

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Feminism in the House of Lords.

Lord Buckmaster is a very good friend to many of the causes which women have at heart, but we think he went astray when he attempted to re-insert Subsection 4 of Clause 6 in the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Bill, which was struck out in the House of Commons in view of the remarkably strong opposition. The Marquess of Salisbury, on behalf of the Government, refused to accept the amendment, though "not opposed to its principle," and promised to consider the matter before the Report stage. The section in question gives the Minister power to direct that the pension and additional allowances shall be paid to the local authority, or some other person approved by him, to be administered for the benefit of the widow and children if there are any. The welfare of children is protected under another section of the Bill, so that the debatable point is the status of the widow. On Tuesday, in the Report stage, Lord Salisbury reported the results of his considerations in a speech which might have come from the lips of the most advanced feminist and which we wish we could report in full. He pointed out that it is nowhere suggested that a pension should be taken from a man under similar conditions. The pension belongs to a woman and woman as a right. The Government also refused on the grounds of expense to accept an amendment proposed by Lord Askwith, with which we are in hearty agreement, which would have the effect of extending pension rights to the widows of men who died before the passing of the Bill until the youngest child

had passed school age, whether that was fourteen years or sixteen years, as well as allowances for her children.

Harbour at Last.

On Friday, July 31st, the Guardianship of Infants Bill and the Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Bill received Royal Assent. They are, it is true, greatly the worse for wear and sadly mutilated after their prolonged and stormy voyages through Parliament. But we give them a warm welcome none the less, as we believe they will bring relief to many who are suffering under existing conditions.

Teachers and the Poole Judgment.

We deal in a leading article with the judgment in this case. But the opinion officially expressed by the National Union of Teachers is so important, especially in its repudiation of the contention that there are special conditions of unemployment to justify the dismissal of married teachers, that we give it in full :—

"We claim full professional privileges for qualified women teachers. Having obtained the certificate of the Board of Education which gives them the right to teach, it should not be cancelled by the marriage certificate. There are authorities who stipulate, when engaging a woman teacher, that should she marry she must tender her resignation. But her resignation is not always insisted upon. The circumstances are reviewed, and sympathetic consideration is given to cases that require it. Two years ago, with the demand for economy and the amalgamation of departments, there was unemployment among newly qualified teachers. But the position has greatly improved. There are, of course, teachers just leaving college who are not immediately absorbed; but that is no reason for dismissing women teachers because they have married. Such a course of action is not justified on the ground of unemployment. The supply of qualified teachers is not too great, having regard to the number of children who have to be taught. The size of the classes in schools is frequently too large. In London there is a good staffing system, and the same may be said of areas under progressive authorities in the country, but there are many cases where the classes are unwieldy. On educational grounds the dismissal of married women teachers cannot be justified, particularly with the large number of supplementary unqualified teachers who are engaged in teaching. We are delighted with the decision in this case, because it safeguards the rights of qualified women teachers, and we should have viewed a judgment in favour of the educational authority with some alarm."

We have only to add that married women teachers do not want "sympathetic consideration," they want justice.

The President of the Divorce Court and a Clean Press.

The Judicial Proceedings (Regulation of Reports) Bill, introduced by Lord Darling, passed through Committee in the House of Lords on Wednesday of last week. Lord Merrivale, the President of the Divorce Court, not only welcomed the Bill but in his desire for a wholesale cleansing of the Press moved a drastic amendment to the effect that the publication of an offending newspaper might be suspended for a period of time not exceeding six months. This, however, he withdrew in order not to imperil the chances of the Bill. An amendment proposed by him to replace a subsection which permitted publication of the grounds on which proceedings for dissolution of marriage, etc., are brought and resisted by the following: "A precise

'Keep fit on
COCOA'

BOURNVILLE
SEE THE "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE
OF CHOCOLATE

Write
Cadbury, Bournville
about Gift Scheme

statement of the grounds upon which the proceedings are brought and resisted" was accepted by the Government. The debate in the House of Lords, if so unanimous a discussion among those who know what they are talking about may be called a debate, must surely go a long way to convince those who are opposed to legislation on the subject on the grounds that publicity acts as a deterrent.

"The Loan Shark"

The report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider the two Money Lenders Bills, one introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Carson and the other into the House of Commons by Mr. Wells, was issued this week. The Committee have reduced the two Bills to a single measure based on the Upper House Bill. Our readers are referred to articles on the subject in our issues of 12th September, 1924, 14th November, 1924, 26th June, 1925, and to an experiment in private money-lending described by Miss Keeling in this week's issue. We fear the proposed Bill will not go very far to remove the evil so far as the poorest and most ignorant classes of the community are concerned, as it is often almost impossible to track down the illicit money-lender. But the compulsory registration of money-lenders on payment of a licence the prohibition of broadcast circulars, and the presumption that interest beyond 4 per cent. per month is successive, will protect those in temporary difficulties who resort to this method of raising money. The attitude of the Government towards the Bill has not yet been announced.

Juvenile Offenders.

A Scottish Committee has been set up to consider the treatment of juvenile offenders. Mr. George Morton, Sheriff of Forfarshire, has been appointed chairman, and there are two women among the nine members, Miss N. H. Irwin and Baillie Mrs. Millar. We are more interested in the prevention than the treatment of juvenile offenders, though comparisons are futile, as the treatment of the juvenile offender means the prevention of the criminal. At this time of the year the urgent need of more playgrounds and playing-fields, so much discussed in the Press recently, is borne in upon us. Nor are outdoor facilities sufficient; we go so far as to suggest that indoor places of recreation should be provided in our crowded cities. We believe that the cost would be amply covered by the reduction in juvenile offences.

