

Vol. 13 to be taken away.

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

IN POLITICS
IN THE HOME
IN INDUSTRY

IN LITERATURE AND ART
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN THE PROFESSIONS

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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Contents :

	PAGE
<i>"The Woman's Leader" in Politics :</i>	
THE CIVIL SERVICE	304
NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER	305
THE CORN PRODUCTION ACT. By the Earl of Selborne ...	306
THE LEAGUE AND AFRICA. By Leonard Woolf	307
LEAGUE OF NATIONS RALLY	313
<i>In other Lands :</i>	
THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN DENMARK	305
<i>In the Law :</i>	
WOMEN JURORS FROM THE MORAL STANDPOINT ...	308
<i>In the Home :</i>	
MORE EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A WOMAN IN THE HOME	309
<i>In Literature and Art :</i>	
REVIEWS: "Educational Experiments"	310
DRAMA: "The First and the Last"	311
<i>Correspondence and Reports :</i>	312

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

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THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND
COMMON CAUSE.

NOTES AND NEWS

A Consultative Committee in America.

In spite of the differences in organisation among women voters in the United States and in this country to which we drew attention last week, there is one very interesting parallel which appears to have emerged in both countries. All the big national organisations in America, including the suffrage societies, women's clubs, &c., &c., have for some time had "legislative representatives" at Washington, corresponding to our Parliamentary secretaries in London, who undertake lobbying when any Bill in which their society is interested comes before Congress. These representatives have realised that there are advantages to be got from co-operation, and they have, therefore, recently formed a Consultative Committee on almost exactly the same lines as that inaugurated by Lady Astor over here. It is a consultative, not an executive, body; but whenever measures come up, or should come up, on which any of the constituent societies are agreed, those, and those only, send out a joint memorandum (in addition to individual ones), by which the dissentients are in no way bound, stating that they represent a strength of "x" women; and Congress is duly impressed. It is interesting to note that it is an official of the suffrage society who has been elected chairman of this Committee. The total strength represented by the Consultative Committee is estimated at 26 million women. No wonder the Congressmen tremble.

Cambridge Comedy of Errors.

The May Term at Cambridge has ended, and the admission of women to membership of the University still stands postponed. The circumstances which led to the postponement are sufficiently grotesque. The Council invited the Senate last winter to vote on a scheme for removing the present sex inequalities. The Senate rejected the scheme. Then the Council invited the Senate to vote on a scheme for linking the women's colleges (or trying to link them, which is different) into a sort of separate university. The Senate rejected that also. There came a pause, silence; then whisperings. Exactly what happened during the pause is, at present, secret history. But quite suddenly a new set of men were appointed to draft a new scheme, and were told they must be quick. They produced their scheme—the so-called "Compromise"—and had it ready in good time to be voted on during the term. But the Council, for some mysterious reason, decided not to present the Compromise to the Senate as a single clear issue, but to couple with it, as an alternative scheme, a proposal for giving women the unacceptable "titular" degrees. The Cambridge Council, having little experience of these problems of procedure which our own National Union chairmen have so frequently solved, got itself into a hopeless tangle. It desired to put two proposals to the vote which were, in a sense, alternative to each other, yet not (as the Honours Lists have it) "bracketed equal." The Compromise was to be regarded as No. 1, the Titular Degrees as No. 2. Votes for and against each proposal were to be given at the same time; but the votes on No. 2 were to be disregarded and destroyed if No. 1 were carried. The advocates of No. 2 made a great hubbub; and the Council the other day, when trying to take a vote that its intended procedure for June 16th be approved, narrowly escaped defeat. Already alarmed and confused, the Council had sought a legal backing for its policy—but scarcely got it. In the view of a distinguished counsel, to let a grace be carried and afterwards say the grace was invalid was not a correct proceeding. Counsel suggested, as a way round, that members of the Senate should be told beforehand that when they voted on proposal No. 2 they would be voting "on the hypothesis that proposal No. 1 had been defeated." By the time this opinion had been obtained, the May term was nearly over. The Antis had raised a further cry

of protest against being brought up from the the country to vote when travelling was so difficult. Availing themselves of this objection, the Council determined to give themselves more time, and postponed the vote till October 20th.

Time is on Our Side.

The postponement will, we believe, prove advantageous to the women's cause. It can certainly not favour that of our opponents. The opposition, in the great effort which it made to bring up all the forces of selfishness and ignorance to vote against Scheme A last December, spent itself. And the more our opponents continue to talk about the women's colleges being "parasitical ivy plants," and the more they sneer at educated women as "graduate governesses," the more they reveal the vulgarity and jealousy which inspire their own being. We can only hope some of them will go before the Universities' Commission and give evidence in this low-comedy strain. Meantime, we are confident that the Commission will reform the University if Cambridge should miss the last chance of reforming itself.

Appointments at Oxford.

On May 31st Convocation appointed Miss Jourdain, Principal of St. Hugh's College, Public Examiner in Groups B2 and B5 (Faculty of Literæ Humaniores). This is the first year that women have been eligible for such a position. On June 3rd, voting took place for Boards of Faculties. Six places had to be filled, and Miss Pope, of Somerville College, and Miss Wardale, of St. Hugh's College, were both returned as members of the Board for Modern Languages—Miss Wardale at the head of the poll. In both these cases the initiative came entirely from men. We wish we could congratulate Cambridge on being as progressive.

The Deceased Husband's Brother.

Last week the Bill to enable a woman to marry her deceased husband's brother passed its third reading in the House, and there is not much reason to fear great opposition from the Lords. The third reading was not altogether peaceful, for Lord Hugh Cecil's amendment surprised the House into an exhibition of strong feeling, expressed by Captain Bowyer's "Never in my short career have I felt so strongly about anything . . . there is such a lack of charity in the noble Lord's implication." The amendment which provoked this feeling was that "the Church should be allowed the option of determining whether a person contracting a marriage under the Bill should have a right to have it solemnised in church according to the form prescribed in the Prayer Book, or to receive Communion according to the use of the Church." As various members pointed out, it is only notorious evil-livers who can at present be expelled from the Communion. The object of the Bill is to put the man who marries his deceased brother's widow on exactly the same footing as the Act of 1907 put the man who married his deceased wife's sister, and the amendment would have introduced considerable differences, and would have imposed disabilities. Mr. Aneurin Williams, who supported the amendment, said he wanted to see as little mutual interference between State and Church as possible. The House, he said, was concerned with civil marriage only, and had no right and no duty to interfere with religious marriage at all. Finally, however, Lord Hugh allowed his amendment to be negated without a division. It was obvious that, in the case of a division, it would have attracted few votes.

Income-Tax on Widows' Pensions.

It was suggested in the House last week, by Mr. Thomson, that the relief from income-tax granted to disabled soldiers drawing wounds, disability or disablement pensions should be

extended to their widows after their death. Sir Robert Horne explained that the widows' pensions are subject to an allowance in respect of earned income, and that the cases are entirely different. We agree with Mr. Thomson that if it is equitable that a pensioner should be exempt from income-tax, his widow, who receives the same pension, should be exempt. The equity should be the same.

The Plumage Bill in Port.

The Plumage Bill, after six years' vicissitudes, has been read a third time in the Commons, and has virtually become law. Its final form may, as Mr. Bartley Dennis says, possibly do more to protect the birds than the original Bill. Whether this is so or not, it is not only a well-intentioned, but a workmanlike measure. Students of our Parliamentary methods, and of the history of this Bill both upstairs and down, may well think that its triumph as an agreed measure verges upon the miraculous. That David should slay Goliath is less surprising than that the game of Quorums played in the passage outside the Committee-room should have resulted in useful legislation. But the Bill is unsmirched by the tactics of its former opponents; it removes a reproach from a nation in the main humanitarian, and it may be the forerunner of an international agreement to protect bird-life.

Prophylactics.

