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ANCIENT SUFFRAGETTES

BY

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON.

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of the Editor.*

I.—BIBLICAL.

It is a common objection at suffrage meetings that the enfranchisement of women is unscriptural, our opponents generally basing their arguments upon a few isolated texts, not perceiving that the economic position of women has changed and become most unscriptural. St. Paul counsels women: "If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home." He had not in his mind the gigantic problem of the million and a half of surplus women who can have no husbands to consult, or the still more numerous class of wives who, having asked their husbands at home, find them crassly ignorant on things spiritual.

Most of the texts hurled at us are from the works of Paul of Tarsus—rather a misogynist!—reported by hearsay to have been embittered early in life by the unfair treatment of the daughter of Caiaphas. St. Peter also is guilty of a certain bullying tone towards women, but "being himself a married man" he has learnt some wisdom, he knows that in that long trial of human patience there are duties on both sides, much need of forbearance and long-suffering by both parties, and his exhortation to wives is generally followed by "likewise ye husbands."

Could these two Apostles come back to life and see women toiling everywhere—at desk and office, at workshop and factory and loom, at pit's brow and furnace; each one earning her own living and hanging by her own head; 82 women out of every hundred in our town populations, many of them supporting husband and children by their toil—I am sure these two Apostles, being fair-minded, truth-loving men, would at once issue a new and up-to-date edition of their letters, and large bodies of intelligent women would be no longer insulted by exhortations to ask their husbands about spiritual matters when the aforesaid husbands are golfing, or motoring, or a-bed, or non-existent.

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The race of Suffragettes is of very ancient lineage. In searching the Scriptures we find echoes of discontent and rebellion even in the oldest books. How pathetic is the position of Leah, one of the earliest martyrs to the "mariage de convenance"! Those few verses in Genesis give us an insight into the soul's tragedy of the unloved girl, forced upon Jacob by deceit and guile, without one thought of her own feelings or dignity. Even the Jewish Jehovah had compassion upon her and gave her a son, "and she called his name Reuben, for, she said, 'surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction; now, therefore, my husband will love me.'"

Deborah the prophetess and Jael were militant women, and we gather the prowess of the former from Barak's refusal to meet Sisera without her: "If thou wilt go with me then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me then I will not go"; and she said, "I will surely go with thee." Besides her military ability she was an excellent administrator and a woman of great literary power; her song, though somewhat obscure to the lay reader, remains one of the finest models of style, in the English language.

She alludes to the deplorable condition of affairs under male mismanagement:

"In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-ways."

"The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel."

The song winds up with the proud record: "And the land had rest forty years."

In the Book of Ruth we have the story of the deep and unusual affection between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and the high praise given to Ruth by the women: "Thy daughter-in-law which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons," speaks well for Ruth's strength of character and independent spirit. Boaz also gives her high commendation: "Thou followest not young men, whether poor or rich"; and again: "All the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman."

The Queen of Sheba was a lady of much wealth and power, and the Shebans, like Englishmen seem to have had no objection to the rule of a woman, though with strange want of logic the enfranchisement of the sex seems so repugnant to them.

In those days of the Oriental subjection of women it is cheering to read of the spirited action of the Queen Vashti, who very properly refused to make a spectacle of herself at the command of a drunken husband. "The wise men who knew the times"—the equivalent of the modern journalist—howled her down in fury and ordered her divorce—such an action was highly dangerous to the State—"women shall despise their husbands," "there will arise too much contempt and wrath," but her divorce would awe "the ladies of Persia and Média" and "all the wives shall give to their husbands honour both to great and small."

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Judith belongs to the band of heroic women, the saviours of their country, and with Boadicea and Joan of Arc saves her sex for ever from the charge of weakness and cowardice. When the spirit of her countrymen was broken by misfortune and thirst, she rebuked them for their supineness in giving up their city to the Assyrians, "because the sanctuary, and the house, and the altar rest upon us," and she undertook to deliver them herself.

She is recorded to have been a woman of great beauty, and being a widow took great care to make the best of herself before going to the fight, "braiding the hair of her head," and "decking herself bravely to allure the eyes of all men that should see her," "so that everyone said to his neighbour: 'Who would despise this people, that have among them such women?'"

