

THE
WOMAN'S LEADER

AND
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Contents :

	PAGE		PAGE
AN EASTER HALT	74	THE COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC SERVICE. By	
NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER	75	Ann Pope	77
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS. By Lord Lambourne, C.V.O.	75	REVIEWS: "RECOLLECTIONS OF A LABOUR	
THE LAW AT WORK: A JUVENILE COURT	76	PIONEER": "COLLEAGUES."	77
		CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS	78

NOTES AND NEWS

Education and the New Parliament.

So far the subject of education has barely been mentioned, and sooner or later the Government must come to grips with accumulated grievances and the suspended operations of the Education Act of 1918. The subject will be dealt with in the natural course of events, when the estimates of the Board of Education are presented after the Easter recess, and no doubt will lead to a complete statement of the policy of the Government. In the meantime a preliminary canter took place just before the House rose, when Sir John Simon opened the question. He referred to the increase in the size of classes, the cutting down of the number of free-places in secondary schools, and the suspension of scholarships in the Universities, the dilution of the teaching profession by unqualified teachers, the limitation of the feeding of necessitous school children, the position of the training colleges, and the relations between the Board of Education and local authorities. A useful though discursive debate followed, and in replying Mr. Wood endeavoured to make the best of a bad job. The further discussion of the present position of education after Easter will be awaited with interest.

Poor Man's Insurance.

Those who have intimate knowledge of the lives of wage-earners and their families did not require to read the report of the Departmental Committee of 1920 on Industrial Assurance to be convinced that grave evils exist in the present system. Visitors in the homes of the poor know sad stories of money paid as premiums regularly for years with no benefit available at a time when it is most wanted, owing to the unfortunate lapsing of the policy during a period of financial difficulty. Even if the policy be successfully continued, the extravagance and overlapping of the door-to-door method of collecting is patent. It is stated that 44 per cent. of the money paid in premiums for the most part by the very poor is expended on commissions or expenses or, in the case of companies, on dividends. The Industrial Assurance Bill, which was introduced for its second reading last week, is an attempt to remedy some of these abuses. The Bill, which will probably be subjected to a good deal of pulling about in the Committee stage, contains clauses dealing

with the extension of the powers of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies (who becomes the Industrial Insurance Commissioner), with a proposed deposit of £20,000 as a guarantee of financial soundness, with compulsory valuations, and the reduction of expenditure on expenses. There can be no doubt that the interests of policy holders will be greatly protected if this Bill becomes law, but we would like to be assured that under its terms the Friendly Societies will not be placed at a disadvantage as compared with the richer and more powerful companies.

Shabby Committee Tactics.

The one clause Bill, introduced by Lady Astor three weeks ago, to limit the sale of intoxicants for "on consumption" to persons of 18 years of age and upwards, has been seriously damaged in Committee. It seems incredible to those not yet accustomed to obstructionist tactics that such a simple, short and reasonable Bill could produce thirty-nine amendments! Unfortunately one of these which will seriously reduce the value of the measure was tacked on to the Bill—the licensee is not to be held responsible unless it can be proved that he knew that a young person served was under the proposed age. It is obvious that this cannot be proved, and that the amendment is designed to wreck the Bill. Women's organizations should watch the remaining stages of the Bill with vigilance, and do what they can to bring their views before Members of Parliament. The Bill only asks that Great Britain should do what has been successfully done in other countries. The age limit in Norway and Sweden has for many years been 18, and in Japan the sale of intoxicants was forbidden to minors in 1919. In the Monthly Notes of the Temperance Legislation League we read that there is even an English precedent for the reform, as an age limit of 18 has been in operation for over six years in Carlisle in the State-controlled scheme.

The Housing Famine.

A representative body of Bristol citizens including all political parties, Trades Councils, Co-operative Guilds, the National Council of Women, the University Settlement, Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, and other local organizations, are

organizing a "House Famine Campaign" to be carried on during April. A valuable pamphlet¹ has been issued, which gives the more important facts of the present position, and makes practical suggestions, which include a proposal for a citizens' meeting to support the Town Council in taking action. Though it refers to local conditions, this pamphlet will be found full of suggestions to associations of women citizens interested in housing problems. It contains some "typical cases" of overcrowding, which make one ask what our civilization is worth, and some striking figures collected from the Medical Officer of Health. We referred in a recent issue to the energetic lead given by Manchester and other Northern Corporations. A forecast of the Government's new Bill appeared in the *Times* last week, and its appearance on 24th April will be awaited with much interest. In the meantime nothing could be better than spirited campaigns such as the above all over the country. We shall be glad to hear what other towns are doing.

The Rome Congress.

It seems probable that the British delegation to the Rome Congress will be large and representative. In addition to the twenty-four delegates appointed by the two National Auxiliaries, fraternal delegates will represent other women's organizations, and it is earnestly hoped that the Government will send an official delegate. A complete list of the members of the delegation will shortly be issued. Visitors are also cordially invited. Preparations have already been set on foot in Rome, and everything points to a very successful Congress. Funds are still urgently wanted and Great Britain must take its due share of financial responsibility. A reception and dance in aid of the funds

¹ Copies of the pamphlet may be secured (2d. post free) from the House Famine Campaign Office, University Settlement, Ducie Road, Barton Hill, Bristol.

AN EASTER HALT.