The proceedings of the North European Conference on Venereal Diseases is of especial interest at this moment, because it permits of a reference to specific facts in support or disproof of the conflicting statements as to the efficacy of self-disinfection which are heard in this country. This expedient, it appears, is considered of small importance in the prevention of venereal disease by experts of the countries which have tried it. It has been vigorously pursued as a policy in Germany, yet a medical authority states that 25,000 fresh infections occur annually in Berlin. The conference, we are glad to see, insisted upon the diagnosis and treatment of these diseases forming an essential part of the medical curriculum. It betrayed no tendency to recede from the position that regulation of professional prostitution is medically useless as a check on the spread of the infection. The findings are valuable at a moment when insidious efforts are being made to undermine the reforms which we connect with the name of Josephine Butler, and when it is being hinted that the Red Cross might disclose facts favourable to toleration. The Red Cross has spoken. We hope now that some of the others will stop.

Traffic in Women and Children.

Our readers will remember that we drew their attention last week to Lady Astor's question about the British representative at the forthcoming conference in Geneva on the traffic in women and children. It was suggested that it would be advisable to appoint a woman as technical adviser. Mr. Shortt replied that the British Government would be represented by an official of the Home Office, but that it had not been considered necessary to appoint a woman as technical adviser, as two representatives of the National Vigilance Association, one of whom was a woman, had been invited to attend the conference in view of the special knowledge they have obtained of this question in its international aspect. The object of the conference is to co-ordinate the reports received from the Governments on the subject of the action they have taken or are proposing to take with regard to this question, and to endeavour to secure a common understanding between the Governments with a view to future united action. The British representative will be instructed to promote this policy, but he will not be able to commit the Government to any new course of action without its previous approval. The Reports which will be before the conference are the result of a questionnaire sent out by the League of Nations to the Governments of all countries within the League, in order to ascertain what legislation is at present in force with regard to the traffic in women and children, and the scope of the enquiry is quite deliberately not confined to the white slave traffic. One section of the questionnaire is devoted to colonies and dependencies, and it is stated that reports have been received that it is the practice in certain colonies for immigrant white men to have native women and girls procured for them for immoral purposes, and that these women and girls are provided for them by Chiefs or procurers. Another section concerns the practice of adopting, pawning or bartering children for immoral as well as for industrial purposes. We hope that the child slavery which exists in Hongkong, and to which we have drawn our readers' attention, will now come under the fiercer light of European disapproval. In any case, the scope of the conference

and the information before it is definitely wider than any conference on the subject which has hitherto been held, and it is hoped that much good may result from it.

Pensions for Policewomen.

The Police Pensions Bill passed through its Committee stage last week and was reported to the House. Mr. Shortt's amendment bringing policewomen within the scope of the Bill, whether sworn in as constables or not, was agreed to. It is proposed that, by paying arrears of deductions, they will be entitled to service pensions. The days when the existence of women was habitually forgotten came to an end when the Representation of the People Act became law.

The Indian Prison Scandal.

The Committee which the Government of India appointed in April, 1919, to examine the systems of prison administration in India have issued their report. The gaols in India itself have improved during the last thirty years, although there is still much overcrowding in Bombay and the Punjab, and there is much to be desired on the reformatory side. There has been a great reduction in corporal punishment, but the Committee think that the total abolition of this punishment is not yet possible, although they consider a further reduction should be made, and corporal punishment should only be inflicted for certain offences. The real failure has been in connection with the Andamans. The settlement at Port Blair was founded in 1858 with the idea that, after a period of penal labour, convicts should be released and settled with their families as free citizens. Port Blair proved to be excessively malarious, and nothing was done to make the colonisation successful, or to persuade the families of released convicts to join them. "Local marriages" were allowed between self-supporting male convicts and the women convicts who had served a certain term, and since the women were often bad characters, and there was an altogether inadequate number of female convicts, the immorality on the part of the women was widespread. The released convict, often utterly demoralised by ten years spent in the company of the corruptest convicts of India, is let loose into a community where there is, on an average, one woman to every six men, and where even the restrictions of caste have ceased to operate and public opinion is thoroughly corrupt; it is hardly likely, therefore, that successful colonisation will result. The Committee suggest that transportation as a sentence should be abolished; that deportation to the Andamans of female convicts and of the great majority of male convicts should cease as soon as possible, and the women now in the female gaol at Port Blair should be brought back to India. No doubt these recommendations are good, but here also there is much more to be done, and we wish there were a better chance of the speedy employment of women in judicial and legal work in India.

Factory Law Reform in India.

Sir Thomas Holland, member of the Government of India for Industries, has introduced a Bill to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1911, which will be discussed and voted upon in the September session. In the recent session, resolutions were passed generally approving the Washington Conventions, and the Bill embodies these Conventions so far as it is possible to give effect to them in India, and seeks to remedy defects in the 1911 Act. The upper age of "children" is raised from fourteen to fifteen, and the minimum age is raised from nine to twelve, while the maximum hours of work are fixed at the limit at present in force in textile factories—six hours. For adult labour a ten-hours' day is introduced by the provision of a maximum sixty-hours' week, and a stipulation that no person is to be employed for more than twelve hours in any one day. A weekly holiday is compulsory, as is an interval of one hour daily for adults and of half-an-hour for all children working more than five hours. It is the custom at present for working women to bring their small children into the factories while they work, and until some adequate provision has been made for the safe custody of these children, the custom cannot be altered, although the Bill provides that inspectors may prohibit the admission of children to obviously dangerous or unhealthy places. A certain number of exemptions are provided for in the Bill, whose application is left to local Governments, subject to the control of the central Government. Where any factory is exempted for special reasons from the sixty-hours provision, overtime must be paid for at a rate that shall be at least one and a-quarter times the normal rate. If this Bill is passed, we shall have greatly improved the conditions of factory life in India, and it is most encouraging to see that the Washington Conventions are being treated with respect and are actually being effective in some parts of the world.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

The question of the future of women in the Civil Service, which we have often before discussed in these columns, has come to a state which it is impossible to call a crisis, and yet which is extremely critical. It cannot be called a crisis because it is so long drawn out; but it is critical because with every week that passes the position grows steadily worse.

The Government, the Treasury, and the Whitley Council have all said that they intend to give to women a real opportunity in the Civil Service of the future. The thing remains at words, and the reconstruction which is going on is proceeding apparently upon the notion that a little tiny bit of window dressing is all that is required. Even this, however, is so tiny that we can hardly see it, and it is time that something was done.

We propose to give a few instances out of hundreds of what is going on, and we should welcome correspondence on the subject, for the more we know of the facts the more we shall be able to do.

The Civil Service at present consists of large numbers of men and women, of whom thousands are "established," that is to say, permanent and secure, with fixed salaries and pensions, and other thousands are "temporaries," that is, insecure, subject to a period of notice, and without pension rights. In both these classes the women are having a terrible fight for existence.

The permanents, who are most numerous in the Post Office, were, of course, Civil Servants before the war. In those days the women were recruited by examination, and it was well known what their prospects would be. So high they could rise and no higher. All the top posts would be reserved for men. Nevertheless, a great many extremely able women entered the Service (prospects elsewhere being no better), and they soon established a record for good work which is actually telling against them now. They were so capable and so conscientious, and are so still, that they established a standard of supervision far higher than that of parallel male classes. One supervisor to every ten workers is all the women need: on to every four for the men. And the net result is that there are fewer well-paid posts for women, even in proportion to their numbers, than there are for men. This state of affairs should, one would have thought, have led to the promotion or assimilation of a considerable number of these capable women into the higher grades of the Service when the present reorganisation began. The top women were "higher clerical" and the parallel men were so exactly parallel that during the war the work was often interchanged. Yet all the men went up a step on reorganisation, and not one single one of the women. The Treasury claims, under pressure, that they have not finished the business: that assimilation is not complete. But they also admit that they have already promoted to the higher grade more men than the total number of posts; so that the women stand a meagre chance. This is the position of the regular pre-war women Civil Servants. In addition there are the pre-war women's sections: the women's side of the Factory Department, the Trade Boards, and so on. In these, too, the pressure against the woman has become very strong. Wholesale reductions begin among the women, and by every door they are being pushed out.