She was also an excellent public speaker, and received the high commendation from Holofernes: "There is not such a woman from one end of the earth to the other, both for beauty of face and wisdom of words." "Thou art beautiful in thy countenance and witty in thy words." A practical tribute to her charm is

the recorded statement that: "Holofernes took great delight in her, and drank much more wine than he had drunk at any time in one day since he was born."

Her methods, like those of Jael, are neither ladylike nor honourable, but St. Jerome does not seem put off by them, for he quotes Judith as symbolising the struggle of the Church against the devil: "in typo ecclesiae diabolum capite truncavit."

It is discouraging to note that the law of Moses, even at that date, though severe, was fairer and more equal between the sexes than in England to-day. Adultery was punished with death—"they shall both of them die." With us, a husband's infidelity is void of offence; in a wife it is sufficient cause for divorce. A wronged husband can claim pecuniary compensation from the co-respondent; but a wife has no such power. Among the Jews seduction was punished with marriage or death; now money damages or a "sum not exceeding five shillings a week" satisfies the consciences of men. How hard it is for the woman to prove her claim, and having proved it, to get the money, only women and relieving officers know. A good deal of "gush" is being talked just now about the value of married women as citizens; that it is "gush" is proved by the laws our legislators have made for us—a married mother having no existence in the State as the parent or guardian of her child, the father taking to himself the whole honour and glory of parentage. But when disgrace and discredit attach to motherhood, then the sky changes, and the whole burden of shame is thrown upon the unmarried mother, who becomes then sole parent.

That men are so much better than their lawgivers—so that most people do not even know of such injustice—is small consolation to the victim of the seducer, or to the wronged wife suing for a divorce. There is a mixture of cynical humour and Pecksniffian hypocrisy about the English laws affecting sex that would have disgusted the more manly souls of the stern old Jews.

From the Gospels our opponents can find nothing against our cause; there is not one word recorded of Christ that is harsh or derogatory to womanhood. One feels He would be with us now, and the very essence of the modern revolt of woman breathes through those great words: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

II.—GREEK.

IN Homeric times there appear to have been few Suffragettes; women were successfully ground down under the heel of man, and accepted their position with only a few murmurs against fate. We read of fair maidens, good wives, excellent mothers of children—Nausicaa, Hecuba Andromache—but look in vain for women of spirit and enterprise. The Deborahs and Judiths of scripture are conspicuous by their absence. How contemptible to a modern house-wife is the supineness of the faithful Penelope, who suffered so dejectedly the enormous appetites of the suitors and their havoc in the wine-cellar! Not once does it occur to this doubtfully virtuous woman to assume the keys of the cupboards, to turn out the wooers, and to assert her inalienable right to make her own rules in her own house.

Helen of Troy was a typical bad example of "the protected woman" beguiling and ruling men through their lowest nature; now and then she appears to have had a sense of sin and remorse for her behaviour, but she, as well as the princes both of Greece and Troy, put all the blame upon "the god" in a resigned Calvinistic spirit, and appear to have had little or no consciousness of Free Will. To digress one moment: In the Iliad one comes across strange Hebraic bursts of conviction of sin, which might have been written by the author of the 51st Psalm:—

"The hearts of the gods by incense and reverent vows and drink-offering or burnt-offering men turn with prayer, as oft as any transgresseth and doeth sin. Moreover, prayers of penitence are daughters of great Zeus, halting and wrinkled and of eyes askance, that hath withal their task to go in the steps of Sin. For Sin is strong and fleet of foot, wherefore she far out-runneth all prayers, and goeth before them over all earth making men fall, and prayers follow behind to heal the harm."

The only Suffragettes were among the immortal gods, and it speaks well for the liberality and idealism of the ancient Greeks that with such living examples about they still admitted women to the priesthood, and conceived their deities under female guise—Hera, Athene, Artemis, the Nine Muses.

In spite of their worship of Aphrodite, there appears now and then a smothered feeling of contempt for the lust and sensuality which she embodied. Her feeble attempts at warfare are sneered at, for she was a coward goddess, and none of those that have mastery in the battle of the warriors—no Athene she, nor Enyo, waster of cities. She would never have gone to prison for her opinions, nor headed a raid on the House of Commons.

