

THE
WOMAN'S LEADER

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

AND

THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS

The Business of the House.

Mr. Chamberlain made an announcement on Tuesday as to the future business of the House of Commons. He said that the House would rise on August 19th or 26th, and that there would be no autumn session except a possible meeting to pass legislation ratifying a settlement with Ireland if that were reached. He outlined the business to be taken now, and, in relation to the non-party questions in which the readers of this paper are especially interested, he said: "The other Orders on the paper the Government would not press—certainly not after 11 o'clock—unless they could be passed with general consent—the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, the Criminal Law Procedure (Scotland) Bill, &c. . . . With reference to the Guardianship of Infants Bill, it was not a Government measure, and the Government could not give an extra day for it. He had hoped that a discussion on the regulations affecting the employment of women in the Civil Service might have taken place on the Treasury Vote, but if that were not thought sufficient, he would do his best to find an opportunity of the kind that was desired, but he could not possibly find a day before some of the Government measures had been sent to the House of Lords." This is not very encouraging, but it might be worse. It makes the Civil Service debate secure, at any rate, but is terribly disappointing as to the Guardianship Bill.

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

Mr. Chamberlain has allowed that this Bill may be proceeded with if not opposed, and it is decidedly encouraging, therefore, to find that it has already passed through the Committee Stage without trouble. Only a few changes were made in Committee. An addition has been made to the clause raising the age of consent to indecent assault from thirteen to sixteen, by adding the words, "the party so consenting shall be guilty of misdemeanour if he or she is of the age of fifteen years." The clause extending from six to twelve months the limit of time in which a prosecution may be begun has been deleted. A new clause has been added providing that alien brothel-keepers shall, on conviction, be recommended for deportation. These are not material changes, and if they satisfy the opposition, and secure the speedy passage of the Bill into law,

it will be a very great relief to all those who care for public morality and who have so long waited for the first steps of reform.

Licensing Reform in Little.

The Licensing Bill was read for the second time in the Commons on Friday, and it will probably pass easily enough, in spite of the differing opinions of every section interested in it. It is true, as Mr. Chamberlain said, that neither the Temperance Party, the Trade, nor the majority of the nation desires to return to pre-war conditions, but their views as to the useful variations proper to be made in existing regulations differ very widely. The clause allowing the consumption of alcoholic drink at theatre suppers is defensible on two grounds. It conforms to the good rule of differentiating between drink taken with food and drink taken, if one may say so, as a pastime. If it goes through on this score the same facilities should be given to late meals taken by dockers and other manual workers coming off night-shifts. Or it may aim at the attraction to London as a pleasure city of holiday makers from all over the world. If this is so the Government has wakened late to this conception of our capital city. If the theatre-supper drink and other drinking after hours is permitted it must be allowed without class distinctions and under adequate police supervision. But no one is likely to advocate any suspension at all in clubs, working men's, West End, or political. The Bill is not a very startling Bill in any case.

The Cave Report.

The House of Lords debate on the Cave Report was entirely favourable to the maintenance of voluntary hospitals. Lord Dawson's reminder that the thirty teaching hospitals, with their all-important duty of training doctors, should have prior consideration in the allocation of grants was timely, and can be disregarded only at our peril. Lord Cave stated that he was sure that insurance companies would recognise the duty of making larger contributions to hospitals. We hope he is not too optimistic. The debate did a good deal to define the proper relationship between poor-law infirmaries and voluntary hospitals, and Lord Cave promised that legislation necessary to their co-operation should not wait till the introduction of a general Bill dealing with the whole question of hospitals.

Housing Doubts.

The Labour Party holds that the Government has broken its pledges with regard to housing, but neither accuser nor accused put in more than the most formal minimum of attendance when the matter came up for discussion in Parliament. If it be keeping a pledge to continue promising large measures of reform and finding oneself unable to deliver the goods Dr. Addison certainly kept his word on housing, and Sir Alfred Mond has broken his predecessor's pledges. If performance rather than promise is to be the criterion there is still a chance that Sir Alfred Mond may present the nation with more working class dwellings in 1921-22 than his predecessor could have obtained. That remains to be seen, and if Sir Alfred does not keep the Government pledge in this modified form he will not be forgiven either by the working class families who are now homeless, or the women who know how much of the well-being of a nation depends on its housing. The present modified housing programme is a grievous disappointment, and if it were to be a first step towards further shrinkage it would not be tolerated, though it were economical to the point of parsimony.

Nationality Law.

In answer to a question of Sir J. Randle's in the House last week, Mr. Shortt said that he recently laid proposals for an amendment of the Nationality Law before a committee of the Conference of Representatives of the Dominions and India. A resolution was passed commending the principle of the proposals to the favourable consideration of the Governments of the Dominions and India. The proposals provide for the acquisition of British nationality by persons of British descent of the second and subsequent generations born abroad, subject to the following conditions: (a) registration at birth; (b) renewal of registration as a British subject at majority. Mr. Shortt promised, at the earliest opportunity, to take steps to obtain agreement with the Overseas Governments on a Bill to give effect to these proposals. This would remove one of the nationality anomalies, but apparently the even more burning question of the nationality of married women has not yet been discussed. We are tired of all this delay.

Women Governors for Women's Prisons.

We understand that Viscountess Astor is to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the desirability of appointing women Governors to women's prisons; and whether he will consent to receive the names of suitable women for appointment to the Governorship of Holloway Prison when that post becomes vacant. We hope that Mr. Shortt will give a satisfactory answer to this question, although we are not very optimistic.

Women in Factories.

The report of the Principal Lady Inspector of Factories shows that women are suffering more than men both in present pay and in prospects, from the black depression which has brooded over British industry in the last year. Depression has been most acute in women's trades, such as Nottingham lace, fruit preserving and other food industries, metal and jewellery, cycles and similar trades, and the withdrawal of women from employment in men's industries is almost complete. Only in light leather tanning works and as substitutes for boys in heavy metal industries are any material numbers still at work. So ends, or so seems to end, the hope that women's sphere might be enlarged by the inclusion of well-paid and skilled work for which women, during the war, showed both taste and aptitude. It is not a wise nation that regards with indifference so much unused energy and capacity, and we must hope that employers and male competitors may show more enlightenment when the depression lifts than now. Patience is, of course, a feminine virtue, but it is hardly the national asset some men suppose.

Children at Work.

It is well known that our system of medical examination of adolescents previous to entry into factory work is perfunctory and almost useless. Dr. Legge, H.M.M.I.F., describes the system in use in Belgium, which rejects preliminary inspection in favour of continuous medical supervision of young persons under eighteen. These are examined during the first month of employment and thereafter at intervals of one to six months, the object being not their exclusion from employment, but the correction of abnormalities produced by methods of work, and the transference of the worker from processes inimical to his health. The expedient is too recently introduced to afford data

for judgment, but it seems to be preferable to our English plan and to the American system of elaborate entrance examinations at the age of fourteen without any attempt to follow up the young worker when actually in employment.