Among the temporary women things are no better. The substitution of ex-Service men for women goes rapidly on, and although the clerical grades have had an opportunity of competing for permanent posts, no such chance seems to await the super-clerical ones. If there is not room for the permanent women, how is there going to be room for the temporaries? And yet the House of Commons has received the famous Regulations which are to govern their entrance examinations. It is meagre window dressing if this is all.

And while this tide is flowing, the Treasury quietly announces a new open examination for the administrative class of the Home Civil Service (men) for the summer; and produces another set of Regulations closing all diplomatic and foreign posts whatever to all women: and there we are. That window is not even dressed, and we can see through it into the "mind" of the Treasury.

And meanwhile, a significant little incident has taken place in the office of the Civil Service Commissioners. That office is the one which regulates all the admissions into the Civil Service: it conducts the examinations, and sets up the selection boards and so forth. Last year it dealt with over fifteen thousand women. The Civil Service Commissioners are all men, but they have had a responsible woman in their office up to now. She was a temporary officer, and, obviously, an important one. The Commissioners, we understand, applied for a permanent appointment of a woman to do this work; their reorganisation scheme included it, and they wanted it. The Treasury has turned it down. No responsible woman's post has been sanctioned there, and the temporary officer has resigned as a protest. No personalities are involved: she has not resigned because she has not been appointed, but because no woman is to be put in charge of the admission of women. We trust this at least will not be allowed to stand.

We could go on multiplying instances indefinitely, but perhaps we have already said enough to show how critical the position is. Now what is our hope, for we have one? It is this: that Parliament may be willing and able to force this matter back on to the right lines.

Our readers will remember how the position stands: how we have the promise of a full debate on the Regulations, and that the Government will abide by the result. It is, perhaps, not much of a hope, but it is all we have.

On Monday of this week, Major Hills reminded Mr. Chamberlain of the promise given by Mr. Bonar Law, and asked if he could fix the date when the debate should take place. The Leader of the House, in answering, did not fix an exact date, but we have some reason to believe that it may take place at the end of this month, and in any case before the end of this session. When it comes, we must strain every effort to make it lead to an effective and successful decision.

There are some who think that the insistence of the Joint Committee for Women in the Civil Service upon this Parliamentary policy has been a mistake. They contend that it has given the Departments, and particularly the Treasury, the opportunity to hold everything up and to slip men quietly in to all the posts before the women get a chance, on the plea that the women's conditions have not been settled by Parliament, and therefore they cannot take them in. For our part, we do not agree with this criticism. Where there's a will there's a way: and in this case the will is so clearly lacking that we do not greatly care what excuse the Departments or the Treasury bring forward. Sometimes it is economy, sometimes ex-soldiers, sometimes lavatory accommodation, and sometimes this pending Parliamentary discussion. It doesn't matter which head of the monster you cut off—the chances of these present women in our present Civil Service are, we think, equally thin whichever way you go about it. But there is one thing which does matter: one thing which is vital, and that is the future. There will not, we believe, be more or less women let in this year or next by the adoption of this policy or that, but there will be all the difference in the world in the future by the way they come in. Let us call it two women let in by open competition as against two women let in by secret selection. Either way you have only two: but how different a matter for the next batch! That is the real thing we believe, and although, of course, it is tremendously important immediately to get as many good women into the Service as we can, and although it will be a crying shame if the good temporaries are not given a chance, we feel that the terms upon which women are to be employed will turn out in the long run to be more important still. If it were a choice between getting lots of women in by the back door and only a few the other way, we should, for our part, choose the few. But in this instance there is no such choice. It is, we fear, a few by the back door or a few by the front. But we ought to be able to make it many by the front. That is the thing we must aim at, and that is why, before this long-deferred debate takes place, we must see that every Member hears from his own constituents about it. All our readers who want further details of the Parliamentary campaign should write to the Secretary, Joint Committee on Women in the Civil Service, 58, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

By OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.

Political interest has swung away from the House to the constituencies. The Government have lost two elections and look like losing a third. Of the two which they have lost, one, St. George's, Hanover Square, is a Conservative stronghold whose loss in normal times would have seemed incredible; yet it has gone, and gone by a large majority. And, what is more significant still, only a fraction of the electorate took the trouble to vote.

Two months ago, when the coal dispute started, the Coalition were undoubtedly popular. They were a Government, and they were governing. Their conduct throughout the trouble has been without reproach, the country has been peaceful, and comfortable to a degree quite unexpected during a coal stoppage. What has caused this sudden swing from popularity to dislike?

The causes are many. Probably the two which have had most weight are high prices and falling wages. It is an axiom of British politics that governments are blamed for misfortunes and praised for benefits with which they have nothing whatever to do, and when the electorate is in a certain psychological temper everything which goes wrong is put down to their door. Prices do not fall and wages do. From this you get a state of things in which anything may be expected.

Prophecy becomes unusually difficult, and there are many who think that an election is to be expected this autumn. This may be so, but, on the other hand, there is a strong reason against it, and that is the wish of the Government, who want to prove conclusively that they are alive to the third and greatest weakness imputed to them—Government extravagance. On this there is no doubt that the Press campaign has been effective. The wide field of Government Departments, with their varied requirements and commitments, offer, no doubt, an easy mark, for it is not hard to pick out many an item which in itself seems indefensible. But, indeed, the evil lies deeper, and for a great deal of the clamour the Government themselves are to blame. It has often been said in these notes that the Prime Minister dislikes economy. What he likes is expenditure, timely and spectacular, and all the thunder of the Treasury is turned aside by knowledge of this fact. Extravagance has not ceased and is not ceasing. Indeed, no more pathetic confession of incompetence could be imagined than the recent Treasury circular cutting down expenditure by 20 per cent. It shows, as does nothing else, that any attempt to compel Departments to spend on nothing except what is necessary has failed, and the only thing left is the crude method of cutting off one-fifth of their supplies.

But to come to the House itself. On Monday and Tuesday, June 6th and 7th, the Safeguarding of Industries Bill was debated at some length. Seeing that all conceivable arguments had already been used up on the preliminary discussions, an interesting struggle was not to be expected, and expectation was not disappointed. Speeches ran to quantity rather than quality, and in the end the Bill was carried by an immense majority. The Committee stage will be taken this week under somewhat severe closure.

Wednesday, June 8th, was a long day of small things, and a great many second-class measures were helped along their road. None of them calls for any notice except the Bill to amend unemployment insurance. This was introduced by Mr. Macnamara in a speech which was hardly worthy of the subject, but the Bill passed without difficulty.

On Thursday, June 9th, the long-expected Post Office vote was taken. Mr. Kellaway, new to the post, made an unexpectedly good defence, and showed powers of debate hitherto unrevealed. He claimed that the deficit was due to one cause, and one cause alone, the bonus paid to Post Office servants, and he went on to prove that they were entitled to it, and on both questions he made out a case which it was difficult to controvert. He was attacked by the economists, and, as is usual in economy debates, the Government's majority was comparatively small, for 118 voted against and only 196 supported; but in spite of all this the Department came out of the tussle much better than was expected. True, this had to be paid for by concessions; but the yielding on foreign postage for printed matter, and on Sunday posts, was timely and well received.

[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.]

NEWS FROM OTHER LANDS.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN DENMARK.

Women in Denmark possess both political and municipal suffrage on the same terms as men, the latter having been conceded in 1908 and the former in 1915. There are now nine women Members of Parliament, four in the Lower House (Folketing) and five in the Upper House (Landsting), and a good many women are members of Municipal Councils.