Professional Women and Hospital Treatment.

We have received again this year the annual report of the Professional and Business Women's Hospital League. This organization, as our readers will doubtless remember, is in the nature of an insurance society, designed to meet the needs of a section at least of those persons who are ineligible for charitable assistance through voluntary hospitals, who are outside the scope of National Health insurance, but who are nevertheless not in a position to meet without difficulty or hardship the sudden financial drain of an illness or surgical operation. The League works in co-operation with a number of hospitals who make special provision for its members, also with Messrs. Bailey & Son, surgical instrument makers, who allow reduced prices to members. One would naturally expect such an organization to make an increasingly wide appeal among professional and middle-class women. That it actually does so, is illustrated by the growth of its benefit membership during the past year from 1,649 to 2,008. One special and incidental cause for our own particular interest in the work of the Hospital League is the double fact that its late secretary, who resigned during the past year owing to pressure of other business, was Miss Mildred Ransom, formerly a most indefatigable organizer of "Common Cause" sales in the early days of that paper's career; and its present secretary is Miss P. Strachey, of the London Society for Women's Service.

The Protection of Chorus Girls.

We congratulate Mrs. Philipson on the success of the Private Members' Bill promoted by her for the registration of theatrical managers which has now passed through all its Parliamentary stages. By the terms of the Bill every theatrical manager must be registered and must first advertise his intention to apply for registration. This will protect members of the theatrical profession who have fallen into the hands of unscrupulous or bogus managers.

Women's Place is the Home.

We would like to know more about Councillor Carter, of Middlesbrough, who opposed a recommendation of the Parks Committee that ten policemen should be appointed for duty in the parks during the month of August. He declared that the proper place for women was in the home, and ridiculed the idea that they could carry out the duties required. We imagine that he must be a well-to-do bachelor. He is certainly not the father of modern daughters. Mrs. Schofield Coates pointed out the need for women to protect small children, and the recommendation of the Parks Committee was carried by 19 votes to 11.

Errata.

When our more distinguished contemporaries make mistakes, as they sometimes do, they seldom acknowledge them. We, however, usually do so, in spite of our limited space. We regret several copying slips in names in our article on the Aubrey House Garden Party. Mrs. Cholmeley should read Mr. Cholmeley. The name of the late Mrs. Osler, one of the best and most devoted friends of Woman's Suffrage, was incorrectly spelt and an "e" was inadvertently omitted in Mrs. Creighton's name. In the interests of accuracy we must add to our note of last week on the report of the Adoption of Children Committee that the Duchess of Atholl resigned when she became Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education and Mrs. Eleanor S. Wilson Fox took her place on the Committee.

Questions in Parliament.

NURSING HOMES.—Mr. Cooper Rawson asked the Minister of Health whether he is in a position yet to state the constitution of the proposed Committee to enquire into the question of the registration of nursing homes, and whether the British Medical Association will be given an opportunity of giving evidence of an expression of their views? Mr. Chamberlain replied that it is not proposed to set up the intended Select Committee to inquire into this question until after the Recess. It will rest with the Committee to decide what evidence it is desirable to hear, but they will no doubt consider the question of inviting evidence from the British Medical Association.

EQUAL PAY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.—Mr. W. Baker asked the Prime Minister whether he is aware that a promise was given in 1921 that the principle of equal pay for men and women in the Civil Service should be considered within three years; and whether he is prepared to appoint a Committee to inquire into the question? Mr. Guinness, replying, referred Mr. Baker to the following answer given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the same question on March 5th:—"This question has been reviewed both by the late and by the present Government, with the result that it has been decided that the state of the country's finances does not admit of the increase of expenditure involved in the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women in the Civil Service."

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.

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THE RIGHT TO MARRY.

An important decision given last week in the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice should go far to clear the fogs of confused thinking on the question of married woman's work. The facts of the case were stated in our issue of 17th July under the title "A Married Woman Teacher Shows Fight." Mrs. Short, assistant certificated teacher under the Poole Education authority, brought an action against the Corporation of Poole for wrongful dismissal on account of marriage. Mrs. Short was married in 1921, and up to that time the Education Committee had shown no sign of objection to the employment of married woman teachers. About a year later a return of the number of married women in the Committee's employ was asked for. It was found that a total number of seventeen, including Mrs. Short, were engaged in the Council Schools and non-provided schools of the district. After consideration the Education Committee reported to the Council that they were of opinion that no fresh appointment should be made of married women teachers whose husbands were living and able to support them. The Council adopted this report and went a step further in deciding "that it be a condition in any future appointment of a woman teacher, that in the event of her marriage she shall forthwith resign her teaching engagement."

A year later the Education Committee went still further and recommended that notice be given to all married women teachers in Council schools that their engagement will be terminated unless they can satisfy the Committee that some sufficient reason exists for the engagement being continued. This decision was also approved by the Council, and letters to this effect were written to all married women teachers. Mrs. Short replied that she had no domestic ties as she employed help in order that she might give her undivided attention to her school duties. Her claim for retention was, however, disallowed, and she was given notice to terminate her engagement. In the case of other teachers who put forward reasons for their employment, further information regarding the financial position of the claimant was asked for. In one letter the Town Clerk asked definitely: "Please let me know what your husband's salary is and whether you have any other source of income than your salary." (The italics are ours.)

