened strength.

A nurse's pay, during her four years' training, varies from eighteen to thirty pounds per annum.

MADGE MEARS.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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THE LOUTH CAMPAIGN.

Will there be a second woman Member of Parliament by the time this reaches our readers? Though still in the thick of the contest, we venture to predict that there will! But whether or not success crowns our efforts, the campaign has certainly been well worth while. All of the N.U.S.E.C. party, now numbering over twenty, are agreed that if we have been able to help in some degree to spread the gospel of Equality, we have ourselves received a powerful stimulus to our own faith. We have learned as much as we have taught others; we will return, when it is all over, to our ordinary workaday life remote from these peaceful country lanes, the prosperous farms, the quiet villages, and yellow sands, with fresh stores of practical experience to enrich our future work.

We had been told that the people of the Eastern counties, like the Northerners, were cold and hard to rouse, but our experience here does not bear this out. The atmosphere of this great meeting was warm and sympathetic throughout, and the utmost enthusiasm was shown for the candidate, who is known and loved throughout the whole division.

THE MASS MEETING AT LOUTH.

There have been other mass meetings in Louth, the chief town in the constituency, but we refer here, of course, to our own meeting, organised by us on Mrs. Wintringham's behalf. The Town Hall, which was gaily decorated with our colours, was crowded. Miss Macadam presided, and the speakers were Mrs. Oliver Strachey, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, and Miss Helen Ward. The presence of Mrs. Wintringham on the platform, who had a most enthusiastic reception, added greatly to the success of the occasion, and though she herself did not speak, her sister, Miss Longbottom, said a few words on her behalf. A characteristic letter was read from Mrs. Fawcett, who was unable to be present, offering most cordial wishes for her success. Mrs. Fawcett said that the fact that Mrs. Wintring-

CORRESPONDENCE.

INSULTING CONDUCT TOWARDS WOMEN.

MADAM.—In a case I heard re the above, the police officer stated that it was rarely they could get women who complained to give their names and addresses, so that it was difficult to get the evidence corroborated. I can give three reasons why that is so, and am sure that all women will agree to them.

First: There are very few girls who care to be mixed up in a Police Court case and publicity given to their names and addresses, and parents and employers are equally averse to it.

Second: Counsel for the defence are known to insinuate that the girl has given encouragement to unwelcome attentions, and this to a respectable woman is very repugnant.

Third: It generally means loss of a day's work, which, to a working woman, is a very serious matter, and in the case of remand for further inquiries, another day.

If women could be guaranteed non-publicity as to names and addresses, also from insulting insinuations, and some compensation for loss of time (in the case of a working woman), then there would be more cases brought and England might be freed from a number of male pests.

I understand that in America it has practically been stamped out, so severe is the penalty for an offender. ELLA E. RIDDLE.

CHILDREN'S COURTS AND THE PROBATION ACTS.

MADAM.—Could any of your readers who are also magistrates state what arrangements are made in regard to Children's Courts? Is a special rota ever appointed? Are the women magistrates specially advised when a Court is to take place?

Also, does it not strike them as odd, that if two offenders are charged together, and one is over sixteen, both come into open Court, though the second may be quite a young child? It would be very interesting, too, to have some correspondence on the use of the Probation Act, and status of Probation Officers, neither of which seem sufficiently used in some Courts. A NEW JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

[Owing to pressure on our space we much regret that we shall be unable to print letters dealing with the Drink Question.—ED., "W.L."]

COMING EVENTS.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.
 SEPTEMBER 23.
 At Leeds Rotary Club. Speaker: P. M. Hamilton, Esq.
 SEPTEMBER 25.
 At Westcliff Brotherhood, New Palace Theatre, 3 p.m. Speaker: Frank Briant, Esq.

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ham was not of the same party as Lady Astor would be a positive advantage. The three speakers were followed with the keenest interest, and constantly interrupted by loud applause.

AUTUMN SCHOOL, SCOTLAND, October 7th to 10th.

We again remind our readers of the Autumn School arranged by the Glasgow Society at Largs, on the Firth of Clyde. Such an opportunity for study and discussion of our winter's programme is very appropriate at the present time, and we hope that members of our Societies will take advantage of it and attend in large numbers, particularly those who were unable to attend our Summer Conference in London. For full particulars apply to the Directors, 202, Hope Street, Glasgow.

THE WORK OF OUR SOCIETIES.