Paternal Irresponsibility.

A woman in Shoreditch County Court recently claimed expenses of the education and maintenance of a child over fourteen years of age from a husband whom she had left. Judge Cluer decided that she had no claim and that if she could not support the child she must send it to the workhouse. The mother pointed out that if the child had been illegitimate the father must have supported it till the age of sixteen. That a legal wife should be in a worse position than an unmarried mother is certainly against public policy; that a man should be able to escape responsibility for his child because he is in disagreement with the child's mother is scandalous. The father of an illegitimate child does, no doubt, find it easy to evade his legal burdens, but the fact that he does so cannot be used to justify a married man in doing the same under the wing of the law.

The Cinema and Juvenile Crime.

A mother, whose son was convicted of theft after having gained access to a brewery storeroom, complained bitterly to the magistrate that it was time that some authority should intervene to prevent the exhibition of films which incited boys to deeds of daring. The idea of using the cinema to develop ideas of citizenship is spreading amongst mothers of all classes, and the sooner a woman is on the board of cinema censors the better.

Germany and Drink.

The Statistical Committee of the Reichstag has been discussing Germany's rising consumption of alcoholic liquors, and has unanimously adopted a resolution in favour of the municipal control of bars and drinking places. It also urges that the display of drink advertisements on the Imperial State Railways should be restricted. All experiments in the regulation of the drink trade are interesting, but, of course, the present abnormal condition of Germany makes it difficult to argue from one country to another.

Late Marriages in France.

France is doing everything in her power to increase her population, and already a Bill has been brought forward twice to lower the age at which a man ceases to be a minor. According to the present marriage law a man is considered a minor until he has reached the age of thirty, and his parents' consent to his marriage is necessary up to that age. Twice the Senate has rejected the Bill which proposed to lower the age to twenty-five, but a third attempt is to be made by Abbé Lemire, Deputy for the Nord. The Abbé believes that if a man has not reached years of discretion at twenty-five, his case is more or less hopeless and five years will not bring wisdom to his aid.

The Progress of Profit Sharing.

The attention which is being paid to the study of profit-sharing in industry is illustrated by a Bill brought forward by the Italian Catholic Party. It provides for capital to receive a fair interest fixed by law, the surplus to be divided between shareholders and workers: that part of the profits accruing to the workers is not to be paid to them in cash, but to be used to buy up shares in the undertaking. The following is the first article of the Bill: "At the request of at least one-fifth of the staff employed in an undertaking, the management shall allow all its staff to be questioned by means of a referendum with individual secret ballot, and if the majority declare in favour of the introduction of profit-sharing and labour co-partnership, the management shall agree to this reform." The Bill also confers on representatives of manual and non-manual workers the right of control over the management of undertakings and over their administrative and financial operations. These representatives also have the right to sit on the Board of Directors and on the Trade Union Commissions of Control.

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

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDHOOD.

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

The second International Conference on the Protection of Childhood was held at Brussels from July 18th to 21st, and over 1,200 delegates from all over the world took part. The enemy Powers were not invited to the Congress, but the question was raised as to the early admission of their delegates to the International Association for the Protection of Childhood, which is to be the outcome of the Congress.

The Congress divided itself into four sections, each dealing with one particular aspect of child-saving work. The discussion in each section centred round main questions which had formed the subjects for long and reasoned papers handed in before the Congress by many delegates from different countries, and which had been distributed to all members of the Congress.

The first section dealt primarily with delinquent and neglected children, and the question of how co-operation can best be effected between children's courts and voluntary charitable agencies working for child welfare was discussed. The position in Belgium itself is somewhat acute, where the children's judge is given very wide powers. In Paris both the children's judge and the ordinary police court magistrate for adults are furnished with a list of the charitable agencies in the district to which they can refer cases for supervision or help.

Members appeared, too, to feel that there is great risk in sending a delinquent child straight from the seclusion of a reformatory school or convent to the perfect freedom of life outside. It was suggested that an intermediate home to which a child could go for a few months and from which he or she could go out to work but return for meals and sleep, was an excellent safeguard. A strong appeal was made to the Congress by the official English delegate to the effect that a child's natural place was in its own home, and that no pains should be spared to persuade the parents to improve the home surroundings, so that a child might return there as soon as possible, and a resolution was passed to the effect that if a child could not be sent home it should first be sent to an auxiliary home or be boarded out with a carefully chosen family.

There was much discussion on the subject of illegitimate children, Sweden having passed a law three months ago providing that paid guardians should be appointed for every illegitimate child.

An excellent resolution was passed to the effect that the production of good cinema films should be encouraged, but that a determined resistance, private and public, should be made to the representation of demoralising cinemas. It was agreed that children and young people under sixteen should not be admitted to adult cinemas, or to the side-shows that accompany such cinemas, even if they are with their parents. A special commission to examine films, film advertisements, notices and programmes should be appointed. The International Association for the Protection of Childhood should deal with the subject of the international dangers to children of bad cinemas.

The second section dealt with the classification of abnormal children, the special training of such children in towns and in the country, and the after care of all such children; it was felt that careful psychological tests should be applied to the examination of all abnormal children before they were classified.

The third section dealt with health and infant welfare. Resolutions were passed to the effect that infant welfare centres should be encouraged, that health visitors should be trained, that midwives should have to be qualified by examination for their work; and that homes to which unmarried mothers could go with their babies should be increased.

The fourth section dealt with war orphans, and came to the following conclusions: That the nation should be represented in the home of a war orphan by visits from a visitor, who must be aware of the delicacy of his or her task; that the mother should have the choice of the visitor among names submitted to her, and that she should have the right to refuse any particular visitor admission. The visitor is to have no special rights except those of her duty towards the child, and she should realise the gratitude and affection of the country towards the child.

The Conference closed officially on Thursday, July 21st, when a most interesting announcement was made to the Congress by Monsieur Carton de Wiart. The official delegates had voted at their private meetings, by twenty-six votes out of thirty-one, that an International Association for the Protection of Childhood should be formed at Brussels. It will place itself in touch with the League of Nations, and will endeavour to ensure that its work does not overlap with that of the League.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

By OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.

