

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

The New India.

That extraordinary being Gandhi—whom so many even of his former admirers were tempted lately to regard as a spent force—has once again reasserted his mastery over the most turbulent sections of the Indian people. When one has embarked on a journey which can have but one end, it is well that it should proceed quickly and without accident. Hence even those who share some of the doubts and fears which only that *enfant terrible* Mr. Winston Churchill expresses in all their crudity may legitimately join in the general satisfaction over the result of the meetings at Karachi. Our own doubts and fears are of a different kind. Much has been said during the past months of the wonderful uprising of India's women, of how they have thrown aside the veil and come out of their age-long seclusion to take part in the national struggle. Will they be strong enough, or will their lords and masters be generous enough, to enable them to preserve their new-found freedom and to extend it to the millions who have not yet emerged?

Unjust Wills.

The House of Lords has now nominated the six Peers who, with the six Members of the House of Commons whose names were given in these columns last week, are to serve on the Joint Select Committee which is to investigate Miss Rathbone's Wills and Intestacies (Family Maintenance) Bill. It is a matter of sincere congratulation that Lord Thankerton has consented to be Chairman of the Committee. The other Peers are Lord Monk-Bretton (U) and Lord Russell of Liverpool (C.), Lord Fairfax, and two Liberal Peers, Lord Charnwood and Lord Cozens-Hardy.

The Select Committee on Employment of Shop Assistants.

We are glad that at last a woman will sit on the Select Committee of the House of Commons, which is considering the hours and conditions generally of shop assistants. Mrs. Manning, Member for East Islington, the most recent recruit to the small

company of women members of the House, has now been appointed. Few committees call more loudly for the participation of women. It was stated last week by Captain Larking, Secretary of the Early Closing Association, in his evidence before the Committee, that there was a greater proportion of women assistants employed in shops than before the war, not, he thought, because their labour was cheap, but because they had been found satisfactory.

The Census, 26th April, 1931.

The B.B.C. has done useful work in the education of the public in the importance of the forthcoming census. This will be the fourteenth national census, and will be of even greater importance than usual owing to the urgent need for accurate knowledge, especially of unemployment and housing. It is satisfactory to hear that new machinery will speed up the returns to such an extent that the population figures will be issued within a few weeks of census day. Statistics with regard to housing must necessarily take much longer. In the meantime everything that can be done to awaken householders to the importance of this "social event" must be done. Readers who have a taste for statistics, might give of their Easter holiday reading to this subject. They will find in the study of the book, *A Survey of the Social Structure of England and Wales*, by Professor A. M. Carr Saunders and D. Carodog Jones, which analyses the census of 1921, the best possible foundation for the results secured ten years later.

Film Censorship.

The Liverpool branch of the National Council of Women has formed a committee whose business will be to visit "talkies" in the interests of children and report to the Council on those to which they take objection. It may be remembered that a similar venture was promoted some years ago by the Manchester branch in respect of silent films. It is an interesting effort and may conceivably prove a fruitful one, though we do not conceal from ourselves the difficulty of producing an agreed and reasoned verdict on such a matter. One obstacle is likely to be the fact which has not yet struck the semi-official film censorship, that a certain class of film so far from being relatively innocuous for children over 16 but unsuitable for those of tenderer years, is in fact likely to make its worst impression on those in their late 'teens, and leave the very young unaffected. Thus in some cases the prohibition should extend to those above rather than to those below a specified age—yet this has, so far as we know, never been done. We are reminded in this connection of the comment made by one of our own younger offspring on the climax of a somewhat brutal and sexually violent motor-car abduction scene upon which we had accidentally stumbled: "Look," he said, with a start of interest, "it's a six-cylinder Buic with a left-hand drive." What our elder offspring thought was not revealed.

What About the Miners' Welfare Fund?

The Bill to extend for another five years the life of the Miners' Welfare Levy of 1d. a ton on coal output is now in Committee in the House of Commons. Our readers may remember that the collection of this levy formed part of the legislation which followed the coal crisis of 1920, and which has provided an annual revenue for the erection of pit-head baths, convalescent homes, and the provision of recreation grounds, scholarships, and other amenities for the benefit of mining areas. Various proposals have been made concerning the direction of future expenditure, and some of these are now under discussion in Standing Com-

'Keep fit on
COCOA'

BOURNVILLE
SEE THE "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE
NAME OF CHOCOLATE

Write
Cadbury, Bournville
about Gift Scheme

mittee. Among them is Mr. Wolmersley's proposal that some of the money might be used for the support of men maimed in the industry and now dependent on public relief. We, for our part, have sometimes been tempted to view such a levy as the potential experimental germ of a family allowance scheme for the mining industry—somewhat on the French industrial model, but unlike the French schemes, under statutory joint control. It would be interesting to work out in terms of levy per ton output the cost of a modest scheme of family allowances—or rather of a series of schemes of varying adequacy.

Miss Bondfield Wins the Second Round.

On Friday of last week the Court of Appeal gave judgment in favour of the Minister of Labour in her appeal against the King's Bench decision, recently reported in these columns. That decision supported the objection of two trade associations and a catering firm to her application of a Trade Board order to the "catering trade". The plea upheld by the earlier judgment was that the Minister had, by her definition of the catering trade, created a trade by definition from a number of operations which could not properly be regarded as a defined industrial undertaking. The judgment of the Court of Appeal reversing this prohibition, was a majority judgment, upheld by Lord Justice Scrutton and Lord Justice Slesser, with Lord Justice Greer dissenting. Lord Justice Greer condemned the Minister's order because it purported to include in the trade, work which might be included in another trade if it were done in connection with a specified trade; he therefore considered that the Divisional Court was right in making the order for prohibition against the Minister. Leave to appeal to the House of Lords was granted, but at the moment of writing we do not know whether the catering trade associations intend to carry the case forward. Truly Miss Bondfield has embarked upon a long and tortuous path in her effort to substitute order for chaos in the working conditions of those who serve meals in public places.

Arnold Bennett.