It is proposed to present a report of the work of all our Societies at the next Council meeting in order to gauge exactly how many are alive and carrying on activities of various kinds. A letter will shortly be issued to each Society, explaining the scope of the report. In the meantime, it is hoped that officers and committees are everywhere considering the plans for this winter's work. It can no longer be said that there is nothing to do. Recent events have demonstrated the possibilities before us, especially in the constituencies.

EQUAL FRANCHISE: GLASGOW S.E.C.

The Glasgow Society held their opening—in the form of an "At Home" to members and friends—on September 15th, in the Central Halls, Bath Street, at 3 p.m. There was a keenly interested audience when Miss Bury, Edinburgh National Society for Equal Citizenship, spoke on the first item of the Immediate Programme, "Equal Franchise," treating it from the point of view that whatever the age limit or qualifications may be, the basis must be equality as between men and women. Mrs. James Taylor, Vice-Chairman of the Glasgow Executive Committee, presided, and Mrs. Edmund Toms moved the vote of thanks.

GLASGOW SOCIETY FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Autumn School, October 7th to October 10th, at Elderslie, Largs (Firth of Clyde). Syllabus of Lectures on Programme of National Union. Principal Lecturers include: Mrs. Abbott, Miss Helen Fraser, Mrs. Paisley, Miss Frances Melville, B.D., J.P., and Miss M. A. Snodgrass, Town Councillor, Glasgow. For further particulars apply 202, Hope Street, Glasgow.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

SEPTEMBER 26-30.
 Annual Meeting and Conference in the Cutlers' Hall, Sheffield. Tickets to be obtained from the Hon. Conference Secretary, Mrs. H. F. Hall, Conference Office, 55, Church Street, Sheffield. Season Tickets, 5s. Tickets for Single Meetings, 1s.

THE LEAGUE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

An "At Home" to all friends of the Suffrage Cause will be given at Church House, Westminster, on September 29th, from 4 to 7 p.m., by The League of the Church Militant, to give the Rev. and Mrs. C. Hinscliff an opportunity of meeting friends old and new before leaving England to take up work in Roumania. There will be no charge for admission, but an opportunity will be given to those present to contribute to the expenses. All desiring invitations are asked to write at once to the Secretary, L.C.M., Church House, Dean's Yard, S.W. 1.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO SECURE STATE PURCHASE AND CONTROL OF THE LIQUOR TRADE.

SEPTEMBER 26-30.
 Worcestershire. Tour of Women's Institutes. Subject: Nationally owned Public-houses. Speaker: Miss F. L. Carre.

SEPTEMBER 28.
 At Worcester Women's Co-operative Guild, 7.30 p.m. Subject: Public Ownership of the Liquor Trade. Speaker: Miss F. L. Carre.

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President: Marie Carmichael Slopes, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S.
 Vice-Presidents: William Archer, Esq., Councillor Margaret Ashton, M.A., Sir James Barr, C.B.E., M.D., Edward Carpenter, Esq., The Rev. Dr. H. Corner, M.A., Harold Cox, Esq., M.A., The Lady Glenconner, Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins, M.A., Councillor E. King, J.P. (Mayor of Islington), Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, Bart., C.B., M.B., Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, The Lady Constance Lytton, A. Baldwin Raper, Esq., M.P., Sir Archibald Reid, K.B.E., F.R.S., Rt. Hon. G. H. Roberts, J.P., M.P., Mrs. Alec Tweedie, F.R.G.S., H. G. Wells, Esq., B.Sc., J.P., J. Havelock Wilson, Esq., C.B.E., M.P.
 Hon. Secretary: Councillor H. V. Roe.
 Hon. Treasurer: Aylmer Maude, Esq.

Hon. Solicitors: Messrs. Braby & Waller, Dacre House, Arundel St., Strand. A General Executive Committee, and Special Committees are formed.

TEMPORARY OFFICE, at the Mothers' Clinic for Constructive Birth Control, 61, MARLBOROUGH ROAD, HOLLOWAY, LONDON, N.19.

OBJECTS: The objects of the Society are (a) to bring home to all the fundamental nature of the reforms involved in conscious and constructive control of conception and the illumination of sex life as a basis of racial progress; (b) to consider the individual, national, international, racial, political, economic, scientific, spiritual and other aspects of the theme, for which purpose meetings will be held, publications issued, Research Committees, Commissions of Enquiry, and other activities will be organised from time to time as circumstances require and facilities offer; (c) to supply all who still need it with the full knowledge of sound physiological methods of control.

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