Matters opened quietly on Monday, July 18th, with the further consideration of the Finance Bill. This was continued on the following day, Tuesday, the 19th, and finally ended in a spectacular Government defeat. The actual occasion was the application of the Corporation Tax to the earnings of Co-operative Societies. This proposal combined two streams of opposition, both formidable; for it included those who disapprove of the tax altogether and those who think the Co-operative profits should be free. The second body of opinion have a good deal to say for themselves, seeing that income tax has never been imposed on Co-operative Societies. It has often been suggested, but the Government in power, whoever they may be, have invariably refused. When, therefore, you have a combination of those who think the whole tax bad with those who object to its particular application, the weather begins to get stormy. It is reported that Sir Robert Horne was warned that the Government would be beaten, and was told that if he would suspend the operation of the tax for a year his attackers would be satisfied; but he was unaccommodating, with the result that the ship went on the rocks. It is easy to exaggerate the importance of such a defeat; at the same time, to say the least, it does not add to the strength of the Coalition.

On Wednesday, July 20th, the House, hot and tired, returned to the Safeguarding of Industries Bill, and on this and other measures sat till one o'clock the following morning. Though the Bill will get through, its prospects are by no means certain. It has few friends. Free Traders dislike it and Protectionists show no enthusiasm, and it would cause no surprise if it were dropped. It has been forced on the Government by a band of Tariff Reformers, who are believed to be more noisy than numerous.

On Thursday, July 21st, the House was crowded for Dr. Addison's attack on Mr. Lloyd George. It cannot be said that either combatant distinguished himself. Dr. Addison forgot that his housing policy was a failure. He forgot also, or perhaps he never knew, that without Mr. Lloyd George's support his Ministerial life would indeed have been short. His speech was not ineffective in parts, particularly where he contrasted the apathy of the Government in health and housing with their extravagance elsewhere. But what he totally failed to show was why he, with a favourable Government, an open Treasury, and a placid House of Commons, failed to get the houses built. If Mr. Lloyd George's reply was not always in the best taste, and there certainly was one passage which he must have read with regret next morning, the general sense of the House was with the Prime Minister and not with his former colleague.

On Friday, July 22nd, the new Licensing Bill had an easy passage. There was no division or Second Reading; and Mr. Bottomley's motion, to send it to a Committee of the whole House, which was equivalent to killing it, only found six supporters.

The Irish barometer, after fluctuating wildly, has suddenly risen. The final terms of the Government were handed to Mr. de Valera on Thursday, July 21st, and thereupon he left immediately for Dublin. What these terms are has not been disclosed, and, indeed, a revelation at this moment would be dangerous. But it is believed that they do not make a settlement impossible. To put it in another way, they are not such as would compel either Sinn Fein or Belfast to break off negotiations. No one can write on this subject without a sense of the deepest responsibility, for at the moment all things stand still for an Irish settlement; but there is no harm in saying positively that those best entitled to know are most hopeful.

Before these notes are read the future course of the Session will have been declared. If a prophecy is to be risked, the House will be lucky if it adjourns by August 30th, and this in spite of anything which Mr. Chamberlain may say. There are dark rumours that the House of Lords are extremely restive. They are being kept in London all through the hot weather with nothing to do, and will suddenly be called upon to pass a mass of big Bills in August. But this, unfortunately, is no new feature, and while some of the measures may be slaughtered, it is probable that the large majority will get through. The future, however, in this as elsewhere, depends on Ireland.

[The views expressed in this column are those of our Parliamentary correspondent, and are not our editorial opinion. Like so many other things in this paper they are expressly controversial, and comment upon them will be welcomed.—Ed.]

BURNING QUESTIONS.

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

PROS AND CONS OF STATE MEDICINE.

Should the medical profession become a branch of the Civil Service? Should the State, which concerns itself largely with preventive medicine, and which provides medical attendance for millions of insured persons, and medically inspects millions of elementary school children, expand its panel system to include all citizens? Should it undertake the upkeep of voluntary hospitals? These are burning questions which, whether or not ripe for decision, must be debated, and are, in fact, discussed with considerable heat. Though few women other than those trained for the medical profession may be qualified to record an expert opinion upon them, it is the duty of all to form an opinion, for these matters will be decided not by the British Medical Association but by Parliament. Electors cannot therefore content themselves by maintaining an open mind and hoping for the best; it is their duty to form a reasoned opinion capable of transmission to this tribunal, which is alternately our master and our servant.

The last few years have added many arrows to the quiver of those who fight for a State medical service. The progress of medicine and surgery during the war has seemed to demonstrate the advantage of dealing with the health of citizens in the mass, and allowing the doctor to select his patients at his chosen moment, instead of being called in at the patient's whim and left unsummoned when his aid would be most effective. The voluntary hospitals, in their present difficulties, must look to State aid for immediate and perhaps for continuous help. Economics and ethics alike seem to demand an equal chance of health for rich and poor, and this for citizens wherever domiciled. The growing importance of preventive medicine raises doubts as to the wisdom of a system which may reward the doctor in direct proportion to the amount of sickness in his area of practice. The demand for accurate statistics, if medical science is to base its generalisations securely, makes an appeal from another angle for a uniformity of treatment and record keeping hardly attainable except by State control. The Government has accepted such large responsibilities with regard to the nation's health that the course of evolution seems to lie in completing the process. How grievous is the waste in a system which keeps records of the health of almost all persons from the ages of five to fourteen, and then, as its subjects leave school, discontinues the elaborate and costly process, only to begin again in the case of insurable employed men and women, and even here after an indefinite interval which may make the record almost valueless.

So far the advocate of State medicine, who can and does point to such documents as Sir George Newman's Report on Public Health during 1920, as bearing out almost all his contentions. When the case for State medicine is persuasively put it seems madness to delay installing a scientific, comprehensive Health Service, costly indeed, but well worth its cost. What do we get instead of it? The ministrations of a family doctor whom we "choose" for ourselves, but whom we cannot choose unless he has elected to settle in our immediate vicinity. The advice of a consultant recommended by the family doctor, or suggested, haphazard, by some acquaintance as ignorant as ourselves. A freedom from inquisitorial medical inspection which results in every new doctor into whose practice we drift

having to begin at the beginning in diagnosing our case, though the case may be in late stages, and many material facts regarding it and us may be irrecoverable.

There is, however, another side to all this. What if the vices of the State medical system are inherent, and not, as its advocates hold, the result of its incompleteness? What if its outstanding successes are conditional on the survival, side by side with it, of something more elastic, more personal, less prone to rely on figures and more interested in individual human beings? What if the medical records, magnificently complete, should become so labyrinthine that they are never referred to? What if the £24,000,000 of the Ministry of Health estimates for England and Wales should be doubled or trebled in the near future? Reformers sometimes forget that even productive expenditure must be abandoned if it exceeds available resources. What if the old-fashioned liking for a family doctor who "understands one's constitution" should again become a respectable, even a scientific, predilection?

The superiority of our voluntary hospitals to the State-supported institutions of almost all other countries is not a mere accident, and when we are asked to give them over to the State we cannot afford to forget the costly inefficiency of many Government Departments. It is at least possible that the efficiency of our war medical service was as much due to the doctors' unofficial training as to their official organisation in the army. Nor is it proved that voluntary effort is unequal to large calls and sudden strain; the Red Cross, during the war, obtained in its own sphere as good results as the R.A.M.C. it supplemented. Observe that the advocates of a State medical service do not contemplate the survival of the voluntary system. They want the whole field.