Throughout the English-reading world the untimely death of Arnold Bennett will be deplored. He was one of the greatest novelists of our age and there can be no question concerning his immortality. Moreover, because of him, certain aspects of life have gained an added significance. He has added a kind of full-blooded romance to the acquisition of material wealth, and he has focussed a new quality of attention upon large hotels and provincial towns. Thus, his fellow-citizens of the Five Towns, though they may have felt at times that they had much to forgive, may feel on second thoughts that they have also much for which to return thanks. But above all he was a great artist of human personality, and to the personality of women he gave a full share of his understanding, respect, and interest. He gave them, too, a mighty independence. From the moment they left his pen they were "their own women".

Ministry of Health Memorandum on Birth Control.

The Ministry of Health has only just published the Memorandum under which local authorities may ask for sanction to give information on methods of Birth Control for medical reasons to certain categories of women, to which reference was made in these columns last July and which certain local authorities have since either adopted or prepared to adopt.

Up till recently, however, the Memorandum was only known to those local authorities who took the initiative in asking leave to start such schemes. The majority of Councils and practically all ratepayers did not know of its existence. The National Birth Control Council on this circulated a large number of local authorities but could not, of course, reach the general public. We hope that as a result of the publication of the Memorandum, many ratepayers or bodies of ratepayers will press their local authorities to send up schemes.

Sterilization in the U.S.A.

The State Legislature of Vermont last week passed a Bill providing for the sterilization of feeble-minded and insane persons and it is expected that the assent of the Governor will be readily forthcoming for the measure, as he himself advocated such legislation in his inaugural address. Under the new Bill sterilization will be subject to the consent of the feeble-minded persons or their guardians, and the opinion of two doctors must be forthcoming as to whether the person in question is a fit subject.

Women Barristers in Quebec.

On Friday of last week a Bill providing for the admission of women to practise at the Bar was defeated by 34 votes to 32

in the Quebec Provincial Legislature. It is sad to see how slowly and imperfectly the spirit of the age penetrates even to relatively ancient centres of Imperial civilization. One can only hope that the narrowness of the majority by which defeat came will stimulate the potential women barristers of Quebec to fight again, and fight to win!

Head Mistresses on Tour.

Last year a party of head masters under the leadership of Dr. Norwood, of Harrow, carried through a highly successful tour of Canada, examining from city to city the possibilities of University and professional education, comparing notes, and forging links between the academic and social life of the two countries. It is satisfactory to note that on their return the head mistresses put forward a claim to engage in similar enterprise, and at the end of last week a party of ten set forth from Liverpool. Dame Meriel Talbot, one of the joint secretaries of the committee responsible for the tour, has gone with them, and their itinerary is planned to stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts.

Fur Trapping.

A useful leaflet has been issued privately¹ on the horrors of fur trapping. Most of us feel a little uncomfortable about wearing fur, but probably soothe our scruples by the reflection, which we are assured is more or less correct, that the cheaper furs within our reach come from animals usually humanely killed. This leaflet should be widely circulated, as it gives practical suggestions as to what can be worn with a good conscience and where it can be obtained as well as what which must at all costs be rejected by those who refuse to wear beautiful furs from animals who have died in torture. Even nearer home is the cruel rabbit trapping, to which we have often alluded in these columns. Have Women's Institutes taken up this last subject we wonder?

Strange Standards.

It is unfortunate that the remarks of Mr. Justice Humphreys in the trial of the Italian, Martinacci, who had killed his wife by stabbing her must be interpreted as meaning in this country, as well as in France, that in his view "la crime passionelle" is to be treated differently from other types of murder or manslaughter. In this case the Italian stabbed his wife to death when he discovered that she had been unfaithful to him. Reports in the paper do not give enough evidence for a final judgment, but the fact is clear that the verdict of manslaughter rather than murder was given on account of the provocation offered to the husband. The judge endorsed the prisoner's views of marriage—that for a wife even to kiss another man was infidelity! Would he have uttered the same sentiments, we wonder, if the prisoner had been a wife who had killed her husband for such a reason?

Dame Margaret Lloyd George.

With a son and daughter in Parliament in addition to her illustrious husband, we do not hear so much as we should like of the activities of Dame Margaret Lloyd George. We are therefore glad of the opportunity of congratulating her on heading the poll at the recent Criccieth Urban Council elections. Dame Margaret has served on this Council for nine years and was its Vice-Chairman.

Women's Activities in Poland.

The last issue of *La Femme Polonoise* contains an interesting account of the trend of thought evinced by feminine organizations in Poland since they have received equal political rights. They are preoccupied with the idea that if men are required to sacrifice their life on the field of battle, women should be willing to make an equivalent sacrifice in other directions. The idea is gaining ground that women should band themselves into a pacific army having in view work for the moral, intellectual, economic, and sanitary advancement of the town and country population. It is suggested that all women between the ages of 20 and 22, unless there is a special reason for exemption, should be trained in maternal and child welfare, work in crèches, public libraries, hospitals, dispensaries, and receive instruction to fit them to assist the rural population in home management and fruit cultivation. The leading article of this periodical contains an impassioned article by Cz. Wojensla, appealing to Polish women to work constructively for world peace.

¹ "Horrors of Fur Trapping," by Major Van der Byl, Wappenham House, Towcester, Northants.

THE WOMAN'S PROGRAMME.

The N.U.S.E.C. Council of 1931 has a character of its own; the weight of work seems to have swung from Headquarters to the societies and guilds.

Of late years Parliamentary business has seemed our main business, and our energies have been devoted to Bills before Parliament, lobbying by Headquarters, interviews of M.P.s in the constituencies.

This year the Council resolutions laid most stress on local government work and here the Headquarters are glad to help, local effort must guide and carry through. Perhaps it was the presence of the new societies, the consciousness of our immense accession of strength with our eighty-seven new guilds, that turned our minds.