Mr. Justice Romer, in summing up the case, pointed out that by the decision of the Education Committee the woman teacher was not necessarily dismissed on marriage; she was merely obliged to resign and her resignation might or might not be accepted. His view was that the Committee intended to discriminate between cases in which the husband was or was not capable of supporting his wife. He held that Mrs. Short was exceptionally free from ties that might interfere with her teaching. Her husband was in receipt of a salary of £4 a week; she had no children; her mother lived with her and managed the house in her absence, and she was able to employ domestic help. In commenting on the letters from the Town Clerk, quoted above, Mr. Justice Romer says: "I cannot understand what the Education Committee or the Council had to do with the financial

position of teachers and their husbands." Nor can he understand why if the best interests of education are their main consideration, the married woman whose husband is unable to support her should be preferred. His view that they are influenced by other considerations is confirmed in his opinion by a letter sent by the Town Clerk to the managers of the non-provided schools which states the reasons of the Committee's decisions:—

1. They consider the duty of the married woman is primarily to look after her domestic concerns and they regard it as impossible for her to do so and to effectively and satisfactorily act as a teacher at the same time.

2. They consider that it is unfair to the large number of unmarried teachers who are at present seeking situations that the positions should be occupied by married women who presumably have husbands capable of maintaining them.

Mr. Justice Romer was driven to the conclusion that the grounds for dismissal were not the best interests of education in the district or of the efficiency of the school, but were from "motives alien and irrelevant to the exercise of the statutory duties of the Education Authority," and a declaration that Mrs. Short's notice of dismissal was invalid was granted.

Mrs. Short's spirited refusal to submit to the unjust and short-sighted decision of the Education Committee is deserving of the gratitude of all who stand for "equality of liberties, status, and opportunities," whether successful or not, but we congratulate her heartily on her victory. The bare facts speak more eloquently than any words from us. The responsible position of a teacher is not a charity to be awarded to the most necessitous candidate. Inquiry into the domestic concerns or financial position of anyone engaged by public or private employers is an intolerable impertinence. We have, it is true, much sympathy with students from training colleges or others who find difficulty in entering their chosen profession. But we cannot believe that in the long run the interests of any profession will be promoted by inquisition into the personal circumstances of its recruits or by the ejection from its ranks of members, however gifted, solely on the grounds of marriage. We read in the *Observer* this week that in post-war Germany marriage is a positive advantage to professional and business women workers and that it is only the woman teacher who knows that it may mean the end of her career. A few weeks ago, in discussing "the coming of the business woman," we spoke of wifehood and motherhood as a career in itself, and we believe that the majority of women will find it so. For those with the vocation for domesticity it is a career of great scope and interest. But those who have gifts in other directions must not be faced with the alternatives of permanent celibacy or their complete suppression. In any case, the decision as to whether a married woman shall or shall not work apart from her home does not rest with any outside authority. Mr. Justice Romer's judgment that the Poole Education Committee acted from "alien and irrelevant motives" should remind employers and employing bodies of the obvious truth that their sole business is to engage the best person for the job.

CHEMICAL WARFARE.

By LESLIE R. ALDOUS.

In recent years much has been written in books and in the Press on the subject of Chemical Warfare. Many of our gallant soldiers who fought in the Great War still retain vividly in their memories the horrors of "mustard gas" and such atrocities. But the gas warfare which they knew was mere child's play compared with what it would be like if ever there should be a "next war." Experts make no secret of the fact that, in the future it will be possible to use chemical devices on such a large scale that the women and children who stay at home will be just as much in the war zone as those who go abroad to fight.

This is one of the difficult problems with which the League of Nations is trying to deal. At the great Arms Conference, at which forty-four nations were represented, a few weeks ago at Geneva, a special Protocol on chemical and bacteriological warfare was opened for signature. America had a large share in drawing it up, though she is not yet a member of the League. The object of the agreement is to prohibit the use of all asphyxiating and other gases in war, and of all other chemical devices,

including bacteriological methods, of warfare. Already twenty-eight States, including all the Great Powers except Russia, have signed the agreement. This means that chemical warfare will henceforth be a crime against international law. True, in 1914, Germany violated her treaty obligations, but there was so very little body of international law in those days that she thought she could take the risk of being branded as an international criminal. Events proved to what extent she had under-estimated the force of world opinion.

Since 1914 we have progressed considerably towards a reign of law in international affairs. Not only the League of Nations, but also an effective Permanent Court of International Justice has been established. It is, of course, too early to pretend that we have advanced so far that no nation would dream of offending against international law. Chemical warfare, too, is a most difficult thing to control. But a Protocol condemning it is in existence. And no nation to-day is likely to risk arousing against itself the whole force of world opinion so lightly as our ex-enemy did eleven fateful years ago.

AN EXPERIMENT IN MONEY-LENDING.

By D. C. KEELING.

In November, 1924, the Liverpool Personal Service Society initiated, as a direct corollary to the recent local inquiry into the evils of ill-regulated money-lending, a small experimental Loan Fund. A special Sub-Committee to administer the Fund was formed, on which sit a solicitor, two barristers, business men, representatives of the Social and Industrial Reform Committee of the Women Citizens' Association, and other social services.

This Committee has four objects in view:—

1. To educate those people who are so ignorant and foolish as to resort to money-lenders charging interest as high as 433, 666, and even 1,300 per cent. per annum when there is little prospect of ever paying back the loan itself.
2. To mitigate to some extent the misery caused by recourse to money-lenders.
3. To lend money, after careful inquiry, to those in special emergency and difficulty who would otherwise be unable to obtain ready money at reasonable rates of interest.
4. To gain experience by practical experiment.