No one desires to return to the day when a man's physician was a member of his retinue, and when a doctor's qualifications were a matter between himself and his master; but the alternative is not a state of things when the sick man must entrust his intimate affairs to a stranger, however uncongenial. The panel system cannot, however modified, permit of as free a choice of doctor as a voluntary system, and as medical education improves the psychological factor of the relation between doctor and patient will not become less important but more. In fact, if all doctors were equally well-qualified (just as if they were all alike ignorant) the psychological factor would be all-important. So long as medicine remains at an experimental stage, a patient is justified in asking for some choice as to who shall experiment upon him.

There is another point. So long as the State system remains incomplete, the right of a patient to refuse treatment is recognised. Can we suppose that a complete State system would tolerate it? If there had been such a system in the last century, does anyone doubt that the whole population would have been subjected to the Koch treatment for tuberculosis? Do we wish to have the latest preventive treatment for other diseases forced upon us until we are assured that it is not only the latest but the best? We must decide these things for ourselves, or have them decided for us by our Members of Parliament, persons not much better equipped than ourselves to decide our fate, and much less impressed than ourselves as to the importance of the decision.

E. M. G.

THE LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS.—II.

8. Turning to the question of the limitation of naval armaments, the Committee welcome the proposals to call a Conference of Naval Powers. They hope that the conference will meet at an early date; that it will aim at securing by concerted action the limitation of naval armaments; and that so soon as the date of the conference has been fixed, the Powers taking part in the conference will see their way not to begin any new naval construction until after the conference has reported.

9. While welcoming the recent statement of H.M. Government that Great Britain desires only "a one-Power standard," and their repudiation of the idea of competitive building, the Committee point out that the announcement of such a standard by itself will not stop, and may even stimulate, competitive building. The desired result would, however, be secured by adding to the "one-Power standard," an agreement as to the maximum number, size, and armament of the capital ships which the great Naval Powers should maintain, and as to the replacement of capital ships when obsolescent. This is the practical minimum, which ought to be obtainable at such a conference.

10. While the above paragraphs represent the view of the Committee as to the steps that may usefully be taken at once in the direction of the reduction of naval armaments, they invite attention to the following interesting and important memorandum presented to them by one of their members, Rear-Admiral Hopwood, C.B., on the extent to which naval armaments might eventually be reduced.

MEMORANDUM BY REAR-ADMIRAL R. A. HOPWOOD, C.B.

Limitation of armaments, so that each nation is restricted to a fixed expenditure, must rest on agreement as to relative strength.

Even if this could be reached, it is conceivable that, in time, science might provide some cheap form of destructive agent so that the actual relative strengths would be completely changed.

The most common reason given for the upkeep of large fleets is that of defence of maritime interests. The remedy seems to lie in abolishing this reason. A battleship is simply an attempt to concentrate the greatest power of all sorts in one hull. The result is to bring into being the means to compass her destruction. So we got the torpedo boat, submarine, and latterly motor-boats and air-borne torpedoes. For the destruction of these again, or for their support, as the case may be, came in

turn the T.B.D., light cruiser, armoured cruiser, battle cruiser, and battleship, so completing the circle of interdependence. So long as all these exist in any country, every other country is justified in possessing their antidotes in view of the unforeseen.

Great Britain's past record at sea should be reassuring, but unless it is admitted by other countries as a sufficient reason for their acquiescence in her numerical preponderance, another solution of the difficulty must be looked for. The modern fleets are the direct result of Prussia, who has ceased to be a reason for their perpetuation.

It is worth considering whether a solution might not lie in the direction of, not the abolition of navies, but in changing their nature. Services which will always require navies of some kind are enumerated in the following list, within the experience of most naval officers. It is quite incomplete:—Plague; famine; earthquake; fire afloat or ashore; rescue and relief work afloat and ashore; shipwreck; collision; towing; salvage; medical aid; refugees; surveying; research; exploration; suppression of piracy and slave trade; visits of ceremony; escort; showing the Flag to fellow-subjects overseas, &c., &c. Any work, in fact, on the high seas or within reasonable reach of them, which it is no one else's job to do. All of it could be done by lightly armed cruisers of, say, 1,000 to 8,000 tons, so equipped and stationed as to constitute no possible threat to each other or to maritime trade.

Naturally, numbers must depend upon the geographical situation of their owners' territories. But it would at least be instructive if each nation, without prejudice or committing themselves in any way, were to draw up a list of their requirements of such ships for such services and any others that occur to them. It might then be possible to discuss whether an agreement on these figures could be reached. It would be essential that the proposals were given the fullest publicity, and as many disadvantages as could be suggested clearly pointed out.

A clash of the great maritime Powers would inevitably produce more or less disastrous effects on many small nations, who would be directly or indirectly involved through no fault of their own.

The wholehearted acceptance of what might at first appear national disadvantages for such a reason as this would probably constitute the surest guarantee of good faith, and might thereby create an atmosphere of goodwill which would be far more powerful than any material safeguards.

(To be continued.)

SCHOOL CARE COMMITTEES.

WHAT LONDON IS DOING.

By A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT ON EDUCATION.

"A new factor," says Dr. W. H. Hamer, the School Medical Officer of the London County Council, speaking of public health and infant mortality in his report, recently issued, for the year 1920, "has begun in the last ten or twelve years to assert itself, and the direct work done in the schools, and for children under school age in the maternity and welfare centres, seems to be now finding manifest expression. A great deal of this work, it must be remembered, has been voluntary work, carried out just for the work's sake, and the fact that so much has been accomplished is clear proof of the ever-widening interest taken in child welfare." Dr. Hamer goes on to say that so far as school medical work is concerned, the results obtained during 1920 have been favourable beyond all expectation, and he is of opinion that the Elementary Education Act of 1870 has played a prominent part in this improvement—an improvement which has been most marked since 1900, i.e., in the generation of children born of parents who were the first school boys and girls to benefit by universal State education.

The physical and social welfare of the school child have, in fact, received increasing emphasis in each of the Education Acts passed since 1870. The Education Act of 1918 considerably enlarges the powers of the local education authorities and empowers them to supply, or aid the supply of, facilities for social and physical training in the day or evening. It would be an interesting matter to inquire how far this widening and deepening

of the purpose of education have been stimulated by the increased activities of women in public affairs, but this would cause divergence from the object of this article, which is to explain to women of some leisure and inclination that organisation of voluntary workers which has been built up by the London County Council under the name of School Care Committees.