Three main divisions of work are suggested, on housing, mental treatment, and maternal mortality. Each society is urged to make a real effort to secure better housing by seeing that the local authorities make the fullest use of the Housing and Town Planning Acts. This should be preceded by a survey into the existing supply, estimated shortage, cost of existing provision, cost of putting these Acts into force. Backed by such knowledge deputations or interviews could do a great deal to increase supply and by women rent collectors improve standards. A few months ahead lie the borough council elections; lucky indeed are those places where such elections are outside party, but in any event we are begged to secure women as candidates whether independent or to be put forward by the parties themselves. The best chance is when a vacancy occurs but we must have a candidate ready. Local authorities and teachers will be conferring on the Burnham scale of salaries and both sides should be approached to include family allowances in the new arrangements. There again new points of view are easier to impress when some change is almost certain.

To carry out the resolution of the Council on Maternal Mortality a similar inquiry is essential. A deputation to the council will be effective if the members know the local provision of beds, numbers attending welfare centres or clinics, the local maternal death-rate and any special local feature.

The Council was seriously concerned with the hopelessly inadequate provision for early mental treatment and a survey into the pitifully small numbers adequately catered for would bring us face to face with a vital problem of racial health. Again we must stress the necessity of any deputation realizing the cost of the present muddle and of the minimum satisfactory arrangements required.

As in other years most of the thirty resolutions passed by the Annual Council Meeting are intensely practical in character. A few are deliberate re-statements of principle necessary in a rapidly growing community such as the N.U.S.E.C., which has doubled its membership in two years. Our faith in an equal moral standard, equal pay and equal protection for women in industry, are part of our attitude towards all problems. Some resolutions call for Parliamentary action. During the Easter recess many M.P.s visit their constituencies in order to keep in touch with the

NOTES FROM WESTMINSTER.

It has again been rather a dull week in Parliament, and that in spite of the fact that some of the topics discussed have been in themselves of great importance. The truth is that Parliamentary interest in a debate depends partly on the personalities who contribute to it; partly on whether it is likely to lead to a critical division. Since debates rarely influence votes, busy Members with piles of correspondence, or engagements elsewhere, refuse to be attracted into the House except by the prospect of a front-rank debate, unless they want to take part themselves, and there are few speakers whose quality is not affected by the sense that their scattered handful of hearers are much more occupied with thinking of what they themselves intend to say than in listening to others.

One of the best discussions was that on the effects of the Indian boycott upon the Lancashire textile industry. Most of those who took part were Lancashire Members with a real knowledge of the subject—a singularly dismal one. Mr. Hacking, from the Conservative benches, drew a picture of the many thousands of looms standing idle in towns which depended, as to at least two-fifths of their trade, upon an Indian demand, which showed no signs of reviving, in spite of the compact between the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi that the political boycott should cease. The compact, he showed, still permitted a boycott so far as

electors. Such an opportunity should be eagerly taken to urge Members to support the Testamentary Provisions Bill which has now been sent to a Committee of Lords and Commons; secondly, to discuss the question of the Nationality of Married Women, especially with Labour M.P.s who can urge the Government to take over the Bill left leaderless by the death of Dr. Bentham. Every side of the House welcomed Miss Picton-Turbervill's Bill introduced to prevent sentence of death on expectant mothers. We understand time is to be given for it, but we need to show individual M.P.s our interest is not merely confined to indignation at a hard case.

The first business after Easter will be the Budget, and the expected deficit may enable those who wish the Government to withdraw the O.T.C. grant to gain their point, though perhaps not entirely on merit.

A very difficult task is suggested by the resolution condemning inadequate sentences in the case of child assault and cruelty to children. Criticism to be valuable must be based on hearing the case, not on newspaper reports, and requires a rota of women to attend the court and listen intelligently to the proceedings. Hearing such cases will immensely strengthen the society in sending a deputation to the magistrates or to the chairman of the Bench to urge the desirability of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee on Sexual Offences against Children.

Personally I was largely out of sympathy with the debate on the care for the unmarried mother. She has committed the gravest possible wrong against her child in bearing it fatherless and homeless, and the standard of opinion among married women at a clinic that she is not fit to mix with them I think is very sound. We do not ask the unmarried mothers into our homes or with our girls and boys. On the other hand the suggestions of the resolution (not those made in the speeches) seem to me excellent as regards supervision of the children and help for the mother to get payment from the father. We certainly ought to know the percentage of illegitimacy in our town and the causes of any high death-rate.

Two entirely new subjects are down for study, conditions in the catering trade and the vexed question of the sterilization of the unfit.

Perhaps our most urgent and most difficult duty comes under the heading of disarmament. What can we in our meetings do to educate ourselves and others on the urgent need of concentrated national effort to ensure that the Disarmament Conference of 1932 shall result in a substantial reduction of the armies, navies and the air forces of the world?

Since Great Britain's attitude is bound to carry immense weight, British delegates should attend in the knowledge they are backed by an instructed and keen public opinion.

Much ridicule has been poured on us for the resolution on dress. It is our business, in spite of the Press, to see that our efforts for peace, health and purity are known equally far and wide.

M. I. CORBETT ASHBY.

them, and on the whole seemed to get the best of the argument. No one can help admiring the valiancy of the small I.L.P. group, which pursues its chosen path undaunted either by overwhelming defeats in the Lobby, or by the testimony of an empty House to its refusal to take them seriously. But they would probably make more progress if any one of them would occasionally, say once in a dozen speeches, admit that this country is ever on a single point in the right and any other country ever in the wrong.

Another good debate was that on the Second Reading of the Consumers' Council Bill. Since the object of this Bill is to prevent profiteering, it will doubtless be of special interest to the women readers of this paper. They must not set their hopes too high, because the Bill is introduced rather late in the Session for a measure of such importance, and if the Committee stages are lengthy and the House of Lords proves troublesome, its chances of reaching the Statute Book are not very rosy. But women, nevertheless, should watch it closely, both in its passage and—still more important—in its subsequent workings if it becomes law. It was introduced by Mr. William Graham, with his usual clarity, moderation, and air of general competence. It was blessed by the Liberal Party, in the person of Sir Herbert Samuel, whose qualities are not unlike those of the President of the Board of Trade. And it was cursed from the Conservative benches by Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister—a much less attractive speaker than either of its sponsors. It was thus happy in its beginnings, but, nevertheless, its adversaries made good going, most of them fastening on what is undoubtedly the most difficult and questionable part of the Bill—its arrangement for fixing prices and penalties. Its opponents were able to quote the experience of various bodies which have burnt their fingers over the practice or theory of price fixing. Some of the quotations, it is true, were rather double-edged. Sir William Beveridge, it is true, as a result of his experience at the Ministry of Food, had said:—

"Ultimately it became clear that nothing that mattered at all as food for the people could safely be left free of price control."