Interest varying from 5 per cent. to 9 per cent. per annum, according to the security offered, is charged, in addition to 6d. in the £ at the time the loan is made for costs. The exact amount of interest due after the principal has been repaid is calculated to the nearest penny according to the length of time taken to repay the loan.

Since the formation of the Committee, 134 applications have been considered. After careful investigation by Personal Service Society workers, 53 loans have been made, varying in amount from £1 to £20.

The investigators have found that in many cases the necessity for borrowing has arisen through perfectly legitimate causes, e.g. sickness, death, or difficulties of obtaining employment. The Committee consider such cases suitable for help from the Loan Fund.

Many loans have been made to people entangled in the meshes of money-lending, and the lenders have often consented to reduce considerably the amount of the debts, e.g. one money-lender agreed to reduce a debt of £24 to £6 if the money were paid down. Another woman helped by the Fund owed £104 3s. 6d. to five money-lenders, who were persuaded to accept £23 10s. 3d. in settlement.

In some cases not considered suitable for the Loan Fund the money-lenders concerned have been induced to agree to more satisfactory terms with the borrowers.

Other kinds of help given include stock for people in business or wishing to start business, payment of gas bills for those who let rooms for a livelihood, sewing machines for tailors and dressmakers, provision of tallies for dock labourers, etc.

Up to date the Committee has had no bad debts, although in some cases the borrower has not been able to keep up the payments to the extent which he undertook to do.

To the middle of July, 75 per cent. of the money due had been repaid by the borrowers.

The Liverpool Committee lays great stress on the educational value of the Fund. To each applicant for a loan the objects of the Fund are carefully explained and the evils of ill-regulated money-lending are emphasized. It is hoped and believed that the advice given will in time influence a considerable number of people. A card is given to each borrower, on which is printed the main object of the Fund and a sentence to the effect that regular payments will assist the Committee to help others. The weekly payments are entered and initialled on these cards, on each of which is also stated the exact terms of the individual contract. The first year of the Liverpool Loan Fund is experimental, and so far it has been financed by three donations, amounting in all to £250.

After eight months' work the Committee is convinced:—

1. That a properly administered Loan Fund is a real necessity.
 2. That if Loan Funds are to be self-supporting, the rates of interest at present charged by the Liverpool Loan Fund need to be materially increased, particularly where there is no security.
- At the end of the experimental year it is hoped to place the Fund on a surer and safer basis, and the rates of interest at present charged will be revised.

The Committee has been in correspondence with the Russell Sage Foundation regarding American methods of dealing with the loan shark.

That Foundation has attempted for many years to improve

the unsatisfactory condition of the small loans business by (1) calling attention to the existing evils; (2) prosecuting loan sharks who violated the law, and (3) urging the passage of the Uniform Small Loan Law. This law gives State control to the money-lending business, restricts the rate of interest charged for loans not exceeding 300 dollars, and provides for licensing and supervision by Banking Commissioners. In September, 1922, the Universal Small Loan Law was passed and is now in force in nineteen of the United States, and its effect has been (1) to reduce unnecessary borrowing, (2) to lighten the burden of genuine borrowers, (3) to reduce the losses of lenders, and (4) to substitute respect for disrepute in the lending business. At the same time remedial loan societies working on a commercial basis have been formed and now exist in thirty-one large cities.

England would do well to follow America's example in drastically dealing with the disreputable money-lender. The present steps towards new legislation are in the right direction, and experiments such as that now being made in Liverpool will do much to show the need for, and the possibility of, conducting remedial loan funds.

WORLD EDUCATION.

This great organization, which was formed at San Francisco in 1923, held its first Biennial Conference in Edinburgh last year. The term education is taken in its broadest sense, and at the Conference there were, besides specifically educational organizations, such societies as the League of Nations Union, the Women's International League, Women Citizens' Associations, and Societies for Equal Citizenship. Representatives were present from our affiliated societies in Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The note which was predominant in this great international gathering, with its representatives from every continent from the West to the Far East, from the old world and the new, was education as a means to world peace. This was prominent in the groups dealing with primary, secondary, adolescent, and adult education, also in the illiteracy group, as well as in the special group dealing with international relations. Study of and support for the principles and work of the League of Nations, and the promotion of international goodwill and intercourse among both teachers and students were advocated in the educational system of each country. It was noticeable that speakers from several countries seemed naturally to use the feminine pronoun, and more than one reference was made to the special gifts of women as teachers. The right of all, rich and poor, of whatever race or sex, to equal opportunities in education in accordance with their capacity to profit by them was established. The Conference confirmed and developed the temporary constitution adopted at San Francisco in 1923, and now goes forward an established organization to work for the advancement of education and the establishment of goodwill among all the nations of the earth.

LORD CECIL'S TRIBUTE TO DAME MILLICENT.

Many readers of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship unable to be at the garden party will like to read Lord Cecil's letter of apology for his unavoidable absence:—

DEAR MRS. HUBBACK,

I am so terribly sorry that I shall be unable to get to the Garden Party at Aubrey House this afternoon. Unfortunately the House of Lords is exceptionally busy and I am afraid I must be there for the time of its sitting.