For many years past women have been employed in the Civil Service, in spite of a law passed in 1875 excluding them from the various offices, and in 1919, thanks to their own exertions, they received equal pay for equal work. They are now admitted to Government and Municipal offices on the same terms as men, and are permitted to retain their posts after marriage. Women may practice as doctors, lawyers, engineers, &c., and are qualified to act on juries and Royal Commissions, but not as judges, magistrates, or clergymen. A Bill proposing to throw open all State offices to women has been recently brought in, and has passed the Lower House, but it was only carried in the Upper House with an amendment excluding them from office in the Church. The Lower House could not agree to this, and therefore the Bill has been referred to a Committee, of which Fru Elna Münch is the Chairman. This is the first instance of a woman having been appointed Chairman of a Parliamentary Committee. A woman is also a member of the Committee of Ways and Means.

Elementary schools, higher schools, technical institutions and the university are open to women and girls on the same terms as to men and boys, and women are appointed to the higher posts in schools, and occasionally to the governing bodies. They are paid at the same rate and receive the same pensions as men, but hitherto no woman has been appointed to the post of Professor at the University.

There is no special legislation for women in industry, with the exception of the law prohibiting their employment in factories for four weeks after child-birth. They work on the same terms as men, and there are no trades from which they are excluded by men's trade unions. Men have, on the contrary, supported women in the demand for equal pay, and as a rule equal pay is given for equal work, although the pay per hour is not the same. In the trades where women are employed on the same work as men, they belong to the same trade unions, sometimes having special women's sections, and are consequently affiliated to the great Central Organisations of the Co-operative Trade Unions. A considerable number of women employed in industry, particularly in the clothing trade, are home workers; but there is practically no sweated work in Denmark, as the home workers are well organised and consequently well paid.

Under the new marriage laws a married woman is not subject to any disabilities save that she may not trade under her own name. Her earnings are at her own disposal, she can dispose of her property by will and has joint guardianship with her husband over the children of her marriage, without, however, being entitled to act as joint trustee in cases where the children have money. She must take the nationality of her husband and she has no legal claim to any part of his income. In the case of illegitimate children the mother is the sole guardian, the father being compelled to contribute three-fifths, and, in special cases, the whole cost of maintenance, the amount being estimated according to the standard of the mother. The grounds for divorce are the same for men as for women, namely, infidelity, desertion, bigamy, and imprisonment for life.

As regards morals the laws apply equally to both sexes and are impartially administered. State regulation of prostitution has long since been abandoned, and treatment for venereal disease is compulsory both for men and women.

C. V.

BURNING QUESTIONS.

We call the attention of our readers to the fact that in the topical and controversial matters which we treat under 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.

THE CORN PRODUCTION ACT.*

By THE EARL OF SELBORNE.

In 1916 Mr. Asquith appointed a Sub-Committee of the Reconstruction Committee, of which I was Chairman, with the following terms of reference: "Having regard to the need of increasing home-grown food supplies in the interest of national security, to consider and report upon the methods of effecting such increase." We were informed that the question asked us did not refer to war but to post-war conditions, and I do not think it is possible to put the case for the Corn Production Act better than by a marshalled series of extracts from the reports of that Sub-Committee.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the United Kingdom relied upon its own production of wheat to feed its population with bread. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it produced enough wheat to supply by far the greater part of its population, but had become dependent upon imports for supplying the remainder. At the beginning of the twentieth century it had become dependent upon imported wheat to the extent of four-fifths of its consumption. In 1854 it was still very largely self-supporting in the matter of wheat, but the period between 1854 and 1874 was, on the whole, one of national prosperity, in which the population increased rapidly, and the imports of food necessary to support it increased in proportion. The nation lost grip of the conviction which had been present to an earlier generation, that it was a matter of importance that the food which it ate should, as far as possible, be grown within its own borders, and not, to an undue proportion, be imported from overseas, and gradually the idea prevailed that the State had no more intimate concern in the methods by which a farmer farmed his land than it had in the designs which a jeweller adopted for his jewellery.

In the years following 1875, there commenced a period of agricultural depression which, in varying degrees of acuteness, lasted till 1907. In the 'seventies the average price of wheat had been over 50s. a quarter; by 1885 wheat had fallen to 32s. 10d., and oats to 20s. 7d. a quarter in England and Wales; in 1894 wheat fell to 22s. 10d. a quarter, and in 1895 oats fell to 14s. 6d. It is doubtful whether enough attention had been given to this period of depression or its effects. The loss it entailed in the capital invested in the cultivation of the land of landowners and farmers, and of the wages of labourers, was prodigious. The Royal Commission on Agriculture appointed in 1893 on the advice of the Right Hon. H. H. Asquith, M.P., when Home Secretary, reported that the Chairman of the Inland Revenue had calculated that between the years 1875 and 1894 there had been a decline in the capital value of the agricultural land of Great Britain of £834,000,000, or 50 per cent. A great number of farmers became bankrupt; the number of agricultural labourers steadily decreased, and the rate of wages fell.

The effect of the depression on arable cultivation was marked. Since the year 1870, something like 4,000,000 acres of land have been converted from arable to grass. It may be said that by 1907 the period of depression had begun to pass away, and there is no doubt that for several years before the war capable and energetic farmers of arable land, possessed of sufficient capital, were making their industry pay. But, nevertheless, the process of conversion of arable land to pasture was interrupted only in the single year 1912, and, in 1913, the year immediately before the war, the diminution of the acreage of arable land in England and Wales was no less than 277,000 acres. It is of great importance that this fact should be noted, and its significance understood. Notwithstanding the proved possibility of obtaining good returns from arable land by good farming, the decrease of the arable land of the country was still going on at a disastrous rate.

British agriculture was in this position when war broke out in August, 1914. In the previous year, 1913, the value of the foodstuffs (excluding sugar) which were imported into the

*Lord Selborne's article was written before the recent announcement of the Government's intention to repeal the Agriculture Act. In view of the controversy which the announcement has aroused, our readers will be interested in this article which puts the case for the control of agriculture so clearly.—Ed.]

United Kingdom from overseas, though capable of production within these islands, was about £200,000,000.

We commend to the study of all interested in these questions the parliamentary paper (Cd. 8305), 1916, "The Recent Development of German Agriculture," by Mr. T. H. Middleton, C.B., Assistant Secretary to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. It will be sufficient here to quote the following statements:—

"On each hundred acres of cultivated land:—

- "1. The British farmer feeds from 45 to 50 persons; the German farmer feeds from 70 to 75 persons.
- "2. The British farmer grows 15 tons of corn; the German farmer grows 33 tons.
- "3. The British farmer grows 11 tons of potatoes; the German farmer grows 55 tons.
- "4. The British farmer produces 4 tons of meat; the German farmer produces 4½ tons.
- "5. The British farmer produces 17½ tons of milk; the German farmer produces 28 tons.
- "6. The British farmer produces a negligible quantity of sugar; the German farmer produces 2½ tons."

And, "That the British farmer is much the more favoured by nature, and the view of leading German agriculturists is that their soils and climate are distinctly inferior to those of Britain," and that, "It is not possible to resist the conclusion that it was the economic policy adopted by his country that prevented the German from following the methods of the British farmer. The agricultural policy adopted by Germany was indeed extraordinarily successful in restoring confidence and emboldening farmers to resort to intensive cultivation."

If stability was to be assured to British agriculture, we recommended that the State should fix a minimum wage for the ordinary agricultural labourer in each county, guarantee to the farmer a minimum price for wheat and oats, and take steps to secure the increase of production which is the object of the guarantee. The cereal crops are the pivot of agriculture, and we did not consider that dairy and stock farming would in any way be prejudiced by our proposals. Moreover, these very important branches of the agricultural industry can be more, not less, advantageously conducted on arable land than on grass land.

It cannot be too often reaffirmed that the recommendations we made have never been asked for by landowners or farmers, and that they were made exclusively in the national interest and not in that of any individuals or class of individuals. We believed that elementary considerations of national insurance demand that this country should become self-supporting in the matter of foodstuffs in the event of any future emergency, and we showed how this could be done. We believed that it is an urgent problem of national welfare to increase the rural population, to give it a fuller sense of social unity, and to open out to the agricultural labourer the opportunity of intellectual and material advancement, and we have also shown how this could be done. But no one will be justified in picking out those of our recommendations with which he happens to agree, and in rejecting those which do not happen to fit in with his personal opinions, and then in expecting the mutilated policy to bear fruit.