Established in 1909, the School Care Committees function, broadly speaking, under two heads:—

1. In matters affecting the physical welfare of the children, such as medical treatment, for necessitous children the provision of meals, cleanliness of the school child, or allegations of neglect or cruelty.

2. In matters affecting the social welfare of the children, such as choice of employment on leaving school, social and thrift clubs, or work in connection with children's country holidays.

There are now 6,000 voluntary workers on these School Care Committees. They are establishing friendly relations between the parents and the school, acting as intermediaries between the Council and the parents when misunderstanding arises, and parents are unable to present their own point of view. In fact, they may be said to introduce the personal touch of sympathy and understanding in the administration of the Education Acts.

One of the most important of the activities of these School Care Committees is the help and advice they give to parents in the choice of employment of children about to leave school. Interesting work can also be done on the Juvenile Advisory Committees of the Employment Exchanges under the Ministry of Labour—committees formed to prevent children from going into blind-alley or casual occupations. In addition, the School Care Committees work in close and friendly co-operation with the numerous agencies whose concern is the amelioration or improvement, in one phase or another, of the lot of the child.

The Care Committees are, in the first place, the link between school and home, and, at a later period, the link between the child leaving school and his or her work in the world—a time when a friend outside the home is often of inestimable value in bringing a good influence into the child's life. The essential qualities are the possession of some leisure, some experience, much tact, and an overwhelming belief that the best can be got out of human nature if the approach be made wisely.

There are, roughly speaking, for after-care workers, three types of supervision required, dependent on the kind of child and the character of the home:—

(1) For children from homes where the parents take the responsibility for supervision.

(2) For children, satisfactory in themselves, but whose parents are unable to decide, for one reason or another, questions concerning choice of occupation.

(3) For children who suffer from some disability, either in themselves or in their homes.

Children coming from good homes are generally placed in the best situations available, and the School Leaving Forms are marked "supervision not needed." Supervision in the ordinary sense is not required; but from the Labour Exchange point of view it is essential to have information about the future career of these children, inasmuch as the only effective knowledge of individual employers comes from the accumulated knowledge of actual opportunities afforded the children so placed. From the

point of view of the Council it is also important that contact should be maintained with these children in order to encourage their attendance at evening institutes. The main objective of the supervision in this class is the collection of information.

The honorary secretary of the Care Committee is given particulars of children who are in employment of a blind-alley type, so that every effort may be made to secure work of a more satisfactory character. If the child is out of work, the child is urged to re-register at the Exchange, or with the same committee which placed him before.

School conferences are held at regular intervals between the members of Care Committees, the head-master and head-mistress of the senior departments, the principals of evening institutes, and an officer of the local Juvenile Advisory Committee. This conference discusses with the parents the future career of each child about to leave school, and the local opportunities for continued education.

If the child has left, or is about to leave, school but has not found work, a member of the School Care Committee discusses with the parents any plans that they may have for the child's future; notes any preferences and ambitions which the child may have, together with any information as to home conditions that may make one trade more suitable for him than another; and points out how desirable it is that the child should enter a trade which would provide permanent work in the future.

The Education Committee of the London County Council are of opinion that at no time has the problem of juvenile labour required more careful handling than it will need in the immediate future, and they confidently appeal for co-operation to all those whose work brings them into contact with children about to leave school.

That Care Committee work entails real labour and strenuous effort none who have attempted it can deny, but at the same time, in spite of numerous disappointments that are bound to come to all who work with human material, it is wonderfully cheering to know that it is in our power to give the children the chance in life which their own environment does not offer.

THE DIARY OF A WOMAN IN THE HOME.

July 19th, 1921.

In spite of popular tradition, clothes for herself are probably the item on which the average woman in the home will be least reluctant to economise. Most women take an interest in clothes when they are between eighteen and thirty, some take an interest in them all their lives, but there are few of any age who would not rather go shabby themselves than cut down the family meals, the family holidays, or any other expense that vitally affects the children. There is a sad side to such economies; the love of beauty is too little developed in our present civilisation, and further discouragement to it must be regretted. Expensive clothes are not necessarily beautiful, but cheap clothes, from bad workmanship and shoddy material, are nearly always the reverse. A woman may have comparatively beautiful clothes at a comparatively low expense, if she is clever about making them herself; but to do this effectively, time as well as skill is required, and the time of the woman in the home is subject to as many claims as her income, and often seems too precious to be spent on making, or even thinking about, her own clothes. Children's clothes are a different matter: I speak with little experience, but I suppose most people who can make them enjoy doing it, and where is the woman who does not wish to see her children beautifully clad? Unfortunately, some of the least beautiful but most necessary parts of their attire cannot be made at home, and these are the ones which seem to cost the most. Boots and shoes, woven underclothes, water-proofs, and hats, must be bought, and everybody who has had to do with children knows the dreadful glee with which they wear through the soles of their boots and grow out of their combinations. All this gets worse and worse as the children grow older; as they progress in size and activity they get more and more sensitive about having clothes just like those of their contemporaries. No one is more conventional and subject to fashion than the school child, and to make him feel different from the rest in these small matters is to provoke a self-consciousness about trifles which one would do a great deal to avoid. Every stage in a child's development is such a joy that the woman in the home hardly counts the cost, but she must allow for boots and shoes in her budget, since even in this weather they cannot always, as Bridget puts it, go about "bare footed."

If clothes wear out, so do household goods, and if they do it more slowly, they are even more apt to show themselves "past mending" at the very moment when one can least afford to buy new ones. The only thing to be done is to go without when one can, and to buy cheap substitutes when one can't. The children, fortunately, do not mind at all. Some, like Ellie, have a real appreciation of beautiful furniture, but nearly all are happily insensitive to household equipment. Although they are still conventional about some things, they no longer carry it to the point of snobbishness, and it would be difficult now to find a preparatory school like one to which my father went for a few months, where one of the first questions asked of new boys was: "Does your mother have a silver butter-dish?"

Expenses of locomotion mean different things according to one's dwelling place. If one lives in the country they may mean a pony and cart, or even a motor; if one lives in a town they mean undergrounds, buses, and trams. In any case, they can only be reduced by arranging the comings and goings necessary for home and work with great care, calculating what is necessary for them beforehand, and cutting off every kind of joy-ride. Whether going to see one's relations and friends is to be classed as necessary business or as joy-riding may be an open question. It seems to be so mixed up with the subject of holidays, and those are so mixed up with the subject of education, that I find I cannot think of any of them apart. They bring me to the very core of the whole matter. The question with which I started was, how can the standard of life of the middle-class woman in the home be adapted to the present stress with least injury to the children?

But here are Ellie and Bridget coming home from school, much exhausted after a morning of exams. Bridget had what she called "a lovally and topping exam." yesterday (the adjectives are a mixture of her own phrasology and of that used at school). When I asked her what exam it was, she said, "Well, you know, there were a lot of questions and we had to give the answers." It took some further pressing to elicit that the questions were "Most Horrid sums." I felt as if her morning had been occupied in much the same way as mine, but I cannot say I ever find the "Most Horrid sums" in my account book either "lovally" or "topping"!