And the Imperial Conference of 1923 held that:—

"nor is it feasible to confine price control to any one stage. Once applied, it becomes necessary to extend it to all stages"; The inference being that nothing but the whole hog of Socialism would succeed in devouring the profiteer. Amusing instances were given of the activities of the said profiteer. There was the trader who advertised that—

"Howards' are Chemists' Aspirin Tablets. The P.A.T.A. terms and splendid window show bonus enable the Chemist to make a 102½ per cent profit on a £10 order."

Then there was the righteous grocer who complained of Palmolive Soap that—

"this soap costs me 47s. 3d., and I am compelled to charge the public 78s., an exorbitant profit (robbery would be a more suitable word) of over 64 per cent on cost price."

There was the tradesman who proclaimed that—

"although prices are on the up-grade, we can still do you at old prices."

The subject thus lent itself neatly to spicy illustrations, both on the need for food control and of its difficulties. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister got home neatly with his comparison of the Bill to a certain text:—

"There's a great text in Galatians,
Once you trip on it, entails
Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
One sure, if another fails."

CROSS BENCH.

THE KEY OF PROGRESS

A Survey of the Status and Conditions of Women in India

By SEVERAL CONTRIBUTORS

With a Foreword by H.E. THE LADY IRWIN

Edited by A. R. CATON

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FOLK COOKERY.

By ANN POPE (F. WHITE).

"RE-DISCOVERING ENGLAND."

The writer of a leading article in *The Times*, 25th September, 1929, says "It is well to be reminded that there are still enough old English things left in England to make it worth while to preserve them," and as my journeys throughout England for the purpose of studying the food and cookery of our country confirms this statement as far as culinary matters are concerned. I was much disappointed when the Board of Education published "Village Survey-Making" (Educational Pamphlet No. 61, H.M. Stationery Office), to find how little notice was taken of the food of the selected district.

But I was not surprised. Neither was I surprised to receive last month only one answer to my advertisement for local and national dishes. I hope, however, to have more in future, and will pay out as many half-crowns as I can afford! one at least each week, if I get the information required.

It is not, I know, easy to obtain, and that is why I want everyone's help. What I want is the name of any favourite dish or cake that anyone connects with the place where he or she was born or spent any part of their lives. This month I have been reading *Men and Memories, Recollections of William Rotherstein, 1872-1900* (Faber and Faber, Ltd., February, 1931) and in it he says: "Other memories: the delicious smell of new bread on Fridays, the household baking day. This meant, besides fresh bread, oven-cake, which only a Yorkshire cook can bake, for tea. An oven-cake is large and flat, like a big, thin muffin, eaten hot and buttered. My mother was a perfect housewife. I still remember her in a blue apron, busy about the house, seeing to everything as her own mother did."

Now that's the sort of information I want. Sir Henry Jones, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, in *Old Memories*, says "My mother was imaginative and æsthetic and intuitive to the finger-tips, and she was extraordinarily clever . . . I cannot but marvel at the skill that secured comfort for all of us. A happier household, I believe, there never was; and though my father, I should say, never made a pound a week, we never lacked anything, so far as I could see, whether in the way of wholesome food or of comfortable and respectable clothing. Of course, it is not possible to make the 'plenty' of a good working man's home intelligible to the well-to-do. Things which look like impossibilities are achieved every day; and the so-called laws of domestic economy are abstract generalities compared with the concrete sense and skill of the clever mother. Neither on Sunday nor on weekday was the meal scanty, or the fun and chatter lean, or was there any faintest hint of scarcity or poverty."

It is this wisdom in these days of economic stress that we wish to recapture; and it does not mean narrowness nor drudgery. The reading of the research worker into the history and economics of food and cookery, has to be as wide and as special as that of any other. There is no point of our lives the subject does not touch.

One of the authors of "Village Survey-Making" has just given us a book (*Re-discovering England*, by Charlotte A. Simpson, B.Sc. (Oxon), Lecturer in Geography at Warrington Training College, Liverpool; Ernest Benn, Ltd., 21s.), which whilst based on the geology of our country and containing the Geological Survey Map of the United Kingdom, is so charmingly written and touches so many interests that it makes a perfect holiday guide as well as a basis of serious study in modern geography, and my own subject "Folk Cookery". For civilization is built up on the food the early inhabitants of the world were able to obtain to preserve life, and that depended on climate and the contours and soil of whatever land might give them birth.

Let me whisper a secret to you, we who can cook can often unravel an obscure record made by learned antiquarians or historians who have no pot-boiling experiences. Another point: there have been and are many, many records in *The Times* during recent years of men and women reaching to a great age; and it is said our span of life is extending to such an extent that insurance officers allow ten years more when calculating pensions to what they did some years ago; but I would remind you that these old folk who live so long were the Early and Mid-Victorians who were brought up on simple old English fare, and that is one more reason why we should study Folk Cookery. Therefore please send me your early food-memories as quickly as possible, I especially want the names of dishes still made and enjoyed and the name of any occasion with which they are associated.

THE ALL-ASIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

From a Correspondent in India.

The success of the All-India Women's Conferences for Educational and Social Reform, led the organizers to propose the holding of an All-Asian Conference, and a letter of invitation was issued which pointed out that each continent had its own distinctive civilization and culture, yet the women of Asia were practically unknown to one another. "A Hindu woman knows nothing of the Chinese woman; the Burmese woman is ignorant of the conditions in which her Persian sisters live. The Chinese women know more about Americans, the Javanese about the Dutch, and the Indians about the English than we know of one another." The proposal resulted in the holding of the first All-Asian Women's Conference in Lahore (Punjab) in January, 1931, following immediately on the annual All-India Conference. The objects of the Conference were defined as follows:—

(1) To promote the consciousness of unity amongst the women of Asia as members of a common Oriental culture.