Academic people have an advantage over ordinary people; they map their lives into definite terms which come to an end (or are supposed to come to an end) at fixed times. Members of Parliament have sessions, but most ordinary men and women go on from day to day, from week to week, from month to month, with only the occasional and irregular interludes, rare for most of them, which holidays offer. Easter, this year a little too early from the point of view of the holiday maker, falling just at the end of the first quarter of the year, offers a convenient and natural halting place for retrospect and prospect. At first sight a survey of recent events is discouraging enough. The "age of confusion" still appears to have us fast in its grip. Abroad we see semi-starvation, homeless refugees in the East, bloodshed in the Ruhr; at home, chaos in Ireland, strikes, unemployment, and overcrowding. Ten thousand agricultural labourers are already on strike in Norfolk; thirty-five thousand colliers in the Rhondda Valley are about to leave the pits. Social progress has to a large extent been arrested. Education is suffering from a mistaken parsimony. In the House of Commons last week, Sir John Simon called attention to niggardly economies resulting in the minimum of financial saving and the maximum of friction, irritation, and detriment to the children of the nation. In last week's issue we referred to the housing conditions of London; from other parts of the country comes the same story of a housing famine, with its costly trail of disease, death, and crime. Questions specially affecting the status of women in the community also appear to be at a standstill. For some years masculine prejudices have been carefully camouflaged, but the paint is wearing off. A leading article in a well-known paper recently declared that equality between men and women, even equality of a moral standard, was impossible. It would not be difficult to continue in this pessimistic strain, and to point to instance after instance of intolerable delays in righting wrongs which mean sacrifice of hopes and opportunities for thousands of human lives.

But the horizon is not entirely dark. In *Men like Gods* the

will take place at Bedford College on Tuesday, 10th April, from 8-12.30, for which tickets may be had for the small sum of 5s. This is a pleasant method of raising funds, and is certain to be a great success. Much is hoped from this Congress, which takes place at a time full of international anxiety, and every woman who has international peace at heart should contribute something to this great reunion of women of all lands.

Sarah Bernhardt.

On Good Friday Paris honoured the memory of a great artist and a great woman. The writer of an appreciation in the *Times* truly said: "To be born and to die were the only common things that Mme. Sarah Bernhardt ever did." On the stage, perhaps more than in other forms of art, have women made their creative genius felt, but Sarah Bernhardt was not only a great actress, but a vivid and commanding personality. Her life was a great adventure, and even old age did not daunt her.

Our Next Issue.

Next week the "Burning Question" will deal with a subject which produced lurid flames at the time of the General Election—"The Capital Levy." Mr. Pethick Lawrence will put the case for the compulsory levy on Capital, and Dr. Gregory, of the London School of Economics, the case against. A short bibliography will also be given for the benefit of those who wish to study the subject more thoroughly. Mrs. More Nesbitt will contribute an article on "The Present and Future Position of the Women Police Movement." Other articles in the near future will deal with "The Black Smoke Tax," "Nationality of Married Women," "Money Raising Efforts—Good and Bad," "Women in the Legal Profession," "Private Members' Bills," etc. "Proportional Representation" will be dealt with as a "Burning Question" in a later issue.

hero, a tired sub-editor of a "well-known organ of the more depressing aspects of advanced thought," overcome by the pessimism of his chief, goes for a holiday in his little motor-car and finds himself suddenly projected into Utopia. After prolonged and exciting adventures, he surveys this distracted world from its calm heights, and is convinced that "though there is confusion in all struggles, retractions, and defeats, the whole effect is one of steadfast advance." There is little that is definite to record in the way of actual progress, but there is advance all the same. New standards, new ideals of international co-operation, of war and peace, of democracy, of education, of class or sex relationships, of religion are crowding in around us, "beating at our clay-shuttered doors."

The worst of it is that we cannot see where we are or whither we are going. Changes are waiting for us at every turn—new, startling changes—but for the most part we are too little receptive to realize that they are there at all. There is still a section of the community, composed both of men and women, which instinctively belongs to the great Anti-Change Society. Its members would even stifle discussion on what seems to their short-sighted eyes wrong because it is new. The large majority of women, like the large majority of men, do not trouble their heads much about the changes that are taking place around them. They are content to live their lives as creditably as possible, to do their duty by their families and in some degree by their neighbours; others are not satisfied with this, and are so profoundly critical of the world as it exists for other people, if not for themselves, that they see no hope except in a complete upheaval of existing institutions and a new world built according to a number of cut and dried, warranted infallible formulæ. Others, with less confidence in human infallibility, prefer to grope their way, step by step, following dimly discerned clues through uncultivated and unlighted territory. In an age which sees such miracles as broadcasting and aerial traffic, nothing is impossible.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

By OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT.

Parliament adjourned on Thursday last until Monday, 9th April, the last few days being devoted to polishing off the Fees Increase Bill (docked, however, of its mischievous proposals for charging for admission to the British Museum) and the Unemployment Insurance Bill, and to the time-honoured Consolidated Fund Bill, with its opportunities for general debate.

At a time when Liberal reunion is said to be in a state of suspended animation, there is an interesting fact to record. As is probably known, the subjects to be selected for these general debates are chosen by the Speaker in consultation with the Opposition Whips. It was intimated earlier in the session, when the Civil Service Estimates had yet to be discussed, that before the adjournment there would be a day for each wing of the Liberal party—one on the Civil Service Estimates and one on the Consolidated Fund Bill. It fell out that the Independent Liberals were allotted the former and the National Liberals the latter opportunity.

The Independent Liberals thereupon moved to reduce the Foreign Office vote in order to discuss the position in the Ruhr (in which they were warmly supported by Mr. Lloyd George's party); and it was generally understood in the House that the National Liberals intended to raise the question of agriculture once again. But when the time came they raised the question of the Ruhr from almost identically the same point of view as the other branch of the party only a fortnight before, and they were even more warmly supported by the Independent Liberals, Mr. Asquith himself intervening with a magnificent oration, which with Sir Edward Grigg's remarkable maiden speech shared the honours of the debate. Mr. Baldwin and Mr. McNeill, for the Government, advanced no new argument and contributed nothing to our existing knowledge. Mr. Asquith characterized the attitude of the Government as one of "benevolent impotence," and the phrase went home.

There is a growing feeling that the present Government cannot last much longer. The Prime Minister is quite obviously weakening. His voice has been hardly audible for the past fortnight, and he has looked increasingly worn and tired. His holiday may be expected to effect a change for the better; but whether temporary or permanent it is, of course, impossible to forecast. The probabilities, however, are against his retaining the strength to continue long. And what then? There are two alternatives. Mr. Baldwin has steadily won his way in the regard of the House. He is extremely popular with the new members of his party. Furthermore, he is a man of a high order

of capacity and leadership. It is probable that Mr. Bonar Law would advise the King to send for him.