MARGARET CLARE.

REVIEWS.

FOUR GOOD BOOKS.

The Early Hours. By Marmaduke Pickthall. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

Where the Pavement Ends. By John Russell. (Thornton Butterworth. 8s.)

Tales of Unrest. By J. Conrad. (Fisher Unwin. 8s.)

Dead Man's Plack. By W. A. Hudson. (Dent. 7s. 6d.)

It is not often that a reviewer has such luck as to review four delightful books together. When I take up my pen to criticise books I usually dip it into a little mixture of gall, and splash about with it; but to-day I regret that ink is made of so unfriendly a substance, for I wish to write nothing but praise.

Two of these books deal with remote places of the globe: one deals with the Young Turk movement, and one with the English countryside, but all four are filled to the brim with that distilled essence of romance which we all long for, both in literature and in real life, and which we find so seldom.

"Where the Pavement Ends" is a book of stories of the South Seas, written by a new author. It is full both of promise and of achievement; and although there is imitation in it—flavours here and there of Wells, and of Conrad, and of Kipling—yet it has also a colour and a touch of its own. The stories are of unequal merit, but even the worst is good, and the first one, "The Fourth Man," ranks very high. It is, of course, difficult to judge of the verisimilitude of stories of those hot islands and seas at the ends of the earth. But who cares for verisimilitude? The book gives us adventure, human, and yet mysterious, lurid and yet romantic, and what more do we want?

Conrad, of course, gives us all this and more, for he gives us Art; but that is a rare gift, and Mr. John Russell is evidently striving for the same thing. His stories are very carefully balanced, very finished, and very sure. They have not yet the great touch of a master, but they are very good.

"Tales of Unrest," with which I cannot help contrasting them, is, of course, an old book. It is well reprinted by Fisher Unwin, and is such a masterpiece that it bears re-reading, not once but constantly. When Conrad's earlier books are so good we hardly need to look for his new ones; and yet a new Conrad is a wonderful event. When I open a book of his, whether new or old, I feel that I am undergoing an enchantment. It leaves me dizzy, when I close it again, uncertain of the streets of London and the ordinary round of life, and sometimes I turn back at once and begin it over again.

"The Early Hours" has not quite the same intoxicating effect, but it has a very enticing if a different charm. Mr. Pickthall throws over all his pictures of the Turkish peoples a glamour which makes them infinitely attractive. Whether his political thesis is right I do not pretend to know: if it is, this country has a very heavy responsibility to bear for its failure to understand and to help the Young Turks. But whether this be so or not, the book makes delightful reading. The actual East is full of dirt and heat and idleness and smells, above which appear the poetry and leisure and beauty and charm: the East of literature avoids the drawbacks and retains the advantages; and Mr. Pickthall is a most delightful writer. He conveys a glowing and almost a tangible sense of the sun and shade, the fruits and flowers, and hungers and thirsts of the Turkish valleys, and gives a picture of Constantinople glittering in the sun which it is not easy to forget.

"Dead Man's Plack" is a different sort of book, quite unpolitical, quite unexciting, but wholly delightful. Mr. Hudson is a master writer: a new book of his is as much an event as a new book of Mr. Conrad's. This book, which appeared several months ago, is not, perhaps, his best book, but it has all his special charm within its covers. It contains two stories, the first a reconstruction of mediæval England, the second a record of a Wiltshire villager of eighty years ago, and, as is usual with his books, the fascination of his writing is far greater than the subject-matter of his theme. The English woods and streams, the trees and plants, and the downs, live in his works far more than the people whose lives make the background, and when I put this book down I could hardly forbear taking the train at once to escape from the hot pavements and the dusty turmoil of the town. "An Old Thorn," the second story, seems to me the better of the two. It has a curious effect of being itself rooted in the traditions of this country, and the primitive superstition it describes awakes the primitive instincts of its readers.

It resembles "The Shepherd's Life" more than any of his books, and everyone who has enjoyed that exquisite book will enjoy this.

I put down all these books with regret. They are so refreshing and so good. In the arid and dreary waste of modern novels, pointless, formless, and ugly, how welcome these writers are!

R. S.

Our Little Life. By J. G. Sime. (Grant Richards. 8s. 6d.)

Zell. By Henry G. Aikman. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

This Side of Paradise. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

The life of a middle-aged Irish dressmaker in a Canadian town; her half maternal love for an Englishman of education who has drifted into the squalor of Penelope's Buildings, is a dreary enough theme. But the vitality, the warm human charm of Miss McGee, and the courage with which she fights age, poverty, death, disappointment, and unrequited devotion, fill the long chronicle with vibrating interest. It may be argued that the book is unduly prolonged, that Miss Sime has got her effect and shown us the inmost springs of "McGee's" being long before we leave her at the 394th page. But there is a larger issue—the effect of Canada upon the native-born and the immigrant—which needs space for its development and lends a philosophic interest to Miss McGee's individual tragedy. The book is crowded with minute detail, but every touch tells, and Katie McGee stands out at last in a kind of sculptural simplicity that is an unexpected result of such a method.

"Zell" is the rather dreary history of a family in Bryant, U.S.A., and more particularly of Avery Zell from his ninth to his thirty-fifth year. His good-for-nothing father, his lachrymose mother, his ineffectual wife, his sister Winifred, for whom an ugly nose poisoned life, his little boy, whose only striking characteristic is adenoids, are presented to the reader as the merciless fate which prevented him from ever becoming more than a dull official in an insurance business. If they had been different Avery might have sung in opera in New York or Chicago. No reader will feel that any reason why he should have to hear so much about the Zells, to listen to their vapid talk in a horrid dialect, or to forgive their chronicler his use of words like "hispid," "uxorial flagellation," "connotating," and the rest of it, or to hear him describe the "Victorian pulchritude" and "veal, handsome face" of a minor character.

"This side of Paradise there's little comfort in the wise," is the explanatory quotation with which Mr. Fitzgerald adorns the title-page of his American variant on "Sinister Street." Having this sentiment in mind, he has concerned himself exclusively with the doings of the foolish. Amory Blaine, who on the first page is five and makes himself drunk with his mother's apricot cordial, is, at the end, about twenty-three and recovering from the "Indian summer of his heart," which had been experienced in company with Eleanor, an atheist of eighteen, who annoyed him by attempting to ride over a precipice and then changing her mind. He had had other loves; Myra, who appeared to him when he was "a radiant boy" of twelve or so as "a young witch with her cap off and her hair sorta mussed"; Isabelle, whom he adored while he was an undergraduate of Princeton, President Wilson's University, which knew Amory as "a speed" and a "slicker"; Clara, who complained that five men had told her that if she failed them they would lose faith in God; Rosalind, who jilted him for financial reasons. There were countless other young women whom he met at "petting parties," and who, though described as "buds" and *débütantes*, had little to learn as to the commercial bearings of beauty and fascination. The story is told very largely in conversation of the kind that might be expected from a young man described in chapter headings as "Narcissus off Duty" and the "Romantic Egoist."