It is a great disappointment to me not to be able to pay my tribute to Dame Millicent, for she is one of the outstanding figures of our time. The enfranchisement of women, of which she was so largely the inspiration, is not the only claim she has upon the gratitude of her compatriots. She has always stood for what is right and just in public life both nationally and internationally, and it is a grave reproach to our Constitution that no means have been found of directly utilizing her great qualifications for Parliamentary life.

Please give her my respectful greetings and best wishes for her health and happiness.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

CECIL.

23rd July.

"TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY".¹

M. Paul Bureau has written a treatise upon the moral degeneration of France, which leaves us standing aghast at the magnitude of the problem; though of course we have always recognised its existence! The sex-obsession of his countrymen, the forms taken by that obsession, and the overground and underground machinery for fanning its evil flame into a commercially profitable conflagration, are described in his opening chapters with a wealth of detail which leaves little or nothing to the imagination. Closely connected in his mind with all this—indeed closely connected with it in fact, is the decline of France's population. As he very truly points out, healthy domestic life and the desire for children does not easily flourish in competition with such disturbing and varied sex interests. It is only regrettable that, almost as though infected with the virus of his own boggy, M. Bureau imparts an atmosphere of unreality to his discussion of the French population problem by omitting all reference to that other most relevant factor—the abnormally high death-rate prevalent in France. It is not merely French morals which must be reconstructed if France is to hold her cultural place in Europe, but French drains. For a better future M. Bureau pins his faith in the main to moral regeneration reinforced by the inspiration of the Catholic Church. Young people must be taught to practise complete chastity before marriage; they must, with the exception of a few vocational celibates, regard marriage as a racial duty, to be followed by the production of a fairly large family. Marriage must be indissoluble, and any spacing or restriction of births which physiological or economic conditions may necessitate must be accomplished by what our National Council of Public Morals would call "Self control." Here too M. Bureau imparts an atmosphere of unreality to his discussion by confining to a minute and passing reference all consideration of the French Family Wage System, which is after all one of the most significant attempts of our generation to make the world safe for wives and children.

There is much to applaud in M. Bureau's book, as well as much to criticize. And our only hesitation in recommending it to those of our readers who are interested in the population problems of other countries, is occasioned by its extreme length. There are so very many words in it. So very many. And many of them superfluous.

THEN AND NOW.

By A. H. WARD.

"Despite our difficulties we are still the one nation which consumes large quantities of white bread." Mr. Lloyd George's attractive optimism peeps out thus in his Introduction to Mrs. Fisher's book,² and her optimism is to be found in her closing words: "Let us hope that some of us who have lived through the war may at last survive to see another epoch of national well-being." This optimism is based in part on the remarkable parallel between much that happened after the Napoleonic wars and much which happened after the "great war" of 1914-18, a parallel most skilfully brought out by Mrs. Fisher.

As the above quotations suggest, the author appears to feel herself justified in her hopefulness from the fact that England "muddled through" then and that she is determined, bulldog like, to muddle through now. Our ancestors, like our rulers to-day, toyed with the remedy of protection, but some of the most vivid of Mrs. Fisher's pages set forth the absurdities in which the practice of protection at times lands even the astute politician, absurdities graphically expounded in the Petition of the Merchants of London in 1820.

The whole story does not encourage a too facile optimism in the reader. A hundred years ago the British citizen muddled through with his housing problem, and we find it to-day, because of him, almost insoluble. He muddled through with his finance. The national debt in 1815 was £537,650,000, in 1924 it was £7,680,000. These things give us pause. Is the future to be as the past? As the past, multiplied by the inexorable arithmetic of the rolling on of the centuries? Is that the future? Or, we speak under correction, have the unfacile

(Continued at foot of next column.)

¹ *Towards Moral Bankruptcy*, by Paul Bureau. Authorised Translation with an introduction by Mary Scharlieb, M.D. Price 16s.

² *Then and Now: Economic Problems after the War a Hundred Years Ago*. By Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher, with an introduction by the Right. Hon. David Lloyd George. (Published Oxford University Press. Price 5s.)

MURASAKI'S ROMANCE.¹

The Lady Murasaki seems to have been a kind of female Marcel Proust, living in Japan, nine hundred years ago. The volume of "The Tale of Genji" now published contains only nine of the fifty-four chapters which, the translator tells us, will probably occupy six volumes. But there are other ways besides length which this medieval Japanese romance reminds us of "A la Recherche du temps perdu" Genji, the charming young prince, whose story we are told from before his birth, is imaginative, introspective, ultra-sensitive, neurotic, like Proust's young Frenchman. Murasaki, like Proust, creates her effect by tens of thousands of minute touches. She revels in digression. The atmosphere of her book is full of elusive, mysterious suggestion. She has, it seems, no ethical motive, but a passion for beauty. She pursues it in mountain mists, in beds of wind-shaken reeds, in pale sprays of wistaria or cherry-blossom, in lonely houses in the rain, in exquisite human forms, clad in saffron or cherry colour. Judged from the moral point of view, the adventures she records are often sordid; but, in her world, beauty, and only beauty, matters; it is at once the most perishable and the most eternal of all things; the object of life is to capture it, or at least its reflection.