But what of the Chamberlainites? Would they accept Mr. Baldwin? At present it does not seem likely. Mr. Chamberlain has by no means forgotten Mr. Lloyd George, and has by no means given up his predilection for the Coalition. Sir Robert Home and Sir L. Worthington Evans are believed to be of the same opinion. So is Mr. Lloyd George. Indeed, one of the most formidable objections to proceeding too swiftly with Liberal reunion is that the old hands of the Independent wing are honestly apprehensive as to Mr. Lloyd George's intentions. They are afraid of being faced with a Coalition proposal on the morrow of the reunion; and they know that any such event would fracture the party beyond repair.

But to return to the possibilities of the future. If the Chamberlainites might not accept Mr. Baldwin, it is perfectly certain that the Baldwinites would be reluctant to accept Mr. Chamberlain. Once before in this column it was suggested that Lord Robert Cecil might prove to be the means of reuniting the Conservatives. It is probable that the Baldwinites would accept Lord Robert as an alternative leader.

Failing some such arrangement being arrived at, the country must face the serious possibility of another Coalition. That is one of the principal reasons why the Independent Liberal rebuffs of Mr. Lloyd George have been so unfortunate; they have given him the opportunity of saying, if he ever wishes to say it: "Well, I did my best to reunite; but the Liberals couldn't agree, and meanwhile the country had to be governed." This is not to minimize the Independent Liberal case, which is a strong one; but is to say that if the suspicions of some of the old hands are well founded, they have taken the course best calculated to have them verified. If in a crisis Mr. Chamberlain could take command of the bulk of the Conservatives, it is probable that Mr. Lloyd George could muster anything up to sixty followers, and that would more than make up for the sulky right wing of the Conservatives, who, whatever they might feel, and however often they might abstain from voting, would be hardly likely to join forces with an opposition of Independent Liberals and the Labour Party.

Somebody referred to the Cabinet recently as a Cabinet of caretakers. It would be a strange irony if they proved to be no more than the caretakers for the very men they displaced less than six months ago.

One thing is certain. The country is growing almost contemptuous of the Government as it is administered to-day.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

It is recorded that when Lord Erskine introduced the first Bill into Parliament for the protection of animals, in the year 1809, his noble appeal was received with shouts of derision and all his great eloquence failed to achieve his object. His eloquence was not, however, altogether wasted. Public attention had been called to the matter, and people began to think about it.

The effect of Lord Erskine's pleading for the dumb creation was seen thirteen years later, when Richard Martin, M.P. for Galway, introduced a Bill into the House of Commons. Although much ridicule was heaped upon him and the wrongs of animals were treated by some Members as a subject not worthy of serious consideration, that kind and brave-hearted man stuck nobly to his guns, and his efforts were at last rewarded, his Bill became law, and his name will be revered for all time by animal lovers.

Public opinion in this country has altered greatly with regard to animals since the days of Richard Martin. Since the passing into law of Martin's Act, animal lovers have never looked back. They have passed from victory to victory. Many forms of cruelty which were taken at one time as a matter of course, have now died out. Bull-baiting and cock-fighting, for instance, were formerly recognized sports of the highest as well as the lowest in the land. To-day the vast majority of our countrymen would turn from the thought of such things with disgust.

England to-day has more beneficial laws dealing with the protection of animals than any other country in the world. Laws must be strictly enforced, however, if they are to effectively carry out the objects for which they have been passed. I am of the opinion that the humane laws of this country, excellent though they may be, are failing in their purpose—they are not

producing the results which all animal lovers hoped they would. Every year the records of the R.S.P.C.A. still show that thousands of persons in this country are guilty of cruelty to animals, many of the cases being brutal in the extreme. The reason is that the Magistrates, with some exceptions, are too lenient—the small fines inflicted are no deterrent. People must be made to think of animals and to study their habits and requirements. Many people keep animals even to-day under conditions which are simply horrible.

The finest weapon that can be devised in the prevention of cruelty is the fear of detection and punishment by means of the humane laws, but that weapon is rendered futile if persons convicted of cruelty to animals are let off with fines of a few shillings. Frequently offenders brought before the Magistrates say: "I did not think I was being cruel" and these excuses are allowed to prevail. Cruelty to animals will continue to be rampant in this country until such paltry excuses are swept aside.

The Protection of Animals Act, 1911, which may well be called "The Animals' Charter," empowers Magistrates to fine offenders £25 and in addition to sentence them to three months' imprisonment with or without hard labour. How rarely are offenders sent to prison! I guarantee that if imprisonment became the rule for those convicted of cruelty to animals, rather than a very rare exception, many forms of cruelty now of everyday occurrence would die out. You would not see lame, worn-out, or half-starved horses, often with harness sores, disgracing our streets, roads and farms. You would not find horses overloaded beyond their capacity. You would not discover unhappy dogs continually chained up in back yards, half starved, leading lives

of untold misery and suffering. I only mention a few forms of cruelty which still besmirch the fair name of this country.

A few days ago two men, well-to-do tradesmen, one of them a local official, discovered a cat in the shop of one of them. They shut the doors and chased the unfortunate animal about the room, kicking and stamping on it, inflicting terrible injuries from which the poor beast died. Surely, if ever there was a case in which the maximum penalty of three months' hard labour should have been inflicted this was the one. But no! these two brutes were merely fined. A fine is no deterrent to them. They should have been sent away to a place where they would have been forced to think over and perhaps regret their infamous conduct. This case in only one of many I could relate.

Captain H. Arthur Evans, M.P., has just introduced into Parliament a Bill to empower Magistrates to order corporal punishment in cases of gross and persistent cruelty. May this

A JUVENILE COURT.

"A populous and a smoky city,

Small justice shown, and still less pity."

When Shelley wrote these lines he must have been suffering from a fit of depression. The first line is true enough, but no social worker or frequenter of the civil and criminal courts—in fact, no one with a fair knowledge of the march of justice in England—could agree with the statement contained in the last line, and possibly had Shelley been living among us to-day, instead of almost a hundred years ago, he might have been less ruthless in his condemnation of London's hard heart.