Nothing could be less like the European's conventional idea of America than this, a picture so detailed that one cannot suppose it to be entirely imaginary. The story of Amory's college friends dining luxuriously on money they had collected nominally for war orphans one would like to think incredible. But Mr. Fitzgerald's publisher has sold 25,000 copies of the book in America, so foreign readers must take it seriously unless they choose the better part of not taking it at all.

The No Plays of Japan. By Arthur Waley. (George Allen & Unwin. 15s.)

At a superficial glance what trifles they seem, these little Japanese No Plays of which Mr. Waley gives us a score or so of translations. A little whiff of lyrical poetry, a single incident with little of what we call dramatic in it, the fugitive appearance of one or two shadowy personages—all this set within the rigid limits of a traditional form which gives each of these plays an outwardly monotonous resemblance to all the others—are not these the characteristics of an art which is almost childish in its simplicity? And yet it is the contrary that is true. For this simplicity hides in reality complexities so subtle and so intricate, such a refinement of cunningly graduated shades, sensual and emotional effects of such a quintessential intensity that all our Western drama—Shakespeare's and Racine's and Goethe's—appears naïf, and gross, and barbarous compared to it. The poetry in many of these pieces is lovely, even though, as Mr. Waley is the first to admit, the translation is necessarily inadequate—but it is not the loveliness of the poetry which we find so absorbingly interesting in this book—it is the glimpse we get of an art which is different from ours not only in its conventions, but almost in its fundamental conceptions. This, we suppose, is an exaggeration, for the very leaping of our spirit as we read the fifteenth century Seami's counsels of perfection proves to us that, though the Eastern and Western paths turn their backs upon each other and seem to lead in opposite directions, they come from a common starting point and verge towards a common meeting place.

Mr. Waley, in his preface, and Mr. Oswald Sickert, in his letters from Japan, make us realise that the Japanese of the fourteenth century succeeded in evolving a form of art after which we, in our operas and ballets, are still blindly groping—a form which unites and co-ordinates in the service of a single ideal the four sister elements of music, poetry, dancing and drama, enhanced by the plastic arts of dressing, sculpture and architecture. To read the details of the extraordinary elaboration with which every note and every syllable, every step and every gesture, the proportions of the stage, the colour of the dresses, the expression of the masks have been studied and concerted, is to make us blush at our own rough and rudimentary methods. The cadence of the chanted verse, the rise and fall of the intonation, the stamp of the feet on the boards, the rhythm of the three drums, with their different notes and syncopated beats, the piercing accompaniment of the flute, the long pauses of expectation—all this is minutely calculated to create an atmosphere and key the nerves of the audience to the proper pitch. And when the audience is fit to be wrought upon the dancers and the actors do their work. By what different methods from ours! Everything is done here to produce its effect by remoteness from reality. The actors' masks, the absence of scenery, the highly conventionalised manner in which all sorts of objects are represented—a boat, a chariot, a house, being just indicated by the barest arrangement of posts—the hieratic dresses, the curious device by which the action is thrown back into the past and is supposed to be not actually lived through by the personages themselves, but recalled by their ghosts—these are some of the ways in which the Japanese destroy that illusion of reality which we are so anxious to capture. It is not reality that they want to capture, but beauty—a mysterious thing called *Yugen*, or "what lies beneath the surface"; the subtle as opposed to the obvious; the hint as opposed to the statement. It is applied to the grace of a boy's movements, to the gentle restraint of a noble man's speech and bearing. "When notes fall sweetly and flutter delicately to the ear that is the *yugen* of music. The symbol of *yugen* is a white bird with a flower in its beak." "To watch the sun sink behind a flower-clad hill, to wander on and on in a huge forest with no thought of return, to stand upon the shore and gaze after a boat that goes hid by far-off islands, to ponder on the journey of wild geese seen and lost among the cloud"—such are the gates to *yugen*."

In order to become capable of attaining the "true flower" the No actors began their training at seven years old; at seventeen or eighteen they lose the "first flower" of youth, but they must persevere; they must resist the temptation of too early and too great applause, for this is often bestowed upon what is not "the true flower." Seami, who is perhaps the most celebrated of the No writers and actors, left a treatise on the writing and acting of No plays which is called "The Book of the Hanging on of the Flower." The quotations Mr. Waley gives us from this book are extremely interesting. They are for

the most part the practical and technical instructions of an experienced actor-manager whose first business is to hold his audience, and who knows that it is often made up of the ignorant common people and the arrogant upper classes. But the native taste of a Japanese audience must have been developed very differently from ours when such remarks as the following can make part of an actor's handbook. "In imitation there should be a tinge of the unlike. For if imitation is pressed too far it impinges on reality and ceases to give an impression of likeness." "The appearance of old age will often be best given by making all the movements a little late, so that they come just after the musical beat." "If ghosts are terrifying they cease to be beautiful. For the terrifying and the beautiful are as far apart as black and white." "Plays in which child characters occur, even if well done, are apt to make the audience exclaim in disgust, 'Don't harrow our feelings in this way.'" "In plays where a lost child is found by its parents, the writer should not introduce a scene where they clutch and cling to one another, sobbing and weeping." "In representing anger the actor should yet retain some gentleness in his mood, else he will portray not anger but violence."

These rules of restraint and reserve, which seem to be the fundamental ones that guide the No artist, sometimes reach truly mystic heights, "when not only representation but song, dance, mimic and rapid action are all eliminated, emotion as it were springing out of quiescence. This is called 'frozen dance.' This mystic style belongs only to the peerless master of plays, and though it is called 'No that speaks to the mind,' yet it is also called 'mindless No.' There are many who have long frequented the theatre, yet do not understand No, and many who understand though they have little experience."

And so from these curious sentences, from the unsubstantial little dramas themselves—no better than fragmentary libretti—and from Mr. Sickert's personal impressions, we piece together a conception, incomplete no doubt and but partially correct, but still a conception of the strange impressiveness of this form of Japanese art. We feel the preparatory excitation of the nerves and senses, the elaborate simplification out of which grows a sense of infinite richness, the guiding restraint of expression which leads to the utmost exaltation of emotion, the concerted and concentrated union of all the arts, and the merging of these different elements into a whole which finally lifts the spirit into the regions of religious ecstasy. This we understand is the meaning and object of No.

D. B.

A TRUE STORY.