(2) To take stock of the qualities of Oriental civilization so as to preserve them for national and world service (simplicity, philosophy, art, the cult of the family, veneration for motherhood, spiritual consciousness).

(3) To review and seek remedies for the defects at present apparent in Oriental civilization (ill-health, illiteracy, poverty and underpayment of labour, infantile mortality, marriage customs).

(4) To sift what is appropriate for Asia from the Occidental influences (education, dress, freedom of movement, cinemas, machinery).

(5) To strengthen one another by the exchange of data and experiences concerning women's conditions in the respective countries of Asia (economic, moral, political, and religious status).

(6) To promote world peace.

Owing to the short notice given, difficulties of transport and so on, all the Asian countries were not represented, but delegates from China, Japan, Persia, Afghanistan, Java, Ceylon and Burma attended, in addition to several hundreds of women from all parts of India and European visitors.

It is impossible to relate all the unique features of this Conference. It began by electing as President the nationalist Indian leader, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, regardless of the fact that she was at the moment a prisoner. This difficulty was got over by electing a Vice-Chairman of different nationality to preside over each day's proceedings. The Conference was opened by the singing in chorus of one of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's songs. At the opening session (to which men speakers were invited) a Chinese general, founder of the "Feminist World Democracy"—an association for anti-war propaganda—addressed the delegates. At this meeting each speaker used her own language, but, subsequently English was found to be the most convenient medium, with occasional translations into Urdu. One of the most interesting debates was that on marriage and family life. A Muslim lady affirmed that, in spite of the suggestion that Muslim women were badly treated, "men still quaked in their shoes before them!" A Malabar delegate related many interesting customs about this part of India, which has inherited matriarchal law and where children take the family name of the mothers. The Afghan delegate said that in her country early marriage was very rare, and some fifty years ago 30 was considered the marriageable age for a girl. The discussion on health, when it came to the Indian delegates' turn to speak, resolved itself into an attack on the Government, and few constructive suggestions were put forward. A New Zealand visitor described the wonderful results of Dr. Truby King's work for mothers in New Zealand, and suggested that it was in the hands of the women to create public opinion and government action would follow. During the discussion on labour, a Ceylon Christian brought out the interesting fact that, following on agitation, the lot of Indian women labourers in Ceylon was far better than that of Cinghalese women. The fact emphasized most in this debate was the need for Indian women factory inspectors. Other sessions dealt with education, religion, and women in government.

The resolutions passed at the final session by the entire Conference demanded free compulsory primary education for girls, the study of comparative religions in colleges, the total prohibition of alcohol and noxious drugs, research into indigenous systems of medicine, abolition of polygamy, equal rights for men and women, the establishment of Children's Courts, and the appointment of women factory inspectors. A cynic might

point out that such resolutions have been passed by similar conferences without much result in the past. It was disappointing that more stress was not laid on the part women might play in bringing about these reforms. Nevertheless the Conference has brought together women who would never otherwise have joined forces, and has given them a chance of putting forward their claims. Undoubtedly it has carried the women of India one step forward in their determined bid for social reform and political rights.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

By EDITH HOW-MARTYN.

It is somewhat surprising that the full enfranchisement of women has not led to increased interest in elections for local authorities.

As a candidate in a county council constituency where 78 per cent of the voters evidently cared not at all which candidate represented them on the county council I am much interested in trying to find a way to change apathy into interest. A few reflections based on my recent experience may be useful in giving some material for thought.

It is a rather remarkable fact that the voters are entirely indebted to private enterprise for even knowing that an election is taking place, and also for knowing the date, time and place of voting. As each candidate can legally spend about £100 for a county council election it is hardly surprising that contests are avoided if possible. The choice of candidates is further limited because of the expenses incurred in travelling long distances to the meetings. Councils may pay travelling expenses but not all of them use their powers. Further, very few people who have to earn their living can spare the time necessary. Councillors are unpaid, though if paid there would certainly be more interest in their election. It seems to need the spur of another interest, such as a strong desire to get more women councillors elected or candidates determined to fight and win seats for their political party, to ensure a contest. But even these do not arouse any widespread interest. The number of women candidates is deplorably small and the women voters are not keen to vote for them.

The truth seems to be that the vote desired by only a small number of people has been thrust on millions without preparation, explanation, or any idea that to understand voting and all it implies to the welfare of the community does not come by the light of nature. It is urgently to be wished that some well thought out scheme for the education of voters can be devised and put into practice. I suggest that for the information of citizens the returning officer, acting under a statutory duty, should notify every elector of the date, time and place of the election, should state the candidates who are standing with 50 to 100 words about their qualifications and policy—to be supplied by their agents—and end with an intimation that voters who do not give valid reasons for not voting would have their names removed from the register. The electorate would become smaller but at least it would be interested.

In canvassing I came across voters who were not going to vote on conscientious grounds as they did not know enough about the candidates. A voter after receiving her ballot paper asked the polling clerk which one she had better vote for! Several women strongly objected to polling day being fixed on Monday—the washing day!

Who is to undertake the education of the electors? There seems to be only one workable plan which is for the political parties to put their energies into it. To get any real representation of the electorate on county councils the single member constituency should be replaced by constituencies in which the members are returned by the system of proportional representation. Minorities would not then be disfranchised as at present.

But at the root of the matter is the undoubted fact that the ordinary person possesses no civic pride or interest, and in the case of county elections it is difficult to see how it is to be developed.

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

"THE CRIME OF PUNISHMENT."

This book¹ should be read by all who feel complacent about our penal system. They will feel complacent no longer. With courage and vigour the author lays bare its cruelty, expensiveness, and futility; it is true that we are not given anything very definite to put in its place, but perhaps we may one day have a second volume.