We hope and pray that the greater sanity of nations, and their increased obedience to the Divine law, may save our country from any repetition of the hideous catastrophe which has to-day overwhelmed Europe, but we can feel no positive assurance that this will be the case, and we do not think that we should be faithful to our trust for our descendants if we omitted to take any practicable measures to increase the national safety in a future time of need. The argument, therefore, that "if we cannot overtake and subdue the submarine menace we need not trouble ourselves to outline an agricultural or industrial or any other policy, we shall have to take our orders from Berlin,"

† "Cultivated" includes grass and arable: the point of this comparison is that British production is mainly based on grass and the German on arable.

deserves an answer. The future menace to our overseas communications in war time arises from the potential developments of submarine and aerial warfare, and those developments will be available to all other nations as well as to Germany. It does not follow that all our overseas communications will be closed. That is highly improbable so long as we maintain the Navy at the necessary strength and adequately develop our air fleet. But it does mean that it will probably be impossible to maintain such an overseas volume of trade in war time as would enable us ever again to finance our Allies as we have done in this war, and it does mean that it would be perfect madness to enter upon such a war in reliance upon overseas supplies of food or munitions of war. If we were self-supporting in the essentials of national existence, in such circumstances the United Kingdom would be able to face such a struggle with equanimity, and the Navy would be freed for the work of keeping open the communications of the Empire, for the movement of troops, for the support of our armies, and, above all, for attacking the enemy.

In this matter we naturally desired to be fortified with the opinion of the Admiralty. We accordingly wrote to them and drew their attention to the terms of the reference we received from Mr. Asquith, and said "that any observations which the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty were able to make in the

light of their subsequent experience would be of great assistance to the Sub-Committee." The following is a paraphrase of the reply which we received, and which the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have passed as accurate and given us authority to reproduce in the report:—

"The submarine attack on the overseas food supply of the United Kingdom has thrown a great additional strain upon the Navy in the present war. The Navy has so far been able to keep this submarine attack in check, but no means have yet been discovered to render sea-borne traffic immune from attack.

"Consequently, any effective steps to make this country less dependent upon the importation of the necessities of life in the present war would result in a great reduction of anxiety.

"The certain development of the submarine may render such vessels still more formidable as weapons of attack against sea-borne commerce in a future war, and no justification exists for assuming that anything approaching entire immunity can be obtained. Therefore, the experience of the present war leads to the conclusion that any measures which resulted in rendering the United Kingdom less dependent on the importation of foodstuffs during the period of a future war, and so in reducing the volume of sea-borne traffic, would greatly relieve the strain upon the Navy, and add immensely to the national security."

THE LEAGUE AND AFRICA (contd.)

By LEONARD WOOLF.

This brings me to the third and most important point with regard to the African mandates. I submit that it is absolutely essential if the League is sincere, and if the whole system is not to be a mockery, that the general obligations of the mandatory should be explicitly defined in the mandates. This is not the case in the draft mandates which have been published. The League has pledged itself to secure the well-being and development of the natives through the administration of its agent, the mandatory Power. How can it possibly carry out that pledge unless the obligations of the mandatory under the mandate, both to the inhabitants and to the League, are properly defined? The sketch which I gave of existing conditions in Africa, showed that there are three things upon which the well-being of the natives must depend absolutely; first, the economic system, including land tenure; secondly, education; and, thirdly, militarisation. I propose briefly to indicate the minimum obligations which, in my opinion, should be imposed upon the mandatory under each of these heads.

There can be no well-being or development of the native if the League tolerates the existing system, by which the native is exploited and reduced to economic subjection. The process consists of taking his land and then compelling him to labour for wages fixed by his expropriators. The remedy consists first in giving to the native communities secure and inalienable rights in the land. The mandate must declare that the land is to be treated as the property of the native communities, and shall not be alienated to Europeans, and that, if land is leased to Europeans, it shall be only for short periods, with the consent of the native communities. I have several times mentioned the fact that the only part of Africa where the process of exploiting the native has not taken place is in some of the British West Coast possessions. The point to notice is that it is precisely in these British possessions that the administration has adopted these provisions with regard to land which I suggest for the mandated territory. If the League secures the native in his occupation of the land, and refuses to expropriate him in favour of settlers and joint-stock companies, it will only be doing what the British Government has done in Nigeria. The mandate should also contain a provision that the Mandatory shall assure to every native family sufficient land for its support. And if the mandate then adds that no discrimination shall be made between the native who works for wages and the native who does not work for wages, that no influence of any kind shall be brought to bear either by the Government or by headmen to induce natives to work for wages, and that all compulsory or forced labour shall be prohibited, then the economic foundations for the well-being of the natives will have been laid. You have only to compare these suggestions with the draft of the mandate for German East Africa to see how unsatisfactory the latter is.

Under this suggested system the native would be left in occupation of the land, and the administration should undertake the obligation of encouraging him to make the best use of it, and of

its economic riches. I know that many people will say that this is utopian, that the essence of the situation is that Africans are undeveloped people, unable to produce those agricultural products and raw materials which the rest of the world requires, and which Africa can provide. Only European science, European brains, and European capital can really exploit the wealth of Africa, these people argue, and that is the justification of what is taking place in British East Africa and elsewhere. The argument is in complete contradiction with the facts. In British West Africa, where alone the system has been tried of keeping the land in the possession of the natives, and of encouraging and helping them to produce such commodities as palm kernels, cocoa, ground nuts, cotton, and rubber, the system has been a complete success, economically far more successful than the system of expropriation and forced labour adopted elsewhere in Africa. A single fact will show the truth of this statement. The exports from British West African possessions vary from 10s. to £5 per head of the population, from British East Coast possessions they vary from 2s. to 7s. Some allowance must be made for the superior fertility of the West Coast, but it is a significant fact that the native, when reduced to economic slavery, produces exports valued at from 2s. to 7s., but that when he is left to work his own land he produces exports valued at between 10s. and £5.

Neither well-being nor development is compatible with economic slavery. But having provided fair economic conditions for the native, the League will only have created the necessary conditions for well-being and progress. It will now have to attempt what hitherto no European Government has attempted, namely, to give to the African opportunities to educate himself, to acquire the knowledge without which it is impossible for him to develop or to deal with the problems which Western civilisation has brought to Africa. Once more, if the words and pledges of Article 22 are sincere, then the League must aim at developing the African until he is able to take an active part in the government of his own country and live the life of a free man both economically and politically. I do not know whether it is old-fashioned to believe that this can only be attained by education. At any rate, that is my belief, and, if so, then it is necessary that an obligation shall be imposed upon the Mandatory by the League to provide education for the natives. The history of European administration in Africa shows that this will not be done, unless the obligation is stated in the mandate, but there is not a word with regard to such obligation in the draft mandates which have been published. What Africa needs is schools, sufficient elementary schools, so that every child can obtain education. That is the first necessity if the next generation of Africans is to have the knowledge to deal with its environment. Secondly, the mandatory should undertake the obligation to educate the native inhabitants so that they may make the most economic use of their land; this implies agricultural instructors, agricultural education, model farms, and experimental stations.