The main thing that strikes an observer entering a juvenile court for the first time is the friendly atmosphere charged with pity for the young offender. The police are not in uniform, and there is no dock for the little prisoner, who walks up to the fatherly magistrate sitting at the head of a table in a warm bright room. All this is carried out according to the clauses of the Children's Act of 1908. The proceedings remind us more of a room in a school where a naughty child is being gently rebuked by a kindly headmaster, as the magistrate takes the hand of a little girl who has stolen soap from a grocer's shop, or of a weeping boy who, between violent sobs, declares he will be good if only he is not sent back to the Industrial School from where he has escaped. "But why don't you like it, my lad," asks the kindly magistrate, "surely you have a good time with the other boys there. In another three years you'll be able to go out into the world and take a job and help to support mother." Then he adds, in a firmer tone: "If you don't stay on you'll get no proper training, and that means that you can only take some 'blind alley' unskilled job. Now, be a man and stick it, Harry. Three years isn't very long, you know, and mother likes you being there. Everyone has something to do that he dislikes, I as well as you."

Harry Jones' case is that of a boy of 13 who had been removed, with his mother's consent, from an undesirable home. He is no criminal. He was sent to an industrial school merely as a preventive measure, and there he learns a trade, receiving good food, clothing, and education until he is 16 years old. The building is inspected by the Home Office, and among the other children are some destitute orphans, children with their only parent in prison, or refractory children from Workhouses. The magistrate's verdict on Harry, after he has conferred with the woman J.P. at his side, is: "To return to industrial school, mother to act as surety," and Harry is led into an adjoining room where all the finished cases are sent. Mothers, fathers, boys, and girls are all collected there, and are all talking at once. One woman is tearfully saying good-bye to a long-legged boy sentenced to a reformatory for stealing bicycles. In another corner of the room a woman is giving her last instructions to a shy little girl off to a remand home for a fortnight until her case comes up again.

These remand or detention homes are provided by the local authority according to the Children's Act, which lays down that the young offender may not be committed to prison while awaiting trial. Sometimes a remand home is used for the detention of a child who has committed some very slight offence.

The next delinquent is a ragged little urchin of 6, who, we gather, was found wandering by the plain clothes police officer on two different occasions. At the opposite end of the long table appears the mother with a baby in her arms and a tiny tot hanging on to her skirts, whilst beside her stands a girl of 14 or 15 who seems to be thoroughly enjoying the whole proceedings, and in the background hovers a rough-looking man, evidently the father. Hers is the usual tale of woe so often heard in the adult police court on the other side of the road. The father, a coal heaver, has been out of work for months. He got behind with the rent and was therefore turned out of his home. The eldest girl has left school, but can find no employment, and the little chap had become separated from his people and was trying to find a warm place to sleep when caught by the police officer. "And where have you and the family been sleeping the last few nights?" the magistrate asks. "Please, sir, we went back to the old home for a night or two, and then last night we found a Salvation Army Shelter." "You forget, Mrs. Smith, that with a family come responsibilities. What effort are you making to find a new home?" "There's a room in Cable Street I've heard of, sir, and I'm going to settle about it to-morrow." "That's right, and if you can't get it apply to me, and I will do my best. And now about this little chap. As you have four children, and your husband has never seemed able to keep them, do you think you could agree to Johnny going to a school where he would be taught a proper trade. I hear that during most of your married life you have been living on charity." "No, sir, you shan't do that," came the hasty reply. "They are my children, and with me they shall stay." "Alright, Mrs. Smith, then we'll leave the matter for a while; you may go." And, turning to a policeman he raised his voice, saying "Remanded 14 days," and the boy goes off with his mother and the baby, while the

Bill become law, and a new weapon placed in the hands of the Magistrates. I have tried to point out that it is no good giving enlarged powers to the Magistracy unless such powers are used effectively.

There is no doubt whatever that public opinion is now thoroughly aroused, and the vast majority of our countrymen are insisting that the penalties in cases of cruelty to animals shall be increased. Magistrates need not be afraid of exercising their powers to the utmost—they have public opinion behind them, and, after all, it is only public opinion which matters.

Let us all strive to bring about a new era for animals, when their rights and wrongs will be fully recognized, and those miscreants who offend against them will receive the just punishment which they so richly deserve.

LAMBOURNE,
Chairman, R.S.P.C.A.

father takes the other two back into the lobby where the other children are waiting their turn for trial. There follow cases of petty theft, wandering, street begging, and the amusing case of a boy who, quite ignorant of the rigour of the law, let off fireworks in the street.

Sometimes the stipendiary magistrate and the woman magistrate sit long in whispered consultation before delivering the sentence. Sometimes the case is hastily dismissed with a fine of a shilling imposed upon the parents, and sometimes the clerk (a fully qualified solicitor) is appealed to for legal advice on some knotty point.

At the end of an hour and a half all the fresh cases have been dealt with, and now the children remanded for a week or 14 days come up for judgment. In each case the sentence, delivered with due regard to the child's fears, is light. It is based upon the theory that children offer more hope of reformation than adults. There is an extraordinary variety in the appearance of the children. Many are, alas, only too obviously the children of criminals, but some with a bright cheerful expression seem quite ignorant of the seriousness of the occasion, and all are neatly dressed in clothes provided by the remand home. So often does the child appear in tears that we begin to wonder whether the whole neighbourhood knows how the sight of tears will always melt the magistrate's kind heart.

At last the weary magistrate rises to go, and the whole room, out of deference, does the same, as he walks out followed by the two women probation officers, the school attendance officers who have been giving evidence, and a host of police officers.

These juvenile courts have fully justified themselves since their establishment at Birmingham on the American plan in 1905. They are more in the nature of a social than of a legal institution. The fact that a child is neglected is sufficient of itself to bring him within the jurisdiction of the court. One American writer, therefore, says that the juvenile court, as at present organized, is an unnecessary and, in a sense, an anomalous institution. The present functions of the court and its probation officer, he says, could, and should, be performed by the school. The idea embodied in probation system is essentially that of character building. Between such an idea and the degrading associations of the police court and gaol there exists no little contrast. "Probation, and especially juvenile probation, could hardly be expected to flourish in the sordid atmosphere of an ordinary police court. Merely to bring the child back, to permit him to mingle with depraved adult criminals and to risk contamination from them, would be to defeat at the outset the chief purpose of probation."