Not a word of this volume could have been spared: not the account of the savage punishments of the past which we have discarded one by one because they all of them so utterly failed to put down crime; not the writer's own experiences during the four years that she lived at a prison gate; not the comparison between English and American methods of treating crime, throwing the light that they do on conduct and law-abidingness in the two countries. The book is rich in incidents drawn from personal knowledge. A warder casually explained one day to the author that there were no debtors available in the prison to clean her windows because "the mines were working again." It was when the miners were unemployed that they went to prison for their debts. The contrast is brought out between English and Scottish methods in this respect: in 1928 England sent 13,340 persons to prison for debt, and Scotland 58. It is pointed out also how laws can cause or prevent crime. The fact that in the United States of America the ordinary citizen can carry firearms is the cause of much indiscriminate murder, while bigamy is to a large extent prevented in France by a law which lays it down that a man cannot be married without the production of his birth certificate on which every marriage and divorce is endorsed.

Another piece of personal experience was the author's horror and hatred at first sight of a man imprisoned for the offence of carnal knowledge of a little girl, and how, as she came to know something of his upbringing and the conditions under which he had lived and slept, the hatred and repugnance turned to a tremendous pity. And her indignation flamed up against those who permitted or grew rich upon vile housing conditions. She places part of the responsibility, too, on those who (in Chicago) encouraged the showing of films which romanticized rape in such a way that the wonder was not that any had attempted it but that so few had done so.

Much is written here about the horrors of old-time punishments, but a useful warning is given against our feeling too superior to-day. It is true that our forefathers punished brutally, but they were also courageous in abolishing punishments. Is our generation going to do as much to reform the penal law as the generation that was alive 100 years ago? They ceased to hang men for stealing 5s. from a shop; shall we cease to imprison for attempted suicide, for debt, for vagrancy, and drunkenness and other petty offences because the offender has no money to pay a fine?

The most difficult and the most fundamental question that confronts the penal reformer is, what is the precise value of pain deliberately inflicted upon a human being? It must be supposed that those who believe in punishment believe that pain has a beneficial effect, and that an appropriate amount of it ought to be administered in proportion to the gravity of the crime. "I have paid," says the swindler when he has taken his dose of penal servitude. "Paid whom? Those whom he has swindled?" Not a farthing to one of them. He has paid the public in the satisfaction that they have had in inflicting pain upon him.

To most people it is a truism that it is good for men to be made to work: hard labour is regarded as the best of medicines. Forced labour never did slaves much good and it is discredited in Africa to-day, but its virtues live on in prisons. It is, however, significant that the latest efforts in prison reform go to show that the belief in the reformatory effect of work for its own sake is fading away, and prisoners are encouraged to exert themselves by the hope of a cigarette or two at the end of the week.

What is needed on this subject more than anything else is hard thinking, and this book—whether the reader agrees with it or not—will at least conduce to thought. Different people have different ideas as to what punishment is for; everyone must at times be impressed with the futility of weighing it out in proportion to crime as if one could ever tell how much a particular amount will hurt in a particular case.

What if behind it all there lies a superstition that somewhere there exists something we call abstract justice to which offerings must be made when crime has come to light; suffering must be caused to the doer of the crime so that by this sacrifice abstract justice may be satisfied? CLARA D. RACKHAM.

¹ *The Crime of Punishment*, by Margaret Wilson. (Jonathan Cape. 10s. 6d.)

THE RAW MATERIAL OF EXPERIENCE.

There are some books which will never be read by the people who could read them with most profit. And *Life as We Have Known It*, a collection of autobiographical letters, edited by Miss Llewelyn Davies and published by the Hogarth Press (5s.), with an introduction by Virginia Woolf, is undoubtedly one of them. It should be read by all the old gentlemen who inhabit Pall Mall clubs, by public school masters, by members of the House of Lords. It should be given away by the Inland Revenue Department with the forms which are distributed to super-tax payers. But, of course, it won't be. It will be bought and read by those who, having a deep sympathy with the lives and hopes of working women, have already taken some pains to ascertain the conditions under which they live. Yet even to such persons the book will bring new flashes of illumination, for the narration of these autobiographies of Co-operative Guildswomen is so direct, so uncomplaining, and so rich in human experience that except to those who have actually lived out on the frontiers of economic safety, they will bring a new revelation of penury and a new understanding of human tenacity. Bethnal Green in the middle of last century with stark starvation as a relevant fact of life, agricultural child labour in the Fen country, industrial life among the high moors of Derbyshire, home and factory, marriage and childbearing, shopping, cooking, washing, reading, all intermixed and intertwined as they are in the life of the active Guildswoman—such are the pictures which pass before the reader in these life stories so simply and so bluntly told. And at the beginning, in odd and significant contrast, we get the superb and careful literacy of Mrs. Woolf's introduction—the reaction of sensitive and enlightened intellectualism to the hard social origins from which in our own age a new intellectualism is springing.

M. D. S.

"WOMEN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME."¹

"Nothing will be found of greater use in after life than a knowledge of how to lay and decorate a breakfast or dinner-table." After this impressive statement, we need feel no surprise at finding in a book of 108 pages, eight pages devoted to "Serviette folding" and three to "Children's diet". We are told in the preface to the fourth edition that the book has been brought up to date. It is therefore astonishing to find that directions on infant feeding are grossly old-fashioned, and complete ignorance is shown of modern research. This is probably explained by the fact that the Medical collaborator died ten years ago, but this is no excuse for re-publishing such dangerous instructions as, for instance, "the diet in rickets" which contains *no fruit or vegetables* and states no age, so that the child is presumably given the same food at six months and ten years. The style is bad enough to be funny: "Castor oil can also be given to children when shaken in a bottle containing warm milk." And is the following, we wonder, a suggestion of suicide for the world weary? "If stale, salts of lemon must be used." (Incidentally it is insane to recommend salts of lemon for children's use.) In the directions given for cleaning a room, the windows are not to be opened until all the sweeping is over, and clothes when drying are to be turned inside out "to protect the right side from smuts, etc."—and to ensure that this dirt reaches the skin.