I went into the kitchen to see that the cleaning operations were being satisfactorily performed, and viewed with much disfavour the youthful person who was busy at my close range. "Why has Mr. Grimes sent such a young boy to clean the chimney?" I said to Hebe, who thereupon motioned me outside, closed the door, and whispered mysteriously, "It's a woman!" "But can she manage those flues?" I said in alarm. My anxiety, however, was allayed by Hebe, who assured me that the work was being done splendidly, the new worker being so neat and businesslike.

As this was the first time that I had come across this sphere of woman's activity, I made it my business to enquire into the facts. It then appeared that Mr. Grimes was ill—had been so for about five weeks—and at first they had got a man to do the work. However, the customers, one after the other, began to complain of him, saying they would not have him in their houses again, "he was no gentleman!" Sooner, therefore, than lose all their best clients and see their carefully built up business go to ruin, Mrs. Grimes took on the job herself, and there she was, in tunic and high leggings, a trim, workmanlike figure, in spite of her sooty surroundings. Surely here was pluck, good sense, and adaptability to a high degree, and I wished her heartily all the success that she obviously deserved, and a speedy release from her toils by her husband's recovery and return to his legitimate sphere.

But I wondered. If Mr. Grimes were to die, and she take up the business to keep her home together, would the Amalgamated Society of Chimney Sweeps—if such a union exists—admit her to full membership and all its privileges, or would they let her do the work—which admittedly is quite within her powers—and then refuse to let her put any magic letters, such as F.C.—Flue Cleaner—after her name, like our learned friends in—another place?

ELLEN K. MCCONNELL.

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS.

BIRTH CONTROL.

MADAM.—I am instructed by my Committee to inform you that the Committee regrets the undue prominence given recently in the LEADER to the subject of birth control. The Committee quite understands that it is the policy of the LEADER to publish articles giving both sides of the case on controversial subjects, but is of the opinion that in this instance the views and practice of Dr. Marie Stopes have been given more prominence and emphasis than those of the opposition.

The Committee wishes me to make it clear that this protest is made because of the conviction that the line taken in this matter has been prejudicial to the circulation of the paper, and has nothing to do with the individual opinions of the members of the Committee.

EDITH ESKRIGGE,
Liverpool W.C.A.

MADAM.—With reference to the letter by your correspondent, Isabel Willis, permit me to point out that she does not represent the attitude of mind of a vast number of your Catholic readers who believe the Catholic religion should represent and stand for the highest conception of motherhood.

We are more than grateful that you open your columns without bias for discussion of a very helpful and uplifting kind in this vital problem.

Thousands of Catholic slum mothers in the British Isles alone, too sorely oppressed to find the Kingdom of Heaven they are told is within them, must be helped by the educated and truly God-fearing mothers who will not tolerate any system that allows motherhood to be degraded, and used for creating such a pauper and diseased population that the measures of relief both proposed and carried out are totally inadequate.

ADA MALONEY.

MADAM.—I should like to say how cordially I agree with the letter of A. S. Musson in the WOMAN'S LEADER of July 1st. I, too, deeply regret that the paper publishes advertisements in furtherance of birth control, thereby appearing to condone a practice which surely Christians should regard with abhorrence. For them there can only be one possible form of birth control, *viz.*, mutual and voluntary continence. When one remembers the thousands of women, and many men, who for various reasons do not marry, yet are expected to lead, and do lead, moral lives, it seems impossible to believe that the married *cannot* exercise a measure of self-control when called upon to do so. To many of us it seems a sad degradation of the holy estate of matrimony to read of it as merely a means of gratifying instincts which are not an end in themselves but are given for the purpose of peopling this earth, and ultimately Heaven.

E. MAUD BARRY.

MADAM.—In any consideration of the above we are apt to discuss it from a wrong standpoint. We assume that continence is an almost impossible "virtue." If this were so, life as at present lived would be unbearable, for continence is practised by the majority. The point that seems to me to be missed in these discussions is the fact that—as things are at present—it is merely a choice of evils: continence or contraceptives. The objections to continence Marie Stopes, and others, set out with great elaboration; the real disadvantages of contraceptives no one seems to mention. There is talk of the wickedness, and so forth, of incontinence, but the real crux of the matter for those who use contraceptives is the eternal worry and anxiety for fear they have not been effective: just at the times when a woman should be calm and controlled in mind she is constantly in an agony of alarm. This is apart from the fact that everyone, say what they like, detests their use. Continence has its victims, but their troubles are curable (I do not mean in individual cases where deep neurosis has set in, but speaking broadly); we can be continent and happy. I suppose there are matings where contraceptives are used and which yet yield full satisfaction. Marie Stopes is a married woman herself, and she speaks with great conviction and sincerity; but the majority of neurotic people are at present (as any neurologist or psycho-analyst would tell us) not the continent ones nor the mated who have babies.

As regards the babies, the truth is that, as separate personalities, we have ignored them. We have gradually built up a world in which they are an excrescence, a hindrance, an anomaly, an almost unbearable responsibility. The babies are being squeezed out.

I offer no solution. I believe there is none till we realise, first, that continence is no more uncomfortable than the use of contraceptives; and, second, that the babies have rights which cannot be alienated except at the cost of great misery to ourselves.

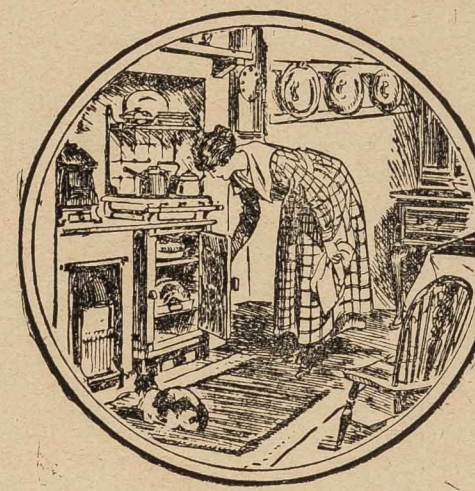
ENNIS RICHMOND.

MADAM.—The letter from the Secretary of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society in your last issue stirs me to an indignant protest against her attempt to stifle free discussion in a paper where the views of both sides on the question of birth control have so far been freely and fairly represented. The "devastating torrent of children" (to quote Dean Inge) cannot be arrested by a slow curative process as suggested by your correspondent. To a large extent it has its source among those who are unfit for parentage, and is a threat to civilisation only inferior to a world war. In this, as in the question of divorce, where they are aided by a majority of Anglican clergy, Roman Catholics actively obstruct reforms which are approved and desired by a large part of the community.

If the Churches choose to uphold rules which date from the Middle Ages, and have little or no bearing on present-day problems, it is for their members, and those only, to decide how far those rules are binding. That is not our business. But when the Churches try to interfere with

(Continued on page 391.)

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