Athene, goddess of wisdom, defender of the state, the "unwearied maiden," who heartened men to battle, still leads women in their revolt against injustice; and with her is Hera, wife of Zeus, Queen of Heaven. She is no Griselda; she stands up boldly for the equality of the sexes and the rights of women, reminding Zeus that her brains and her county family are quite equal to his: "For I, too, am a god, and my lineage is even as thine."

To these immortals we may add the race of Amazons and the two queens, Hippolyte and Penthesilea.

In his brilliant book, "The authoress of the Odyssey," Dr. Butler proves undeniably that the poem was written by a woman, "young, headstrong," a maiden fancy free, her love and affection bestowed at present on home and parents; jealous for the honour and dignity of her own sex—the very youngest of the Suffragists. "No matron would have dared to embark on such a *tour de force* as the Odyssey, or have carried it to such a brilliant conclusion." The fruit of the tree of knowledge would have smirched her high ideals of maidenhood, and made her at once sadder and wiser. She would have not made such magnificent mistakes, or rushed in so pluckily to attempt the impossible.

In spite of many a rapier thrust at the female sex, Dr. Butler is to be thanked for restoring a lost feather to the female cap. Had women studied Greek more widely, they would probably have found out long ago that the story could only have been written by a woman. I am not sure that two school-girls, painfully spelling out the story of how Nausicaa went a washing, did not anticipate Dr. Butler's discovery a quarter of a century ago.

Plato may be said to be the original founder of the "Men's League for Women's Suffrage." He recognises the abilities of the female sex and the unfair repression exercised by men. "Many women are in many things superior to many men"; "all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also, and in all of them a woman is only a weaker man." "Women must be taught music and gymnastics, and also the art of war," and "let them share in the toils of war and the defence of their country."

He recognises the debt humanity owes to the mothers of the race, and that they must be protected through the weakness and monotony of child-bearing. Apparently he realises what "a night with a baby" really means, the depression and weariness that follows loss of sleep; and he enacts that "the mother shall have no trouble or getting up at night, but will hand all this to nurses and attendants."

"Then the wives of our Guardians will have a fine easy time whilst they are having children."

"Quite right too," said Socrates.

In Sophocles, Æschylus, and Euripides, we find women of character and high courage—Antigone, Clytemnestra, Alcestis, Medea. All through the pages of Euripides,—that dangerous innovator and realist,—we catch echoes of the revolt of women; and in spite of his alleged misogyny he has evidently much sympathy for their wrongs. Into the mouth of Medea he puts that great speech on the subjection of women, which might be given to-day from the Suffragette platform without anyone in the audience suspecting its antiquity. "Of all things that have life and sense we women are the most wretched; for first, with an exceeding sum, we must purchase us a husband, and receive a lord over our persons (for this is even a more grievous evil than the former), and in this, too, there is great risk whether we shall get a bad master or a good; for divorces are not honourable to women, nor is it possible to repudiate a husband. . . . Then, should our husband dwell happily with us, not violently imposing the yoke, 'tis an enviable life; but if not, death were better. For when a man is weary with the society of those at home, going out he relieves his heart of its loathing, betaking himself to some friend or comrade; but we are forced to look to one person alone. And they say of us that we live a life of security at home whilst they do battle with the spear, speaking foolishly; for rather would I go three times to battle than bear once the pangs of motherhood."

Then comes Aristophanes, and cracks his sides with laughter at the Socialists, and the New Drama, and the Suffragettes. "Ah me," wails the "Committee-man," "the police have deserted me. But we must never be conquered by women. Let us march against them, O police-man, in order of battle." "We kept silence at home," says Lysistrata, and we used to ask: "How is it, husband, that you manage the affairs of government so badly?" And the husband answers in twentieth century fashion "Be silent woman or I'll break your jaw."