There remains the question of militarisation. Here we have a most interesting field of study of the League's sincerity and international morality. The Covenant itself says that the Mandatory who accepts a B mandate must guarantee "the prevention of the establishment of fortifications or military and naval bases, and of military training of the natives for other than police purposes and the defence of territory." The last words are important: the Mandatory is forbidden to train natives militarily, except for police purposes or the defence of territory. Most people would imagine that this meant that native armies might only be raised for the defence of the mandated territory. But the ordinary person is no match for the casuists of international politics, and the ordinary person is ordinarily wrong. The French are determined to raise native armies for use outside Africa and they therefore refuse to admit this interpretation. They are claiming the right to raise native armies in French mandated territory and to use them outside that territory. They rely upon two methods of circumventing the words of the Covenant. In the first place they point out that the Covenant says that natives are to be trained only for the defence of territory—"of territory," not "of the territory." That means that the natives can be trained, and therefore used, to defend any territory, not merely mandated territory. But if this interpretation fails, they have a second line of entrenchments to fall back upon. There are B mandates and there are C mandates. The C mandates are to apply to particular territories, of which South-West Africa is specifically mentioned, and which are to be administered as integral parts of the territory of the Mandatory. The ordinary person who reads the Covenant would certainly imagine that Togo and Cameroon, which are assigned to France, are to be administered under B mandates and not C mandates. But in the French Chamber last year it was claimed, and the claim received the support of the Government, that all French mandates should be C mandates. The reason was clear: C mandates made the territory an integral part of French territory, to be administered under French laws, and, therefore, the conscription of natives would follow. It looks as if the League Council refused to agree to this extraordinary claim, because it is now said that the French have shifted their ground. They are claiming that there shall be two kinds of B mandates, one called B mandates and the other B1 mandates. And we may, perhaps, infer that B1 mandates are to be C mandates under another name, they are to be French mandates and will allow the conscription of natives for the defence of territory, of any territory.

There are several other important points connected with Africa and the League, but the few questions which I have touched upon indicate the broad outlines of the problem. It is only part of the great problem of the relations between the economic and political civilisation of Europe and the peoples of Africa and Asia. It is to be a test of the League's sincerity. Well, the facts given here show, I think, that the present League and Council have signally failed in that test. The mandate system, as interpreted during the last twelve months, is another name for conquest, imperialism, and the exploitation which follows imperial conquests. The question then arises, what should be one's attitude in face of this cynical interpretation of the fine words of the Covenant? The inclination of many people is to shake the dust of the League and its Covenant off their shoes, to put the whole blame upon immoral Governments, statesmen, and Council, and to say: "What else can you expect from this League?" That is the easy and obvious way of finding a scapegoat for one's own and other people's sins. I believe it to be wrong just because it is so easy and so obvious. There is nothing so easy as to blame Governments and statesmen, because they are always blameworthy. But ultimately the sin is upon the people, upon you and me and the other forty millions. We have the Government and the statesmen we deserve, and we now have the League of Nations which we deserve. Article 22 of the Covenant is a real antidote to imperialism; if translated with sincerity into action it would introduce a new era into Africa and Asia. That is not being done, and will not be done by the existing League. But the ultimate blame, as it seems to me, rests not upon the League, the Council, or the Governments, but on the peoples who tolerate such Leagues, Council, and Governments.

THE END.

WOMEN JURORS FROM THE MORAL STANDPOINT.

It was a matter of the greatest satisfaction to every thinking woman when both sexes were at last included in the jury lists, and we were all agreed that it was essential that women should assist in the courts, and that it was especially unfair in cases brought against men, where women or young girls were the victims, that the jury should be composed only of men. But alas! the actual result of the new Act has been most disappointing, and for two main reasons. First, the possibility that any counsel or magistrate may request women to withdraw; and, second, the unexpected discovery that in many instances jurywomen themselves ask to be allowed to leave the court. From a careful study of cases connected with the first reason, it is apparent that the majority are those dealing with instances of incest, rape, or assault, where often quite young girls, almost children, are the innocent victims. The evidence in such cases is supposed to be too horrible for the delicate susceptibilities of the female mind, and these children are therefore left entirely alone in a court full of men without one member of their own sex to support them. It really sounds so Early Victorian that one's mind goes back to megrims and vapours, and to the far-off days when women were hedged round by a palisade of false sentiment. Surely that is out of date now. Women who have taken an active part in a great war, and been face to face with unmentionable horrors, should be able to listen to the hard facts of everyday life. But the second reason almost looks as if some of us were still under the shadow of the Victorian era, and really were afraid of the truth in its stark nakedness. Does this trouble perhaps arise partly from the fact that the right women are not under the present Act called to serve? We read of music-hall stars, society butterflies, and county ladies who rarely see life beyond their own park enclosures, undertaking such work, and, naturally, find hysterics and horror at details which to many of us are unfortunately only too familiar.

As one illustration among many which shows clearly the urgent need for women on juries, the following case, in which I am personally interested, may be cited. A charge of incest was recently heard at the Central Criminal Court, the two victims being girls of twenty-three and fourteen respectively, who were under my care while awaiting the trial. Two women were called on the jury, but at the request of the *defendant's* counsel were asked to retire, and did so. No woman was allowed in court, and the father, defendant in the case, was discharged by a jury composed entirely of men, although apparently the evidence pointed strongly to his responsibility in the matter. The elder girl is now awaiting her child in one of our homes, but the younger is the paramount difficulty, as we are not yet certain whether we can retain custody. I need hardly say that I am working night and day to this end, as the prospect of her return to such a home is unthinkable. Such cases can be easily multiplied by other workers, and I am now investigating a case of assault on a girl of fifteen, which was dismissed for want of corroborative evidence, although the child had clearly identified the man.

Until women definitely take up this question, and insist on proper representation, we shall never be sure that these poor girls will receive just and reasonable treatment. It must be made clear that women as a whole really wish to accept such service, and are not afraid of unpleasant evidence or unsavoury details, for if this is once realised, and the consensus of opinion is sufficiently strong, we shall carry our point as we have so often done before.

If the Amending Act now under discussion becomes law, the present anomalies in the position of women jurors will be largely dispelled, as was outlined by Mr. Holford Knight in his excellent article last week. If once we can be assured that the presence of women will be *required* in all cases where women and children are concerned, and that neither the prosecution nor the defence will be entitled to exclude them on grounds of sex, then we shall really advance the whole question, and this Act should be strongly supported. One other point arises in this connection which I should like to bring forward. Many of us are now disqualified owing to the fact that we are not householders, and yet are ready and willing to serve, and to offer our technical knowledge for the advantage of our sister women. It is more than time that all those who care for the girls who have gone under in the struggle with poverty and sin, should make an earnest appeal for the right to assist at the courts when such cases are heard, and to protect these children in every possible way at a moment when their whole future lives can be made or marred.

E.D. SMITHETT (Y.W.C.A.).

MORE EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A WOMAN IN THE HOME.

June 10th.

This is the day when the children usually stay at school for dinner and play games in the afternoon. I was surprised, therefore, to see two melancholy little figures on the doorstep at about one o'clock. It seems that the cases of mumps in Ellie's form have increased so as to constitute an epidemic. All children who have not had the disease are requested to stay away from school for three weeks. This unexpected holiday would not, any way, be popular. It is turned into a disaster by the fact that the school sports were to have taken place on Thursday; may any way take place among those fortunate individuals who have not got but have, in the past, had mumps. For those who have so far been mumps-less, and are, therefore, potential sufferers as vehicles of infection, it is a melancholy business. The first afternoon has passed fairly well. Half the dolls have had mumps, and the other half have had sports and prizes. But how will twenty mornings at home go?—I tremble to think of it!

I must try to take the opportunity of reading some Shakespeare with Ellie. But I shall have to give up the hope I had been cherishing of settling down to some quiet reading myself.