To the feminine mind, a completely ridiculous book. We must assume that the author of the preface, from whom we took our opening quotation, shares the masculine outlook of the two authors. We are glad that they are men, and hope that our readers will agree with us that the place of women is the home.

C. U. F.

¹ *Housecraft, Hygiene, and Care of Infants*, by the Rev. J. W. Hayes (formerly Chairman, Council Schools, West Thurrock, Stifford, and Purfleet) and H. Emlyn-Jones, M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.) (late Medical Inspector of Schools, Essex County Council). Fourth Edition, revised and expanded by Jane E. Hayes. (George Philip and Son, Ltd., London, and Philip Son and Nephew, Liverpool. 1s. 6d.)

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OBITUARY.

MARGARET McMILLAN.

The death of Margaret McMillan last week takes from our midst a "key" worker in the cause of child protection and care. To most people her career expresses itself in terms of nursery schools, but she was led to the advocacy of this reform as the result of her own personal work on the Bradford School Board, on which she served for eight years, a period which coincided with developments in physical care for school children in which, largely through her influence, Bradford took such an honourable place. It was, indeed, due to her experimental work, her writings, and not less her insistent pressure, that the medical inspection of schools became accepted as a statutory duty of Education authorities.

When she joined her sister and fellow-worker Rachel, whose biography she has written, in London, the fight for medical inspection had been won, but treatment was almost non-existent. Undeterred by the failure of their first effort, the two sisters raised funds for a clinic, which a few years later was recognized by the Board of Education. This fight won, she proceeded to champion the cause of the "ex-baby", and in 1914—an ominous date, her now world-renowned nursery school in Deptford was opened. But the struggle was not yet over. The war years brought almost overwhelming difficulties and the death of her sister. But Margaret lived to see the fruit of her labours. Her school became fully recognized and with the devoted help of her friend, Lady Astor, in the last few years she raised £20,000 for a college in memory of her sister, for training nursery school students.

Margaret McMillan was not only a social reformer; she had strong political convictions, and joined the Independent Labour Party early in her life. She gave her support to the movement for the enfranchisement of women, and in later years to the cause of Peace. But it will be for her original work for children that she will be remembered. Her closing years brought fame and honour. She was awarded the C.B.E. in 1917, and last year became a Companion of Honour. The Queen visited her school, now known to admirers from all over the world; she herself visited America and Germany and was everywhere recognized as one of the leading educationists of modern times. But above all she had the joy of knowing that the work to which she had given her life was firmly established. In the words of *The Times* obituary notice on Monday of this week—"She died in the firm faith that her students will carry onwards the torch which she has dropped, and that the schools of her heart's desire will multiply and the children be comforted."

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

Wednesday, 25th March.

INDIA (MATERNAL DEATHS).

Miss Rathbone asked the Secretary of State for India the rate of maternal deaths per 1,000 confinements in British India during the last year, or for the most recent year for which figures are available.

Mr. Benn: Figures are not available for the whole of British India. But to take a few illustrative cases, the ratio of maternal deaths per 1,000 live births in 1927 was 12 for Madras Town, and 5.3 for Madras Presidency; 5 for Bombay City, and 5.4 for the Presidency. When copies of the Public Health Commissioner's report for 1928 are received I will have one placed in the Library.

Miss Rathbone: Has the right hon. Gentleman any reason to think that these figures can be complete in view of the statement of the representative of public health in Madras that 20 per 1,000 is a very moderate estimate of the number of maternal deaths?

Mr. Benn: I have given the figures and I have no doubt that they are accurate.

FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE.

Miss Rathbone asked the Secretary of State for India what provision is being made for the representation of women on the reconstituted Federal Structure Committee.

Mr. Benn: As I have informed the House on Monday last, I am in consultation with the Governor-General on the composition of the reconstituted Federal Structure Committee.

Thursday, 26th March.

POLICEWOMEN (LONDON).

Mr. Freeman asked the Home Secretary whether the 50 more policewomen to be appointed in the Metropolitan area are in addition to the increase of 50 announced on 13th February.

Mr. Clynes: No Sir. The increase contemplated in my earlier reply has not been made, for administrative reasons which I have explained more than once to the House. My hope is that it will now be possible to make it effective at no distant date.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR
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OUR NEW OFFICES.

The removal to our bungalow at 4 Great Smith Street was successfully carried out last Friday. As far as possible, during the process of settling in, we are trying to fulfil the motto "Business as usual". We crave the indulgence of our friends, however, should replies to any letters be at all delayed. The telephone is being installed but will not be completed until after Easter. The number will be the same as before, Victoria 6188.

EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The office will be closed over Easter and will be reopened on Wednesday, 8th April.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BRYN MAWR SUMMER SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP.

MADAM,—In 1927 the Bryn Mawr and Affiliated Summer Schools in America first offered a scholarship to a British industrial worker. This gave an opportunity to a British worker to attend the school and study for eight weeks together with a hundred women workers from all parts of the United States, Canada, and other European countries. So successful was the experiment that, owing to the splendid work of the first two students, in 1929, two scholarships were given and last year the scholarship was extended to cover a further eight months at the Vineyard Shore School.

A British Committee has been formed to raise £100 per student, necessary to cover travelling and out-of-pocket expenses. May I appeal to your readers for any help they can give to help us in this really important piece of international and educational work? Any donation should be sent to the Treasurer, Mrs. Ernest Davies, 35 Ormonde Gate, Chelsea, S.W. 3.

DOROTHY ELLIOTT,
Acting Hon. Secretary.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The first woman member of the Council has been elected in the Isles of Scilly, where she headed the poll.

Leeds is opening an Employment Exchange for resident domestic servants as separate establishment from though still under the control of the Ministry of Labour. It will be in touch with Exchanges all over England. It will be remembered that Leeds has residential scheme with a thirteen weeks' training course for unemployed women as domestic servants.

THE ALL PEOPLES' ASSOCIATION.