D. L. HALDINSTEIN.

A NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT.

By kind invitation of Miss Leigh Browne, a conference was held on 15th March to consider what steps could be taken in connection with the Women's Auxiliary Service to start Bureaux of Information.

Mr. Clarke Hall, of Old Street Police Court, who has always strongly supported the employment of educated Women Police, and who himself thought out the scheme of Information Bureaux, presided. He said he was convinced, from his observation and experience as a magistrate, that there were thousands of people badly in need of advice who shrank from going for it to a police court. Girls and boys came to London from the country hoping to get employment, totally ignorant of the dangers surrounding them and handicapped by lack of experience in any kind of work. They needed not only advice but sympathy. All kinds of people came before him totally ignorant not only of law, but of many of the common facts of life, and sought advice on all manner of subjects. They needed to be put in touch with some society suited to their needs. They wanted to start an office which would be a connecting link between the various organizations.

Inspector Stark, of the Women's Auxiliary Service, said they owed a great deal to Mr. Clarke Hall for the sympathetic tone and the spirit of idealism with which he had inspired the work. They had at present one Bureau only—at 7 Rochester Row—and they wanted one in every borough. They were in close touch with the Vigilance Society, the N.S.P.C.C., and other bodies, and passed on all cases suitable to be dealt with by these organizations. But there was always a large percentage of people left who could not be drafted off to any society. In some cases it was technical information that was wanted, in others advice as to where to apply for help, and there were others who wanted a friend who had experience of life and sympathetic understanding of other people's difficulties. Since 1st January last they had dealt with 203 personal applications and 212 letters. It had already been arranged to start a Bureau in Camberwell. In the discussion that followed Mr. Clarke Hall emphasized the need for more Women Police.

Anyone interested is asked to communicate with Inspector Stark at 7 Rochester Row, S.W. 1.

THE COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC SERVICE.

By ANN POPE.

WHY NOT "HOUSE ASSISTANTS"?

It might perhaps help matters if we dropped the term "domestic servants" for a time and adopted the term "house assistants"—just as we say "shop assistants"—and we really might try not to be "superior" and "patronizing." For merely by the accident of birth or fortune, are our circumstances different. In their shoes, should we find self-repression easy?

Do we any of us realize the immense self-command a servant has to exercise in order not to "answer back" when unjustly reprimanded? I'm afraid, when I was a servant, I did not always rise to this height; some mistresses are very unfair—through ignorance—and it is almost superhuman not to defend oneself. How would you bear injustice? The whole attitude of superiority is so silly, too, for we can live without many things, but we can't live without eating and drinking, nor, in this climate, without clothes, even if we have to do without houses! Also there are children to be brought up, and civilization requires us to care for the sick and old before we bury or burn them. Any work that raises the standard of national "fitness" is of the first importance. If we are to have a smaller population it will need to be A1, not C3.

TWO THINGS "HOUSE ASSISTANTS" WANT.

(1) We want the vote on the same terms as other women. Not that we really care twopence about it; but why should illiterate or bad women, who live in lodgings, have what we have not, just because we are obliging and "live in"? This is a most important point, and its true inwardness should be studied.

(2) We wish to be treated on the same level as other skilled workers, and be allowed the unemployment dole. It's pure cheek to refuse it to "House Assistants," and enough to put any girl's back up and make her refuse, absolutely, to become a domestic servant at any price.

Now, let me add, for fear of misunderstandings, that if I had my life over again I would start at 16 as a scullerymaid, under a good cook and kitchenmaid, and work my way up. Then, one day, I might be a useful Member of Parliament.

ANN POPE.

REVIEWS.

Recollections of a Labour Pioneer. By Francis William Soutter. T. Fisher Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.

This is a lively autobiography by a most militant reformer. Mr. Soutter has been frequently in hot water, and he glories in it. There is the persuasive method and the shock method, and although he evidently has succeeded in endearing himself to some even of his opponents, Mr. Soutter has used the shock method with considerable success. But then, he is a Cockney-born, of Scotch extraction, and that is a conjunction which is calculated to produce a most formidable blend of tenacity and cheek and cheery fun.

Mr. Soutter began to earn his living at the age of 12, and he seems to have married when he was under 21 on the magnificent wage of /1 a week. His first big political work was to run "the first Labour candidate who went to the poll in Britain," Mr. Odger, for Southwark, in 1869. Mr. Soutter says: "I was not a member of any political or Labour organization, I knew scarcely a dozen likely persons, and my experience of election campaigns was nil." He worked from 5 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. at a saw-mill. Yet he put the election through and his man polled 4,382 votes to the successful candidate's 4,686. It is good to think that Professor and Mrs. Fawcett worked strenuously for this first working-man candidate, and Soutter relates how Fawcett's "robust voice" was heard outside the Marquess of Granby shouting to the men who had been cheering him, "unless a hundred men can be found, each of whom will bring five voters to the poll, Mr. Odger will not be your Member. It is votes that are wanted at this hour, not cheers."

He began his long and litigious struggle with the levying of church rates in 1879, and there was something distinctly suffragettish about his endeavour to destroy the rate-book by deluging it with ink and broken glass; indeed, the parallel is so close that it was actually asserted that he had blinded the Vestry Clerk for life. This was fortunately no more true in this case than in the later one.

His association with John Stuart Mill's step-daughter, Helen Taylor, dated from her first candidature for the School Board in 1876, and the pages describing this association are among the most interesting. Soutter and his partner were one of "Helen's Babies," and he tells how much more interest was shown in Miss Taylor's candidature than in those of others, because she made it a rule to address four meetings annually, and described the work of the Board drawing crowded and deeply interested audiences. She could present the driest facts and figures in an attractive form, and was equally good at practical work. She was a keen opponent of war, and is quoted as writing in 1878, "That it should be possible for one man, or for a few men, to embroil the country in war, without appeal to the whole nation, has long seemed to me one of the most serious defects of our political system." Soutter was Miss Taylor's staunch helper when she stood in 1885 as a candidate for Parliament.