But the modern revolt of women differs from the old in that it is founded not upon philosophical and academic principles but upon the changed economic position of women. If the Greeks oppressed their women at least they supported them; they had not the problem of the vast host of female wage-earners hanging by their own head, owing no man anything, sharing the burden of the taxes and increasing the national wealth. The demand for the franchise has arisen from the ranks of those who think, and those who work, and those who suffer—the factory slave, the sweaters' victim, the wife bruised and maimed by the kick of a protecting husband, the student allowed to enter the lists of learning, to run the race and win it, but not to be crowned because she is a woman. The cry for justice and freedom for half the human race is real and genuine, and men *must* heed it, for does it not enter daily into the ears of the Lord God of Sabbaoth.

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON.

Women's Freedom League

18

PRICE ONE PENNY.

THE A.B.C. OF VOTES FOR WOMEN.



BY

MARION HOLMES.

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MARION HOLMES.

Almost invariably the statement that the vote is denied to "criminals, lunatics, imbeciles, paupers, children—and women" raises a laugh. Many women themselves seem to think that a good joke is hidden in the phrase. Yet, seeing that the consequences of disqualification are so serious, it is hardly probable that the sapient persons who drew up this list did it in a jocular mood. They doubtless had in their minds certain well or ill-defined reasons as to why each disqualification was imposed. That being so, it is as well that women, instead of acquiescing in so dubious a joke, should try to find out why their sex is placed in such sinister company, and, having understood, if the action be based on just and reasonable grounds, submit patiently and humbly; or, if not, then rebel for the honour and status of womanhood all over the world.

The Value of the Vote.

The first thing to be clearly grasped is the value and power of this right that is denied to us.

It is acknowledged that some of the fiercest fights in history have waged round the question, "To vote or not to vote." The South African war of a decade ago, for which we paid such heavy toll in blood and money, was ostensibly undertaken to gain this very point for the Outlander. Men have fought and rioted, burnt and pillaged, murdered and died to make this right their own. The very bitterness of the struggle to gain possession of it proves its value and power. Men do not fight and suffer so fiercely for a thing of little worth.

The right of voting confers upon the individual and the nation the dignity of self-government. The voters give to certain individuals the power to make the laws. The laws determine the conditions under which the people shall live. The non-voters have to obey the laws and submit to the conditions without having the power to alter or influence them. In a word, the difference between the voter and the non-voter is the difference between bondage and freedom.

"Criminals—"

The power of the franchise being such then, it is easily understood why criminals and lunatics should not be allowed to exercise it. Their exclusion is based on palpably reasonable grounds.

The criminal is an outlaw, a menace to the safety and well-being of the rest of the community. He is not prepared to recog-

nise and obey the restrictions that it is found necessary to impose for the common good. He desires to gratify his own greed, licence, or cruelty at the expense of others. He destroys and wrecks instead of builds up and consolidates the fabric of society. Manifestly he must not be allowed to say what laws shall be imposed upon others when he is not prepared to obey them himself.

“Lunatics and Imbeciles—”

The lunatic or imbecile is incapable of forming a clear and sane judgment; he therefore must not exercise power that has an effect upon the lives and happiness of other people. (True, the imposition of this disqualification would seem to imply that all voters had passed some sort of test to prove their intellectual fitness to vote. This is not the case; it applies only to those who are medically certified to be unfit—quite a nice distinction in its way.)

“Paupers—”

The pauper disqualification is based on rather different grounds from the rest. The right to the franchise is, roughly speaking, supposed to be a *quid pro quo* for services rendered to the State. That being so, it is easy to see how these despised members of society came to be put upon the list.

From the present point of view of the State the pauper is a burden. He does not contribute to the upkeep or prosperity of the country; his maintenance imposes a tax upon the industry of others, and he performs no useful service in return. Therefore he must not be allowed to dictate to his “benefactors” what conditions shall rule. (It will be readily seen that the word pauper—surely one of the ugliest in our language; let us hope it will soon become obsolete!—is used in this connection in its strictly limited sense as signifying the *helpless and friendless* parasite upon a nation’s industry. Many voters on the registers could be disqualified on the grounds that their maintenance imposes a tax upon the industry of others, and they give no useful service in return.)