A characteristic example of her method is the story of Genji's first meeting with Murasaki, not the authoress of the book, but a child who afterwards becomes one of his many loves. He had secretly travelled deep into the Northern hills to visit a wise hermit and seek a cure for an ague from which he was suffering. The journey, begun long before dawn, at a time when, in the capital, the blossom had all fallen, but when the hill cherry was not yet out, is described in some detail; so is the visit to the hermit in his cave, and the appearance of the mountain side, with scattered hermitages and monastic buildings, shut in by hedges of brushwood, wide stretches of shimmering woods below, and mists softening everything, and taking strange and lovely forms. After the healing ceremonial there is a wonderful scene on the mountain side, in which one of the Prince's followers tries to distract his mind and prevent the return of his illness by filling his imagination with the description of a lovely girl, daughter of a distant governor, living in a desolate house upon a remote seashore. Then at twilight Genji wanders out by himself; under cover of the evening mist, he looks into a room in the monastic buildings and sees some nuns at prayer. A little girl runs in,

"dressed in a rather worn white frock lined with a stuff of deep saffron colour. . . . Her hair, thick and wavy, stood out fanwise above her head. She was very flushed and her lips were trembling. . . . 'What is it? Have you quarrelled with the other little girls?' asks the nun. 'Inu has let out my sparrow, the little one that I kept in a clothes basket,' she said looking very unhappy. 'What a tiresome boy that Inu is!' said one of the two maids. 'He deserves a good scolding for playing such a stupid trick. Where can it have got to? And after we had taken so much trouble to tame it so nicely! I only hope the crows have not found it,' and so saying she left the room. She was a pleasant-looking woman with very long, wavy hair. The others called her Nurse Shonagon, and she seemed to be in charge of the child. 'Come,' said the nun to the little girl, 'you must not be such a baby. You are thinking all the time of things that do not matter at all. Just fancy! Even now when I am so ill that any day I may be taken from you, you do not trouble your head about me but are grieving about a sparrow. It is very unkind, particularly as I have told you I don't know how many times that it is naughty to shut up live things in cages.'"

So the conversation between the child and the nun, and the various attendants who come in and out, goes on, and Genji, watching outside in the twilight, seeing the resemblance of the child "to one whom he had loved with all his being" secretly weeps. The child and the nurse Shonagon afterwards play a considerable part in the story, but it is the manner of their introduction that is most characteristic.

Mr. Waley promises that when he has completed the six volumes of the "Tale of Genji," he will, in a seventh, give us a Diary which the authoress wrote during part of her stay at Court and discuss her position as a writer and the age in which she lived. We look forward eagerly to this seventh volume.

I. B. O'MALLEY.

(Continued from previous column.)

revolutionaries some message now, in the fullness of time? After learning about "then" and "now" from Mrs. Fisher and Mr. Lloyd George, do we want to learn about "after" from them? Perhaps, for example, Professor Soddy's amazing financial musings hint at something yet to come.

¹ *The Tale of Genji*, by Lady Murasaki, translated from the Japanese by Arthur Waley. (George Allen & Unwin, 10s. 6d. net.)

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE. (BRITISH SECTION, 55 GOWER STREET, W.C. 1.)

The clauses of the new German Note which refer to the League of Nations register a great advance. It is true that Germany once more alludes to the question of the free passage of troops which would be obligatory under Article 16 were she to enter the League, and that she suggests that she can only be said to enjoy "equal rights" as a League member when, as is intended in both the Treaty of Versailles and the Covenant of the League, her disarmament is followed by general disarmament. The Allies have insisted upon Germany's punctual fulfilment of the disarmament clauses, and it is as well that they should be reminded that they also have disarmament obligations under the Treaty. The question of Article 16 raises an issue which is more difficult. The Note states that Germany, "as a disarmed country," would be exposed "without limitation to the danger of being involved in the armed conflicts of third parties." Whatever may be the views of other people, Germans of all classes regard themselves as disarmed, and therefore helpless. But that is not all.

In the event of war between Poland and Russia the average German considers that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for any German Government to ensure safe passage through its territory of French troops—the troops of its bitterest enemy—destined to be used against Russia. The Soviet system is, on the whole, as unpopular in Germany as it is here, but there is no strong feeling against Russia as a nation, and the sympathies of the Communists who have considerable influence in the industrial areas would undoubtedly be with her.

It is clearly impossible to create a special precedent for Germany, but it is equally clear that some way out of the difficulty must be found. Article 16 of the Covenant is not sacrosanct; more than one attempt to revise it has already been made. It might be possible for Germany to enter the League on the understanding that revision of this article would not be ruled out of order and once a member of the Council she would not only be in a position to raise this question at Geneva, but no League war between third parties could be waged without her consent.

W. G. RINDER.

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PERSONAL.

We congratulate the Greenock Town Council on the election of Mrs Laurie, Hon. Sec. of the Greenock S.E.C. and formerly Hon. Treasurer for some years of the Scottish Federation.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STATE PURCHASE AT CARLISLE.

MADAM.—I note that Miss A. Scott obtains the information upon which she attacks the Carlisle Scheme from Government Statistics and also from friends. In regard to Government Statistics: As I pointed out in my last letter, comparisons between different towns are misleading and can be made to prove anything. This is not only my opinion, but is the deliberate judgment of the compiler of the statistics from which she quotes. Thus the compiler of the Home Office Licensing Statistics declares: "Still less is it possible in view of the infinite variety of the conditions precedent, to base on figures for two or more towns or places any sound judgment as to the comparative drunkenness or sobriety of these places." What then is the use of quoting statistics in the way adopted by Miss Scott?

Mr. Sherwell in the statement quoted by Miss Scott was merely pointing out what the advocates of the Carlisle Scheme have always maintained, namely, that the only useful comparison is to compare a city with itself. If Miss Scott will compare Carlisle as it is to-day with Carlisle say in the year 1913 or 1914 she should be able to see the meaning of Mr. Sherwell's statement. At present she seems to think it helps her case: but it doesn't.