Among his most miraculous feats was the starting of a weekly paper, *The Radical*, with practically no capital and no office; another was making a speech of twenty minutes in Westminster Hall without being run in;

a third was joining in a serious row with £520 in his pocket. It is a jolly book, and it is good to think so manly and gay a soul has always been the staunchest friend of women.

H. M. S.

COLLEAGUES. By Geraldine Waife. Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d.

Miss Waife's first novel, *Colleagues*, enters the world at a grave disadvantage; from the first page to the last—even on its very wrapper—it challenges comparison with another first novel, Clemence Dane's *Regiment of Women*. And *Regiment of Women* was a great book; out of trivial lives, played out in small places, its author hammered a tragedy. Miss Waife's novel misses this rare goal; it is sordid without being tragic. Like Clemence Dane, its author deals with the clash of women's personalities when the disturbing or tranquillizing influence of masculine intervention has been removed from their lives. Like Clemence Dane, she stages her drama in the scholastic world, with its exaggerated dignities and oppressions, intrigues, its friendships and foeships. Her heroine is a young teacher, painfully conscientious, and, we are led to believe, efficient in her work; but in the conduct of every day life, wholly lacking in those qualities of "push and go" which are required of a self-supporting woman in the rough and tumble of our competitive labour market. The story of the book, in so far as it can be said to possess a story, is the story of personal failure. The opening chapters find the heroine installed as lecturer in a large teacher's training college—one which offers a standard of material comfort, a salary and an academic occupation overtopping her wildest dreams. Gradually she awakes to the reality that the institution which appears so fair to outward view is, in fact, spiritually corrupt to its very core; a close corporation of self-seekers to whom life and work consists in the effort to hang on to a peculiarly soft job by methods whose chief feature is the flattery and bamboozlement of an equally corrupt and comfort-loving chief. Against this corruption our heroine tilts, like Don Juan at his windmill, and with similar measure of success. She loses her job, and with it her chances of another. By a chapter of accidents and mismanagement she loses the support of her family. Finally she loses her head. On the brink of complete and abject despair she is rescued by a former colleague and provided with the Home (we use the capital "H" in all deliberation) for which her soul has craved. Now all this is interesting; we go on reading the book until we have finished it. And occasionally the characters come to life. If Miss Waife were simply out to amuse us we would gladly thank her for her first novel, and demand a speedy second. But from the seriousness of her dedication and the sermonizing tendencies of her characters, we half suspect that she has some Galsworthyian end in view and is trying to convince us of the existence of a social evil. And this suspicion tempts us to remark that her women are abnormally nasty, her training college abnormally comfortable, and her heroine abnormally simple. But there—it may be that we ourselves are abnormally simple, and that, like the heroine, have yet to be disillusioned in our belief concerning the splendours of womanhood!

M. O. S.

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THE ROME CONGRESS.

Arrangements for the journey will shortly be announced. Any visitors to the Congress who would like to be in touch with the British Delegation should apply at once to the N.U. Head Office for full particulars. All members and friends of the Women's Movement in this country, especially those who are interested in International goodwill, should send a contribution to the funds as soon as possible. We call their special attention to the reception and dance on 10th April and the rummage sale, announced under coming events. The President of the N.U. and many members of the Executive Committee hope to be present, and will be glad to have the opportunity of meeting many London friends. Another way of helping that appeals to the housewife at this time of the year is to send parcels to the rummage sale.

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Latest Books.

INTERNATIONAL AND LEAGUE OF NATIONS.—*Decadence of Europe*, Signor Nitti. *Patriotism and the Fellowship of Nations*, E. Melian Stawell. *Oppressed People and the League of Nations*, Noel Buxton and C. Evans. *What really happened at Paris*, Col. House.

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS.

CAN WE ALL SUPPORT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS?

MADAM,—Your article on the League of Nations ignores, as most discussions of this subject do, one point which troubles a good many women. The League has from the first identified itself officially with vivisection. It has a department for the Standardization of Sera, which spends its time making experiments on living animals. To subscribe to its finances, or even to advocate its work, means supporting a practice which to us is abhorrent. I am aware this is a highly controversial matter, but for that very reason it ought not to have been incorporated in the League's scope of activity. After all, the main object of the League is to substitute peace for war, and it seems rather a far cry from that to the vivisection's laboratory. I do not wish to debate the actual right or wrong of this question here, but merely to point out that the League's sanction of vivisection is holding back a certain number of peace-loving humanitarian women from giving it their wholehearted allegiance—or indeed, any support at all.

THEODORA FLOWER MILLS.

GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS.

MADAM,—Now that Lord Askwith has introduced the Equal Guardianship of Infants Bill into the House of Commons, may I, through the columns of your valuable paper, appeal to all men and women of this country to do whatever is in their power to rouse public opinion, and to urge their members in the House to pass this Bill into law.

The law in its present state gives to the husband not only all rights over the education and religion of his children, but gives him power also to take the children away from their mother without even telling her where they are.

This, surely, is enough to make the intelligent and thinking part of the community realize that reform is more than necessary in order to protect those unfortunate women whose husbands take advantage of the law to injure them through their children.

A WIFE.

"EDUCATION AND LIFE."

MADAM,—I have read with interest Miss Isabel Fry's article on "Education and Life" in your issue of 23rd March, and I think some of your readers may like to hear a short account of work on lines similar to those she advocates which is now actually being carried out by the Bradford Education Committee.

About six years ago the committee felt that there was a considerable section of boys and girls whose need for education beyond the elementary stage was not adequately met by the ordinary secondary school; and it was therefore decided to open classes at the School of Art under the general direction of the Principal of the School, where boys and girls with a bent towards hand work could be educated through the development of their special ability. The children are selected from among those who fail to gain admittance to the ordinary secondary schools; and in addition to the ordinary examination are obliged to pass a test in drawing. They enter at the age of 12 or 13; and their parents sign an agreement that they will allow them to remain in attendance for two years. This period is sometimes extended for a term or so if no suitable employment has been found when the two years are over. There are no fees.