“Children—”

Children, too, are disqualified on palpable and legitimate grounds. Immature judgment and want of experience must not dictate to wiser and more responsible heads. But children necessarily occupy an unique position in the community. From them no services are exacted; it is not expected or desired that they should be self-supporting—in theory that is—in any self-respecting State. They are not compelled to contribute to the revenues, or to suffer the same penalties for misdeeds and breaches of the law that are imposed upon the more fully fledged members of society. The State—to a certain very imperfect extent—recognises that the needs and wants of its children should be the object of its most tender consideration and care.

“—and Women!”

But we may well ask what points of resemblance are there then between woman and the rest of her disqualified companions? Why has *sex* been made a reason for inclusion in this list?

It cannot be urged against her that she is a natural criminal, or a menace to the safety of the State. Indeed, on the contrary, women are naturally more law abiding than men. It is estimated that male offenders against the law are as five to one compared with female offenders. It may be urged that the percentage of women prisoners has shown an extraordinary and phenomenal increase during the last three or four years. But I do not think that any one is prepared to contend that this is anything but a passing state of affairs arising out of abnormal and unprecedented conditions—not a permanent one.

It cannot be said either that women as a whole exhibit the peculiar characteristics of lunatics or imbeciles. There are foolish women truly, but then there are also foolish men, and they are permitted to vote, while the cleverest woman in the world would be turned away from the doors of a British polling booth. Women practise as doctors, nurses, teachers; they hold high positions in the literary, journalistic, and artistic worlds. They conduct important businesses with skill and ability. They are to be found in every department of industry that needs intelligence. Indeed, the most responsible work of the country—education—is very largely in the hands of women. Quite four-fifths of the teachers are drawn from the ranks of the sex that is placed on the same political level as lunatics and imbeciles.

The reasons too that apply to the exclusion of paupers and children cannot be considered as applicable to women. The State does not provide them with free food and housing and clothing. Many of them are compelled—if they would live—to go out and earn their bread in mills, workshops, offices, hospitals, schools. And the married women in the homes, whose industry apparently counts for nothing, inasmuch as it is not recognised by any monetary standard, are many of them working harder than their sisters in the workshops and factories. The fact too that women are the rearers and guardians of children—a State’s most valuable asset—removes from them all fear of being regarded as parasites on a nation’s industry. They are compelled also to discharge their full responsibilities; they have to pay the same taxes, rates, and rent as men. They are expected to fulfil all the burdens and duties of responsible citizens—yet they are denied the one privilege that makes citizenship a vital and living thing.

Sex as a Disqualification.

We are driven to the conclusion, then, that men who uphold the justice of women’s exclusion, really think there is some natural defect attaching to the sex itself that renders them unfit for this particular form of responsibility. This idea of woman’s natural disability seems to have been voiced quite frankly in years gone by. In 1790 a learned writer explained that the people who should not be included in the county franchise were those who “lie under natural incapacities, and therefore cannot exercise a sound discretion, or (who are) so much under the influence of others that they

cannot have a will of their own in the choice of candidates. Of the former description are women, infants, idiots, lunatics; of the latter persons receiving alms and revenue offices."

Now of course had it been meant that this position should be maintained, women should have been kept in the mental condition of children; *i.e.*, totally uneducated. The present position that they have attained renders such a statement as the above ludicrous, and that is why it always raises a laugh. But the effect of it is not ludicrous. This linking of sex with mental and moral disqualifications has had the result of lowering the status of that sex in every department in life—industrial, legal, and domestic—with all the penalties and disabilities attaching to an inferior status, and women cannot afford any longer to have it regarded as a joke.

Woman's Industrial Status.

It is in the industrial world that the denial of the power to influence legislation is most keenly felt, and consequently it is there that the glaring inequalities between the voters and the non-voters are most apparent.

Take the most important question of all—that of wages. In nearly every kind of work in which men and women compete the voteless women are paid at a rate varying from 25 to 50 per cent. lower than the men. And this not only in the terrible sweated trades where women so largely preponderate (some statistics put the percentage of women in these trades as high as 90), but in the better paid branches of industry, in Government employ, and in skilled and trained trades and crafts.

I have only space here to quote a few examples out of an inexhaustible list.