Miss Scott does nothing to rebut Captain Reiss' explanation of the profits made in spite of reduction of houses by nearly 50 per cent. It should be obvious that if you conduct your brewing in one brewery instead of five, your spirit blending in one building instead of 17, and your beer bottling in one building instead of 13 you are effecting enormous economies in buildings and staff as well as in other ways. Likewise, if you meet the public need with 65 licences instead of 119 you are again effecting economy.

As to sales on the other hand: if you substitute public ownership for private interest you are eliminating the driving force of the trade. If anyone acquainted with the ordinary public-houses in our large cities at the present time compares them with the Carlisle houses he or she cannot but be impressed by the difference, the good order prevailing in Carlisle and the undesirable atmosphere of the ordinary drinking house.

The profits are not large when compared with Brewery Company returns. What they demonstrate is that practical reforms coupled with a reasonable profit without cost to the State are possible under State Management. Substantial meals are supplied at a number of the houses and light meals at others. There is no need for the same facilities at all the houses as long as adequate arrangements are made to meet the public need?

Miss Scott should write to the Temperance Legislation League, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W. 1, for their examination of Councillor Irving's statements. Why did not Mr. Courtney apply at one of the Food Taverns if he wanted more than a slight meal? When the S. Nicholas Arms and the London Tavern were opened in suitable premises, four undesirable public-houses in the neighbourhood were closed. The statement about the letter of July, 1919, was completely disposed of long ago. We wish that Miss Scott would acquaint herself with both sides of this controversy. Ample literature explanatory of the system at Carlisle and rebutting these attacks on the most important and promising scheme ever tried in this country is available for all bona fide students of the question.

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CORRESPONDENCE (Continued). THE REFORMED PUBLIC-HOUSE.

MADAM.—May I ask for room to reply to the criticisms of my letter, which I have read with much interest. My aim was to voice the growing conviction among many religious and social workers that the reformed public-house will do most to overcome excessive drinking.

This is, of course, no solution for those who desire in reality to abolish the use of all intoxicating drink, and who would do this if they could, regardless of whether or not it is the wish of a vast number of their fellow-countrymen. But to most of us, and I speak as a lifelong teetotaler, a change of habit seems of infinitely greater value than enforced abstinence.

We are not so foolish as to suppose that our two or three houses can do more than they set out to do, to show that here and now, without further legislation, public opinion could bring about a change of infinite value in the habits of those who frequent public-houses.

I can understand that our policy seems illogical to those who think only of legislation. But we believe that public opinion can do what temperance reformers have utterly failed to do all these many years because public opinion is not behind the extreme courses they advocate. To them our suggestions seem so simple as to be absurd, in view of the vastness of the problem. But we are suggesting an attack upon the evil where it actually exists, in the low-class public-house. We know that those who drink most seldom have an adequate or well-cooked meal, and we believe that a demand for food will be found to exist even in the poorest houses.

If societies that exist to promote the general welfare, councils of social service and women's institutes, will, with tact and understanding, make themselves acquainted with the conditions in the public-houses in their area, and can then convince the local licensing justices that public opinion desires the promotion of structural alterations and the provision of food in the poorest districts, great benefit will result, as is the case in the many better-class houses where the trade itself has already carried out these reforms. Incidentally the greater publicity brought to bear upon the houses by the visits will be of value, particularly if conditions of uncleanness when found are reported to the Medical Officer of Health. It may be said that this formation of public opinion is what local option is out to do, but we who know industrial areas well shudder to think of the local strife and bitterness that this method would set up, to result in most cases in a vote for no change. A mistake is often made in supposing that the trade alone is responsible for the drink problem, the vast public support there is behind it is not realized. Any effective reform must carry the people with it, and this can only be done by quiet, unobtrusive, steady improvement that is recognized by all as fair and reasonable.

As regards Gracie's Banking, I did not wish for one moment to question the value of this admirable house. My point was that it does not need all the machinery of the State to produce such a house. Any who doubt this should visit such houses as the Bellingham Arms, the Wellington Arms, by Waterloo, and the Rose in Camberwell, though social workers desire to see the smaller existing houses improved, rather than many large new places built.

Again, as regards the old type of public-house close by Gracie's Banking, my point was that the State should not be willing to leave a house, largely frequented by football crowds, year after year in its old unhealthy state. It is just a much used place like this that should accustom people to expect good conditions in the houses they frequent. It is surely largely this unhealthy public-house atmosphere, breathed daily by so many, that makes the fight against phthisis such a slow and uphill business in our country.

May I suggest that those who doubt the suggestion that Treasury demands have hindered rapid reform, should cause a question on the subject to be asked in Parliament. I do not suggest that the State could afford so great an expenditure all at once, to me it seems the duty of the trade, and of the trade alone, to put their houses in order. It seems to many of us madness to suppose that the State can carry on the drink trade satisfactorily, and incredible that any can support this policy except those who see in it a step towards the general nationalization and socialism they desire.

I agree with Lord Astor that it is foolish not to realize that those in the trade desire, like all other traders, to make all the legitimate profit possible, but drunkenness is neither encouraged nor desired by any decent firm in the trade. To interfere, save by the wise education and the provision of other opportunities for recreation described by your B.W.T.A. correspondent, with those who desire to use strong drink in moderation, is an interference with the rights of the individual such as England does not tolerate.