Half the time is spent on ordinary English subjects, though special attention is given to the history of arts and crafts; the other half is given to practical work. In the case of the boys the ground-work is carpentering, and in the case of the girls needlework and dressmaking. In both cases

CITIZENSHIP.—*Citizenship*, E. J. S. Lay. *Outlines of Local Government*, J. J. Clarke. *An Introductory Reader in Civics*, E. E. Houseley.

POPULATION AND BIRTH CONTROL.—*Population*, Harold Cox. *Birth Control*.

GENERAL.—*The Betrayal of the Slums*, Dr. Addison. *The Smokeless City*, E. D. Simon and M. Fitzgerald. *Taxation yesterday and to-morrow*, Jones. *Husband and Wife in the Law*, E. Jenks. *Penal Discipline*, Dr. May Gordon. *Recollections of a Labour Pioneer*, F. W. Soutter. *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization*, Sidney and Beatrice Webb. *The Experience of an Asylum Doctor*, Montague Lomax.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

BARNSELY S.E.C.

The closing meeting for this session was held on 21st March, when the new President, Miss Celia Wray, gave an address on Women's Work in general. She urged that the League of Nations and questions of international relationships should play a still more important part in the programme of women's organizations. Mrs. Willis reported on the Council meetings, and Mrs. Davies made the appeals on behalf of Headquarters and the WOMAN'S LEADER, for which five new subscribers were secured.

a good deal of time is given to drawing and designing. The special purpose of these classes is not to turn out carpenters or dressmakers, but to utilize the natural bias towards self-expression in these ways as a means to general development; and as far as it is possible to judge, the result has been very satisfactory. The girls, in particular, who do not as a whole look very promising at the beginning of the course, improve very much in every way before the end; and, generally, there is little difficulty in finding suitable work for them, and there is considerable variety in the occupations they choose. Some go into shops, some have become textile designers; a few are dressmakers and milliners; and one this last year has become a cake decorator in a large confectionery works. It seems to me that further experimental work on these lines is very much needed to-day; there should be "farm-house" schools, as Miss Isabel Fry suggests, for the country child; and varied types of craft schools in the towns; so that the contact with real life may be made at the place in which any given child will benefit most.

MARGARET C. D. LAW,

Member of the Bradford City Council and Education Committee.

DOMESTIC SERVICE.

MADAM,—In a letter on the above subject in your issue of 30th March, "Hadsome" makes some points and misses others. Her strongest point is—in families where it is necessary for the daughters to earn money—why not keep them at home instead of going to business, and dispense with a servant, which is excellent advice. Her weakest and certainly in most cases erroneous, that domestic servants are ever worked from 6 o'clock in the morning to 10 at night, and not allowed time off when desired.

As "Ann Pope" says in her article under "Household Administration" of same issue: "If we wish to be happy in any state we have to learn to live peaceably, and work comfortably, with others—to give and take." And I cannot see why the maid alluded to should expect to have time off (belonging to her mistress) for her future training for a nurse, unless it had been a mutual arrangement on engagement, and there was always an open door to leave the situation.

"Hadsome" writes of Sunday work for the maids as a great hardship. Surely all women know the need of daily service where young children are concerned. The efficient domestic training of young girls at the moment is imperative for three important reasons:—
(1) To bridge over the difficult years of adolescence from 14 to 16.
(2) The preparation of each girl for her undoubted life work in some household, either as a married woman or not.
(3) The lessening of unemployment by trained service.

Parliament is keenly alive to the urgent necessity for some measure to be taken without delay, and when we realize 400,000 children of 14 years of age are annually leaving our Council schools (of which the greatest proportion must be wage-earners, with but slender chance of employment) that anxiety is justified.

A scheme for compulsory training in some household for a stated period has been discussed, and met with much encouragement, although undoubted difficulties lie before it, but at a time when public economy is an absolute necessity in the country, and the fact that it would cost the ratepayers nothing and be the means of giving a certain amount of special training in domestic work to each girl, this scheme seems to promise a fair amount of success.

A HOUSEKEEPER OF MANY YEARS.

COMING EVENTS.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

APRIL 6. Bennington, Parochial Hall. 7 p.m. Speaker: Rear-Admiral Drury Lowe, C.M.G.
APRIL 8. Brierley Hill Town Hall. Speaker: G. R. Thorne, Esq., M.P.
APRIL 8. Buxton Town Hall. 8 p.m. Speaker: Miss Muriel Currey, O.B.E.
APRIL 9. Chinnor. British Schools, Lower Road. 6.30 p.m. Speaker: J. E. Herbert, Esq.
APRIL 9. Kingsbridge Town Hall. 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Lt.-Col. G. N. Wyatt, D.S.O.
APRIL 10. East Ham Town Hall. 8 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. H. F. Wood and Rt. Hon. G. N. Barnes.
APRIL 11. Hampstead. Speaker: J. C. Maxwell Garnett, Esq., C.B.E.
APRIL 12. Chingford Memorial Hall. 8 p.m. Speaker: Miss Muriel Currey, O.B.E.
APRIL 13. Weymouth Arcadia. Speakers: Rt. Hon. Lord Eustace Percy, M.P., Miss Muriel Currey, O.B.E.

LEAGUE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

APRIL 12. Upper House of Convocation, Church House, Great Smith Street. 6 p.m. Lecture on "William Morris, Poet, Socialist, and Artist," by Miss Cicely Ellis (grand-daughter of Mr. F. S. Ellis, intimate friend of William Morris and editor of the *Kelmscott Chaucer*). Admission 1s.

INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE (11 Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C.2).

APRIL 10. Bedford College, Regent's Park, N.W. 1. 8-12.30. Reception and Dance in aid of the funds of the Alliance. Hostesses: Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Fitzgerald, Miss Letitia Fairfield, Miss Gertrude Kingston, Miss Beatrice Harraden, Dame May Whitty, Miss Lena Ashwell, Mrs. Herabai Tata, Lady Bonham Carter. Tickets may be had from the Secretary, I.W.S.A., price 5s. inclusive.