The Post Office, the largest employer of labour in the country, pays its clerks at the following rates:

Men, 2nd Division Lower Grade ...	...	£70 to 250
Women, 2nd Class ...	...	£65 to 110
Men, 2nd Division Higher Grade ...	...	£250 to 350
Women, 1st Class ...	...	£115 to 140

In the District and Provincial offices the scale is:

	Men.	Women.
First Class Sorting Clerks	45/- to 56/-	18/- to 40/-
Second Class Sorting Clerks	28/- to 35/-	15/- to 25/-

Yet the work done by these variously paid individuals is the same.

In spite of the strong position that women occupy in the educational world, and the fact that they are admittedly at least as skilful and successful in their work as men, there is no Education Committee in England which pays them the same rate of wages. The exact rate varies in different places, but, as a rule, a difference in the scale of one-half to two-thirds is steadily maintained from boy and girl pupil teacher to fully qualified men and women. (It is interesting and instructive to learn that in Norway the women in Government employ in the Postal Telegraphic Department had

their wages raised within a few months of their gaining the right to vote, and in Wyoming, where women have the vote, equal pay for equal work is the rule at least in the teaching profession).

In the Government factories the same unfair conditions prevail as in other branches of employment. The working men, through their representatives, have been able to wrest a Trades Union rate of wages for all men in Government employ. The women who have no representatives were naturally overlooked when this law was passed, with the consequence that their average wages in many of the Government factories are 15s. a week, whilst for the men the lowest rate is 23s.

And all through the various departments of industry this invidious distinction is to be found. It is not based on any inferiority or inequality in the standard of *work*, but on sex and sex alone. It has been calculated that the average male worker's wage is about 18s. per week, and the average woman worker's 7s. From the Government down to the smallest and meanest exploiter of cheap labour, women are looked upon as fair prey.

The "Protected" Sex.

It is an axiom that economic power follows political power. The history of trades-unionism proves that conclusively enough. Before the enfranchisement of the working man in 1867 none of their efforts could secure the passing of an Act to legalise Trades Unions and to protect their funds. But in 1869, after the working men had gained political power, a provisional measure giving temporary protection was hurried through, and in 1871 a full Act was passed which conceded most of their demands. The status of the agricultural labourer, both in wages and in social condition, has risen considerably since his enfranchisement in 1884. The miners since they have had direct representation, have wrung concession after concession from the powers that be, and the terrible strikes that 20 or 30 years ago used periodically to paralyse the mining industry have practically ceased.

People—conveniently blind people—who wish to silence the clamorous demands of the women of to-day, contend that the men use the power they have gained in the Trades' Unions to protect the women's interests equally with their own. Some even say that they accord them a chivalrous precedence and consideration that would be promptly withdrawn as soon as women were admitted to equal political rights. Lord Curzon has said that one of "fifteen sound, valid, and incontrovertible arguments against the extension of the franchise to women" is that "woman, if placed by the vote on an absolute equality with man, would forfeit much of that respect which the chivalry of man has voluntarily conceded to her, and which has hitherto been her chief protection." He also gives as another of the "fifteen sound," etc.: "The vote is not required for the removal of hardships or disabilities from which woman is now known to suffer. Where any such exist they can be equally well removed or alleviated by a legislature elected by men."

But unfortunately for his lordship's reasoning, facts, disagreeable, hard-headed facts, prove quite the contrary. Man's attitude towards woman in the labour market, whether he stands either in the relation of employer or competitor, is not distinguished by the chivalrous respect that is supposed to be a concession to her weakness, or by a generous desire to legislate for her interests at the expense of his own.

Under the present system it must not be forgotten that men's and women's industrial interests often clash, and it is not given to many people to be just and impartial when the vital questions of livelihood and wages are at stake. The men and women are competitors; work is scarce; the difficulties of earning a living are very great, and the ever present nearness of starvation and unemployment drives the workers into desperate hostility towards their competitors. The average man will welcome any excuse to reduce the number of his trade rivals, and so increase, as he thinks, his own chances of getting work.

Up-to-Date Chivalry.