We all recognize and deplore the political strength of the trade that enables it frequently to oppose reasonable reform for fear lest, knowing the extreme programmes of many temperance societies, unreasonable ones should follow. The bitter struggle between the two extreme parties is likely to continue in the future as in the past. Meanwhile public opinion has brought about the most real reform that has yet been made, the earlier closing hour in many districts. There is great danger that the temperance party is so weak in Parliament as to lose even this. Nothing could be more salutary for the trade than the defeat of any bill that aims at altering this, by the vote of the Members of Parliament unpledged to either side. This can be done if their constituents show it is their wish.

EDITH NEVILLE.

TEMPERANCE REFORM.

MADAM.—May one encroach upon your space to reply to Mrs. Renton's letter in your issue of the 24th inst.?

The fundamental difference between us is that while Mrs. Renton concentrates upon reform in the circumstances and conditions under which alcohol is sold, my mind, conscious that the root of the mischief lies in the drug sold, sees as the problem how best to check the amount consumed.

Has the Carlisle scheme resulted in a decreased consumption greater than that throughout the rest of the country?

In 1900 (the highest year) there were over 36 million barrels of beer, over 45 million gallons of spirits, and over 16 million gallons of wines consumed in the United Kingdom. In 1923 the amounts had fallen to 20 million barrels of beer, 14 million gallons of spirits, 13 million gallons of

wines. If the decrease has been greater in the Carlisle area during the past few years, why have the figures not been given?

Does not the truth go to show that with "better conditions," more "desirable houses," the provision of attractions such as quaits, bowls, etc., the additional "respectability of Government houses," the consumption of alcohol has not decreased as rapidly as Temperance workers had hoped?

The "private, personal interest" pushing the sale is not so strong a factor as Mrs. Renton would have us think.

The man (or woman) standing a round for his friends, in public-house or club, cares not a whit where the profits go. Once inside the human body, the alcohol creates the desire for more.

In Carlisle, while private interest has gone, corporate interest remains. Has the Advisory Committee even taken any steps to further the knowledge of the detrimental effect of alcohol? Have they urged the compulsory teaching of the Temperance Syllabus in the Schools?

One hesitates to quote figures, but Mrs. Renton compares Liverpool and Carlisle. May I remind her that while Carlisle, with 237 convictions for drunkenness in 1913, has reduced them to 89 in 1923, Liverpool, without a Control Board, has reduced the convictions from 14,894 in 1913 to 4,868 in 1923.

The populations of the two cities are very different in character. Those who come "over the salt sea waves" seem to land with a great thirst.

One is fully conscious of the fact that controversies between groups of Temperance Reformers grow wearisome to the average reader. How often does one hear "when Temperance folk agree as to what they want, then the ordinary citizen will take a hand"; yet I appeal once more to Mrs. Renton and her supporters to concentrate upon the things upon which ALL are agreed. The great work of the Liquor Control Board was the publication of the Report, "Alcohol and its effect upon the Human Body." Let us all read it (especially that portion which deals with the effect upon the human mind) and concentrate upon the spread of that knowledge.

B. SHILSTON WATKINS.

CORRESPONDENCE UNDER CARLISLE.

This interesting and useful correspondence must cease for the present. We hope shortly to publish a series of short articles representative of different aspects of genuine Temperance Reform.—Ed.

MAISONS DE TOLERANCE.

MADAM.—I can only reply briefly to Miss Powell's further letter. The A.M. and S.H. lent Miss Powell Fiaux's book as an historical study of the French houses; it does not follow conditions are the same to-day. Houses are possibly shuttered and barred to exclude overlooking. I do not say women are never detained in brothels against their will, but I should hesitate to accuse France of such a crime without evidence, and I have no evidence. The point about Strasburg is that it was the morals police who tacitly refused to carry out the regulations excluding men under 18 and it is the same police who would administer the regulations about foreign women.

The "closed" houses in France died out because they offended public sentiment; they became unpopular and therefore unprofitable. The maisons tolérées are gradually falling into the same position, and a clear strong public opinion calling continuously for their abolition would be very effective in hastening their decay. Instead of which time is wasted and side-issues introduced by calling for all sorts of regulations instead of abolition. I have stated before that we do not object to any country passing any regulations it likes which aim at the moral improvement of licensed houses. All we say is that our business is not to improve brothels but to get them abolished as officially recognized institutions.

Without committing the A.M. and S.H., my own personal opinion is that all the regulations which have been made, such as those to ensure proper treatment of the inmates, to exclude men under 18, girls under 21, and foreign women, to prohibit the sale of alcohol, etc., etc., are not worth the paper on which they are printed if it is to the advantage of the interests concerned to ignore them. If the prohibition of foreign women will cause the South American brothels to collapse I am quite certain it will not be operated.

Miss Powell is misinformed about Holland. Holland found it absolutely impossible to enforce its regulation forbidding minor girls to be inmates of brothels; the morals police passed girls of 16 to 18 into brothels as being women of 23 and swore there were no minors in any licensed brothels. The first effective step Holland took was to prohibit the entrance into Holland of any men or women without means of subsistence other than prostitution.

Ultimately the long continued Abolitionist agitation was successful, but Holland to-day votes against the "foreign women" regulation as being perfectly futile. Miss Powell is also in error concerning the National Committees for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women. Their vote against the "foreign women" resolution was 12 to 6.

As you have already given me generous space in your columns on this subject, which may not be of general interest, I hope not to trouble you again on this issue.

ALISON NEILANS,

Secretary, Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

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