APRIL 10. Bosworth Hall, Bosworth Road, Kensal Road, W. 10. A Rummage Sale to raise funds for the Rome Congress. Please send parcels, if possible, to the Caretaker at the above address, between April 9th and 14th, marked clearly "For the I.W.S.A. Sale," or before that date to Miss Hoc, 75 Hereford Road, W. 2. (Hon. Organiser). Further information from I.W.S.A., 11 Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. 2.

WOMEN'S ENGINEERING SOCIETY.

APRIL 11-14. Conference at Birmingham University. Gen. Sec., Miss C. Haslett, 26 George Street, Hanover Square, W. 1.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB.

APRIL 11. 8.30. "The Four Women's Colleges in Oxford." Speakers: Miss W. Moberly (St. Hilda's Hall), Sir Henry Penson, K.B.E.

WOMEN'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIETY.

APRIL 25 and 26. Lord Mayor's Parlour at the Town Hall, Manchester. 10.30-1 and 2.30-5. A Conference of Women Councillors, Guardians, and Magistrates.
APRIL 27. Visits to Local Institutions. All information from the W.L.G.S., 19 Tothill Street, Westminster, or the Manchester W.C.A., 7 Brasenose Street, Manchester.

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LONDON:

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DEAR "HADSOME"—You are quite right, there are "places" where no one would wish to stay one month, much less ten! and these conditions still exist in spite of "scarcity" of supply; also mothers who suffered thirty years ago naturally would do anything to prevent their daughters going through similar suffering.

During my five years' experience, as working housekeeper, cook-general, etc., I had three places "where the food was so scanty that I had to buy extra for myself, and in one for others as well." I remember one day 1 lb. of sausages (3) being brought in for the dinner of three hard-working servants, another time it was one small fillet of fish for each.

In this last place I knew economy was necessary to meet the expenses of a very large house, and offered to wash the handkerchiefs myself, when I saw the mistress doing them in the bathroom. Before the end of a month I was in addition given quite casually all the personal washing of one person, slips, jumpers, stockings, vests, knickers, etc. In several places also different food was supplied.

But when I found I was being unfairly treated I did not stay! All situations are not bad, nor all mistresses mean and unfair.

During the last six months I have placed one middle-class girl of 16 as kitchenmaid in a house where there are five other servants. She is very happy, is not overworked, is well paid, and has plenty of good nourishing food. Her mother is very much pleased. During this same period I have also had a great deal to do with girl clerks, shop assistants, etc. Their pay does not compare so favourably, unless they have a mother and a home; their cheap lodgings are miserable; often the landlady will not even make them a cup of tea. They return sometimes in winter, wet through, to cold, cheerless rooms, and there is no one to give them the homely comforting remedies a mother, good mistress, or kindly fellow-servant would give. Then there are (1) the monotony of clerking and office work, and (2) the haunting fear of unemployment. Also if they marry they don't know how to provide good food, even in days of plenty, and in days of scarcity the family conditions are pitiful, not only as far as nourishment goes, but also with regard to clothing. Again, few middle-aged women clerks are required; it is not uncommon for those who have worked many years in one place to be sent away when they are over 40, but there is always work for a good domestic assistant, even if she has not climbed higher than the routine of an ordinary middle-class household.

Girls who wish to follow evening classes whilst in domestic service should arrange this with their employers on being engaged. My experience, however, when as mistress I have arranged for this, done the girls' work in her absence myself, and paid expenses of material, fees, etc., is that the interest shown and privileges given have not been appreciated. I remember in one case, giving a young girl Vivella in a charming youthful shade of blue, with material for embroidery, together with leisure for classes and making, and having finally to finish the work myself! Otherwise it would have been left incomplete. Yet not one class was missed.

I am quite in favour of middle-class girls becoming house-assistants, as I think the more education a worker has the more importance and interest will be found in the work: besides in these days of changing conditions a higher standard of intelligence is required for household matters, more even than for mechanical office work, the earlier stages of which anyone can easily pick up.

I do not, however, think it a good plan for a girl to have only experience in her own home. Such an idea is absolutely reactionary. We need to raise domestic work by means of examinations, etc., to the standard of a skilled artisan occupation in its elementary stages, and to University standard in its scientific application, not to throw it back.

A Domestic Science Degree was instituted in 1920 by the University of London. The present need is a series of examinations, prizes, and scholarships that shall link the Household Science Department at Campden Hill with the elementary school and the home; a scheme somewhat similar to that which enables an art student to pay all her training fees at the Royal School of Art without costing her parents a penny.

ANN POPE.

BIRTH CONTROL.

MADAM,—It is unfortunate that the N.U.S.E.C. and WOMAN'S LEADER should encourage the discussion of Birth Control, for it is one of those things that, by just discussing it, we spread the idea, and thus put the temptation to practise it in people's way. Birth Control by chemical or mechanical means is a canker in the social body. It encourages lust, illicit passion, and lack of self-control. The sexual functions become an end, instead of a means to an end. The more they are exercised in this illicit way, the more they crave to be exercised. It seems to me to be quite inconsistent with what N.U.S.E.C. and WOMAN'S LEADER are supposed to stand for. Birth Control is no new invention. It was known and practised in Alexandria and ancient Rome, and makes its appearances in civilizations bloated with luxury and sensual enjoyment. It is distressing to find women encouraging it. It is degrading. It is held out as a cure for our social troubles, but if it is practised to any extent, or at all, it brings worse evils than existed before. I am surprised WOMAN'S LEADER should re-open its columns again to the discussion of this evil thing, and hope it will not be continued for long.

A. J. MUSSON.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE. SWEDISH SECTION.

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"To the people of Germany to mobilize their economic resources in order to re-establish their credit; and to avoid all propaganda of hatred and revenge, thus proving their readiness to enter the League of Nations and take their place in the international co-operation" (abridged).

[Owing to lack of space, some correspondence is unavoidably held over.—Ed.]

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Information Department for advice about Women's Work and
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