The "doubting Thomases" who prophesied the failure of the All Peoples' Association on the ground that the idea was too vast, seem likely to be proved in the wrong. "Apa" is succeeding, and has proved that it is doing work for which there is urgent need, and which has not already been undertaken by any other society. It differs from existing organizations in four ways: (1) It does not advocate any particular brand of international co-operation, but merely seeks to promote personal contact and a better understanding between all nations, on the broadest possible basis; (2) it hopes to publish at regular intervals a magazine in English, French, and German, to which all members will be entitled; (3) it hopes to establish international club premises, information bureaux, and reception offices in all important centres where the visiting foreigner will be made welcome; (4) it seeks to do for the ordinary mortal what the League of Nations at Geneva does for the statesman, that is, to enable him to get into touch with other countries and understand their points of view. During the first nine months of its existence "Apa" has enrolled over a thousand members and formed groups in ten countries. Lord Cecil is one of the Presidents of the Association, Mr. Evelyn Wrench Chairman of the Executive Committee, and the British Headquarters are at 99 Gower Street.

COMING EVENTS.

B.B.C.

Monday, 6th April. 7 p.m. "New Books." Miss V. Sackville-West.
Wednesdays, 10.45. "The Week in Westminster." 15th April: Mrs. M. A. Hamilton.
Thursdays, 7.25. The World and Ourselves. 9th April: "Finland."
Fridays, 7.25. India. 10th April: "India and the Past."
Saturdays, 9.20. The Ideal Holiday. Mr. R. H. Mottram v. Sir Barry Jackson: "East Anglia v. the Malvern Country."

ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN.

17th April. Annual Conference, Park Lane Hotel.
 11.30. a.m. Morning Session.

1 p.m. Luncheon. Speaker: Sir John Brooke, C.B., Sir Douglas Newton, M.P., Mrs. Wintringham. Chair, Mrs. Wilfred Ashley.
 3 p.m. Afternoon session.
 9 p.m. Ball (in aid of new premises fund), Park Lane Hotel.

IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION.

7th April. Olympia.

NEW IDEALS IN EDUCATION CONFERENCE.

6th-11th April. Somerville College, Oxford. Particulars from the Secretary, Fairacre, Wiltshire Lane, Eastcote, Middlesex.

SWEDISH EXHIBITION OF INDUSTRIAL ARTS AND CRAFTS.

To *22nd April.* 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Dorland House, 121 Lower Regent Street. Admission, 1s. 6d.

TYPEWRITING.

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OPPOSITE OLYMPIA.—To let, furnished; short or long period; convenient sunny flat; wide outlook; 3 bedrooms, 2 sitting-rooms, gas fires throughout.—Box 1,621, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

BED-SITTINGROOMS, with convenience for light cooking, from 20s. weekly; others with kitchenettes from 30s.; ideal business or student ladies; two can share any room.—29, Brunswick Square (Russell Square), W.C. 1.

UNFURNISHED Residential Chambers in detached house; partial service; common dining-room; owner first class cookery diplomée.—19 Thurlow Road, Hampstead.

UNFURNISHED or partly furnished rooms; excellent part St. John's Wood; small select house opening end March; 16s. to 35s. weekly; meals and service obtainable.—Box 1,625, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

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HASLEMERE.—Subscriber recommends cosy cottage; simple artistic furniture; 1 sitting, 2 bedrooms (3 single beds); gas fires; attic workroom, kitchenette, gas-cooker; Company's water and sanitation; near station; heather and pine scenery; suitable two ladies; partial attendance arranged if desired; 2½ gns., with linen and some plate; for ten weeks from 27th July.—Apply, Owner, 2 Copse Cottages, Longdene Road, Haslemere.

WANTED, at moderate rent, by careful tenants, Flat, as near Westminster as possible; four or five beds; one week in April.—Marshall, 30 Mansfield Road, Reading.

KENSINGTON.—First floor, furnished flat; large balcony, overlooking extensive grounds; lounge, bed-sittingroom, small bedroom, kitchen, bath, piano, wireless; attendance available; 22nd April-1st September; £2 10s., exclusive gas, electricity.—Box 1,627, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION.

VEGETARIAN Guest House; ¼ hour by tram from centre of Bath; central heating; large garden; fine views; boating and bathing in River Avon.—Misses Tollemache, Bathaston, Bath.

MRS. HUBBACK recommends furnished house, beautiful part Skye coast; 5 bedrooms, 2 sittingrooms; bathing, fishing, walking; very low rent.—Write Campbell, Table View, Ardmore, Harlosh, Dunvegan, Skye.

WIESBADEN, Germany.—German family takes paying guests; comfortable rooms; £2 15s. per week; German lessons arranged.—Apply, Frau Stoehr, Schlichterstrasse 18. References, Rev. F. Freese, 43 Princes' Gardens, London; Rev. J. McConnachie, 23 Windsor Street, Dundee.

POST VACANT.

WANTED, assistant worker for children's moral welfare work. Some social training essential. Age 28-35. Salary commencing £150.—Apply, letter only, Miss Smith-Rewse, 17 Crompton Terrace, Upper Street, N. 1.

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MAN and wife together. She cook, he useful indoors or out. Now in Paris. He a Scot.—Apply, Mrs. Cobb, Wealdstone House, Harrow.

PROFESSIONAL.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED. Consult Miss H. M. Baker, 275 High Holborn, W.C. 1. Income Tax Returns, Super Tax Returns, Repayment Claims of all descriptions. Telephone: Holborn 0377.

FOR SALE AND WANTED.

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

MISCELLANEOUS.

MAKE Jolly Soft Toys.—A cut-out squirrel, with bushy tail, eyes; instructions 2s. 6d., price lists free; easy postal course, 30s.; demonstrations and lessons, 10s. 6d., plus 1½d. mile expenses.—Miss T. Copeland, Hythe, Southampton.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 27 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey, Members' Library, books on Suffrage, Sociology, and Economics, Hansard, latest Government Publications, Periodicals, Newscuttings. Information given to non-members 10-8 (except Saturdays).

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 5th April: Miss Maude Royden.

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

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