I wonder for what class of active workers regular reading is most necessary and most difficult. I am inclined to think for women in the home. Reading, like religion and friendship, is one of those necessities of life which are not recognised as necessities because the part of us that dies or does not come to life without them, is not the most visible one. Thousands of men and women (even more women than men, I think) never read. They have never been taught to read, and that part of them has, I suppose, never come alive. I do not mean, of course, that they have not been taught to recognise the letters of the alphabet, or to know what parts of language the printed symbols stand for. That is the least part of reading. They have never realised that books matter, that they are the chief entrance to a world beyond the world of our senses. I do not quite know how this is taught, or whether it can be taught at all. It is perhaps *communicated* rather than taught by those who realise it themselves. Or perhaps the sense has to be there already, and then and then only can it be awakened. In some children it seems to awaken of itself. My mother was the only daughter and eldest child of a man whose great intellectual powers were, during the years of her childhood, absorbed in the study of science, and of his profession. Her mother was a woman whose energies were absorbed in human relations and in practical service for people. This was especially the case during my grandparents' early years of married life, when he was struggling hard to support a family and make his career, and she to bring up their children on small means. My mother, therefore, met with no encouragement in her early desire to read. It was, I imagine, considered rather naughty for a little girl to read when she ought to be sewing or looking after the younger children. Long afterwards she used to remember the secret ecstasy of reading on two special occasions. One was when the family were living in Belgium and used to visit a very aged Scottish friend, Miss Brown, who had a great number of books put away in an otherwise disused closet at the top of the house. When once the grown up people were absorbed in conversation, the little girl would creep away and hide herself in the cupboard with the books. She often remained there for hours, reading anything she could lay hands on. The other occasion was during the years which she spent with some aunts in the country, and a number of little Anglo-Indian cousins whom they were educating. She found or was lent the Waverley novels, and used to get into trouble because she would withdraw into corners to read them and neglect her little brothers and little cousins. Sir Walter Scott opened a magic land to her. It was during this time with the aunts that she got the only encouragement for her literary tastes that seems to have come to her while she was a child. A connection of theirs, a man who made his name as an explorer in Central Asia, came sometimes to stay, and when he did so, he used to take her out into the woods and read poetry to her. She never forgot his reading of Shelley's lyrics, nor did she ever lose her enthusiasm for them. But her passion for history and

literature must have been engrained, otherwise such rare encouragement in an unfavourable world could hardly have drawn it out. She communicated it to me so deliberately and persistently, that I do not know whether I had any of it in me beforehand or not. Ellie, I am almost sure, has it engrained, but of course I have always done my best to communicate it to her too. I think everybody who has it should try to communicate it, for next to religion and friendship it is the chief joy of life.

This thought makes it horrible to reflect that even those who have acquired this gift often lose it before they can pass it on to people of another generation. For it flourishes chiefly among the young. I remember, when I was at college, one of my friends saying to me, with melancholy conviction, that no one over thirty ever read. I disputed this, and instanced one or two "old" people who did seem to care about books, but she maintained that they were exceptions, and since then I have often wondered whether there was not a good deal in what she said. For after we are thirty, and sometimes even before, the existence of needs and claims in which we struggle for life, does very often begin to press upon and overwhelm us, so that we are fain to let go of everything which we do not recognise as a necessity.

I am not sure whether the woman in the home is in a worse position than others in this respect, but I am inclined to think she often is. Some struggles outside the home do use up as much nerve energy, and put as much strain upon that easily overstrained faculty, the imagination, as the effort to rear a family. It was very difficult, for instance, to read during the hardest years of the Suffrage struggle, though I know some who managed it. (I am not, of course, counting as reading the books which one imbibes merely as a sedative when one is too tired to do anything else, or the horrible newspapers and pamphlets which one wades through as part of one's work.) But the woman in the home, even when she is not overworked, is apt to suffer from the nature of her task. It is one that breaks up time a good deal and shuts her up with herself or with people of immature mind, and, above all, it is one that in a mild kind of way spreads out over all the time there is. A profession, even a political struggle, can, as a rule, only be carried on in certain hours of the day or night, but there is never an hour in which the woman in the home cannot find some little task of mending, or tidying, or child-minding to do. If there is nothing else, she can always do something to assist the family by writing letters to relations, or making the children clothes. And all these things are apt to seem more important than reading. Sometimes they may be so, but not as often as we are inclined to think. One does not grow by just grinding at tasks till one sinks into torpor, and to go on growing is terribly necessary for those who try to bring up children. Without growth one soon becomes a dead thing, and especially deadly to the young. Reading is one of the means of growth. It is far from being the only one, but sometimes it is one of the very few within reach. Besides this, if we do not read we shall not only be more deficient than need be in the knowledge that children are always expecting from us, and God knows our inevitable deficiencies in this respect are already glaring enough, but we shall lose all faculty whatever of guiding them into that enchanted country, which, once found, may be a refuge and a promise to them all their lives. It is surely less important to knit them jumpers than to tell them about Perseus and Andromeda, Jason and the Golden Fleece, Cœur de Lion, and Robin Hood, Robert the Bruce, and Joan of Arc, Queen Elizabeth and her seamen, Cavaliers and Roundheads, and all the adventurers and adventures of all the ages. It is very important, indeed, to feed them with a due proportion of vitamins, but it is not less important to feed them with poetry and to see whether they are not thrilled, as Ellie was, before she was six years old, with

"Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath."

MARGARET CLARE.

REVIEWS.

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS.

Montessori Experiments. By Mary Blackburn. (Constable. 6s. 6d.)

Educational Experiments in England. By Alice Woods. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

Five Years Old or Thereabouts. By Margaret Drummond. (Edward Arnold. 5s.)

The books before us show some of the advantages of our educational administrative system. Its fluidity permits and encourages a freedom of experiment invaluable for keeping education a living force. Even the State schools, which in other countries are apt to become stereotyped, vary from county to county and from borough to borough, and even, under a wise and liberal local education authority, from school to school.

An example of the amount of freedom and initiative which can be shown in a council school is given in Miss Blackburn's excellent book, "Montessori Experiments." Miss Blackburn is the headmistress of a large infants' school at Leeds, and for years has been experimenting with the Montessori method, in a way that would horrify a devout Montessorian, and delights Mr. Edmond Holmes, who has written an introduction to the book. Anyone who has visited the Kirkstall Road Infant School, and remembers the charming atmosphere of happy activity which pervades it, will be grateful to Miss Blackburn for telling us—as far as can be told—how it was achieved. One of Miss Blackburn's most inspired ideas was to abandon the old method of classifying the children according to age, and to have two divisions only—the Montessori classes consisting of children from three to five and a-half, and the transition classes consisting of the children who were preparing to enter Standard I. at the end of the school year. The grouping was first adopted to economise the use of the apparatus, but it proved so successful from a social point of view that Miss Blackburn extended it right through the school. The idea seems a most interesting one, and some adaptation of it might perhaps be tried in schools with a wider range of age. We are not told on what principle the children are distributed in the four parallel Montessori classes. Now that so much work has been done on intelligence tests, it might be possible to base the grading on mental powers. "Montessori Experiments" should certainly be read by every infants' teacher, for it contains an exact and practical account of a really valuable experiment.

If Miss Blackburn's book is an intensive study of an educational effort, Miss Woods' is an extensive one. She deals mostly with private schools, for it is naturally among them that *experiments* most flourish, and here we catch a glimpse of the defect of the quality that allows such freedom.

"In a school where girls are trained for domestic service, the food is insufficient, and scarcely any green vegetables or fruit given to the children. The girls are not allowed to speak at meals, nor whilst engaged in household work. To this school the girls go from five years of age to fifteen and sixteen, and during that time, unless they go home, never speak to a boy or mix with other girls. In one case the girl remained in the home for ten years without once leaving it. . . . Girls make their outfit for service, but have to pay back a considerable sum for it when earning wages. One night, after a girl is in bed, a mistress packs her box, and the girl is told in the morning that she is going to service. At the station, where she is seen off, she is told her destination. She learns about her work on arrival."

This, of course, can hardly be called "experimental education"; that it is possible for such an institution to exist at all is the weakness of a system which encourages freedom for each individual who manages a school. This side of the problem is, however, barely touched on in Miss Woods' book, which has been "designed as a means of bringing together into one broader current the endless number of little streams of enterprise throughout our country." It is certainly surprising and encouraging to find what a number and variety of these experiments are being made.

Miss Drummond's "Five Years Old or Thereabouts" takes us back to the intensive method, for it is a study of one child, her little niece Margaret, at the age of five. Miss Drummond is an

ardent follower of Madame Montessori, though, like most English teachers, she is a heretic on the subject of fairy tales. She also gives a useful summary of Professor Terman's book on "Mental Tests," and includes chapters on "Unconscious Mind" and "Sick Children"; but for most readers the main interest of the book will lie in the picture it gives of the mental life and activities of one particular child of five.

M. S.

Mental Tests. By Philip Boswood Ballard, M.A., D.Litt. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)

One aim of those careful and ingenious observers who have devised and improved schemes for measuring the powers and acquisitions of the mind, was no doubt to replace the ordinary ladder of educational examinations by tests more trustworthy. Now, it is, of course, true, that examinations as they exist, are, and must be, often fallible; yet it is not so much examinations themselves as the necessary course of preparation for them under which education is injured, and, therefore, any tests that are not actually more fallible than our existing examinations, and that do not require elaborate courses of special study, are to be welcomed.

The outstanding merit of the system of tests devised by Binet, and developed by later practitioners, is that it provides a norm of measurement.

It seems clear that the system readily detects genuine mental deficiency among children, and also that similar methods serve to sort out, for practical purposes, the grades of competency among adults. But, in respect to non-defective children, the system may, perhaps, be not quite so trustworthy as its advocates believe. Obviously, it can, and does, establish the relative position of any given child at any given moment.

Nowadays, however, we know, from observation, that stages of mental development, especially in regard to different subjects, vary very much in different children, and that a child's advance in any study depends greatly upon his taking it up precisely when he is ready for it.

There are children, for instance, who will learn to read with perfect ease, even without teaching, at three years of age, but who, if their elders successfully circumvent this early eagerness, will learn only with difficulty and unwillingness at seven or eight.

Now the test does not help us to discover whether the child is in the most common stage, which at three years old or so is an inclination constantly to exercise the sense of touch, or whether it is on the brink of one of the less common early attractions towards reading or numbers or music.

Such tendencies are still discoverable only by leaving the child a considerable freedom of choice, and observing carefully what path it takes; nay, there is a real danger that the tests, if accepted too implicitly, may lead teachers to think of that changeable ebbing and flowing depth as something that can be mapped and calculated according to the measurements of one particular Monday morning.

This danger may become serious if the selection of children for higher education is to be made according to the grading of official mental tests.

It is not likely that the sieve will let through any real dullards; but it may possibly bar out the geniuses, who notoriously do not conform comfortably to patterns.

Existing examinations, of course, fail in the same way, and assuredly the Binet tests provide some valuable data that examinations do not provide.

In any case, the pursuit of varied methods of test and inspection should be encouraged and welcomed.

CLEMENTINA BLACK.

The Unrelated Family. By A. Vera G. Wright. (Jarrold. 5s.)

"The Unrelated Family" is an account of an interesting experiment in social service. A lady, called in the book Miss X., who was impressed by the disappointing results of the present methods of elementary education, determined to make a home for a few children who would otherwise have no chance. In the first place, the home was intended only for children who had been

rescued from ill-treatment and neglect by police intervention; afterwards, however, other cases offered, and every application was considered solely on the ground of the child's need. No child over six, and no mentally deficient child, was admitted. The children were—or may we say are?—taught to consider themselves a family, and brought up in the most modern methods of freedom.

The author of the book, Miss Vera Wright, was led by her interest in educational experiments to offer her services as a voluntary worker in the home. She was deeply impressed by what she saw, and has given a lively account of the methods employed by Miss X., and of the individual children in her charge. The result is interesting to anyone who cares about children, either as little social problems or as human beings. It makes one wish to visit the home.

A Young Girl's Diary. Prefaced with a letter by Sigmund Freud. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. (Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

"A Young Girl's Diary" is announced as being "intended for the use of members of the Educational, Medical, and Legal Professions only," this, presumably, because it is considered "unsuitable" for ordinary readers. It is true that the young girl who kept this diary, between the ages of eleven and fourteen, was full of curiosity about sex and the relations between men and women, and reports with amusing frankness the researches made by herself and her school friend into these mysterious subjects, but it is difficult to see what there could be in this to corrupt the ordinary grown-up man or woman. The information unearthed by Grete and her friend Hella from surreptitious ransacking of the encyclopædia (brilliantly explained to the parents, when remarked on, as due to a sudden interest in the longevity of elephants) and, more fruitful, but less innocent, from furtive talks with the servants, is an amazing jumble of facts and wild fabrications. The children's attitude is uncertain, at once horrified and fascinated, with a comic pride in the whole subject as being grand and grown-up. Romances with young men come into these little girls' lives younger than is common here in England: girls in the higher forms have secret meetings with young officers on their way from school, and the younger ones act as enthusiastic go-betweens in the love affairs of their elder sisters; but through the years in which this diary is written the writer herself, in spite of a passing interest in a student here or an

DRAMA.

"The First and the Last," by John Galsworthy, at the Aldwych Theatre.

Mr. Harold Chapin's "The New Morality," which we reviewed a short time ago, when it was produced by the Play Actors, is now being given as a *matinée* at the Aldwych. It is followed by a short play in three scenes, by Mr. John Galsworthy, entitled "The First and the Last." The opening sentence of this little drama, addressed by a distinguished K.C. to his wastrel brother, who creeps into the lawyer's study at midnight, is arresting but misleading. "Come, man, have you killed anyone that you stand there like a fish?" He has, of course. But the rest of the dialogue is not as amusing as this. It is, in fact, in Mr. Galsworthy's most earnest style, and a trifle dreary, from sheer obviousness. Of course, from the first minute we know that the K.C., smug, self-righteous, and full of paltry ambitions, is going to embody the narrowness and cruelty and injustice of the world arranged by the upper classes for themselves. We are going to be shown that the wastrel brother and the little Polish prostitute (prostitutes, to be sympathetic, must always remind us in some subtle way of Tolstoi and Dostoiévsky, so we make them Slav, at any rate, if not Russian) are the really virtuous characters of the piece; that if they commit murder it is entirely by accident and from the purest motives, and that they alone are capable of love, pity, and self-sacrifice. So, after the most touching scenes, in which their

officer there, seems to have cared far more for one of her school-mistresses than for any young man.

So much emphasis is laid upon the sexual speculations and preoccupations which occur in this diary, that one tends to think of it as a work whose impropriety is its only recommendation, but actually this is by no means the case. The same convincing atmosphere of youngness which makes the charm of the Young Visitors is to be found here, especially in the diaries of the first two years. The whole family life is intensely vivid, particularly Dora, who is seen through the merciless eyes of a younger sister, Dora putting on grown-up airs, affecting superior knowledge, finally turning good, and refusing to join any more in her sister's speculations and renouncing her secret love affair—and all because she has suddenly "found a real friend in her Mother"! "I must say, though I am awfully awfully fond of Mother," Grete comments, "I really can't imagine having her as a friend. How can one have a true friendship with one's own mother? Dora really can't have the least idea what a true friendship means. There are some things it's impossible for a girl to speak about to her mother. . . ."

All things considered, it might have been more reasonable to have included mothers along with members of the Legal, Medical, and Educational professions for whom this book was intended.

K. S.

The New Horizon in Love and Life. By Mrs. Havelock Ellis. (A. & C. Black. 10s. 6d.)

This book consists of a series of essays on the subject of love, marriage, maternity, and life in general, published after the author's death. It is preceded by introductions in which Edward Carpenter and Marguerite Tracy tell us something of the writer's life and interests. It is always a difficult and delicate task to review the work of a dead author, more especially so when it is preceded by the eulogies of personal friends. But this particular book is so difficult to review that we abandon the task in despair. The fact is that Mrs. Ellis writes in a semi-prophetic strain which either inspires or repels the reader; and we who were not born to understand such speech, are tempted to flee from it and hide under the nearest blue-book. We can only say to our readers: "If you admire the works of Mrs. Gascoigne Hartley, and if you want to be faintly reminded of the writings of Olive Schreiner, you will probably like this book."

M. D. S.

D. B.

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