Trade unionists, instead of using their power to gain for women the same advantages they have gained for themselves, use it often to close avenues of employment against them, often under high sounding excuses, such as fear that their health or their morals will suffer. Everyone will remember the petition of certain miners against the employment of women at the pit brow. They gave as their reason for objecting to it, that the language and customs with which the women were thus brought into contact, were degrading and unfit, and tended to lower their moral standard. Evidently the miner only uses "language" when at his work—there was no suggestion that in the homes, where we presume the women are brought into even more intimate relationship with them, they are not fit associates. Labour members quite openly state when attempts are made to forbid women to work in certain trades, that they want it done so that there may be more work for men. Mr. John Burns' most frequently advanced remedy for unemployment is the curtailing of the work of women. Mr. Sydney Buxton also admitted only the other day that it was very desirable, in the interests of men, that female labour in the Post Office should be greatly reduced.

Indeed, many men politicians and others seem to think that it really does not matter if a woman starves, so long as a man gets work. Yet the necessities of life are a human need—not a question of sex. And if a woman has to face the struggle for existence, as so many millions of them have to do to-day, hunger and unemployment are as disastrous for her as they are for her brothers.

To leave her in this fierce struggle unprotected, with no weapon of defence such as men possess in the vote, no means of compelling the attention of those who make the law to her needs and desires, is to impose upon her fearful odds. It is against human nature to expect the man who climbs to place and power on the suffrages of

his constituents, and who must of necessity consider their demands and interests first and foremost, to give even a secondary place to their trade rivals. He has to consider votes—there non-voters can safely be put on one side. And to expect high and unselfish consideration to a competitor, who is driven by her bitter necessities to snatch at any chance of underselling, who is ready always to do his work for a lower wage, is to expect the average British workman to be very little lower than the angels.

Woman's Legal and Domestic Status.

The most cursory study of woman's legal position in this country can only make us thankfully acknowledge that the majority of men are considerably better than the laws they make. Nevertheless, we have to recognise that however kind and considerate individual men may be to their own womenfolk, the Law is the concrete expression of man's attitude towards woman in the mass, and in the eyes of the law woman is a creature of inferior status, the dependent, not the equal of her husband, not entitled to the same rights or the same privileges, either with regard to the ownership or inheritance of property or the guardianship of children.

Undoubtedly woman's legal position has been greatly improved since the Married Women's Property Act became law in 1882—indeed, many politicians claim that the passing of that Act removed all cause for complaint on her part—so easy is it to bear another's ills!—still the idea of man's right of ownership over his wife's person and liberty remains deeply ingrained. Never a week passes but some flagrant case of cruelty or injustice to a wife comes before a court, and is condoned by a paltry fine, or a totally inadequate punishment. "Things have come to a pretty pass in this country," remarked an indignant husband recently, when ordered to pay a ten shilling fine for assaulting his young wife, "when a man can't thrash his own wife in his own kitchen."

One Parent Only.

A married woman is not the legal parent of her own children. Every child, according to our laws, has only one parent who can decide its future, where it shall live, how it shall be educated, what religion it shall be taught, how much shall be spent upon it, whether it shall be vaccinated or not. For a child born in wedlock that parent is the father. For one born out of wedlock the only parent is the mother. She alone, in that case, is responsible for the care and welfare of the child; she alone is held responsible and punished if the child be neglected or suffer from neglect. Indeed, even where fatherhood is admitted by the man the law will not admit it, for a learned judge ruled quite recently that "no illegitimate child can be recognised as the blood relation of its father."

The divorce law sets up a different standard of morality for men and women. A moral standard is insisted upon for women, and any deviation from that can be punished by divorce; an immoral one is permitted to men.

"With All My Worldly Goods I Thee Endow."

The laws of inheritance and intestacy uphold in the strongest possible way man's prior right to the possession of property. In nearly all cases they ignore the woman until all the male heirs are exhausted. In cases of intestacy landed property goes to sons before daughters. If a wife die without a will the husband enjoys full and life-long possession of her estates or money. If a husband die intestate the wife is only entitled to one-third of his personal property if he have children, and half if there be no children. In default of other next-of-kin the other half goes to the Crown. In the case of a daughter or son dying intestate the mother inherits nothing; the whole goes to the father, or the father's next of kin.

A wife may spend her whole life in hard work; she may save and deny herself necessities to help her husband to amass considerable wealth, and yet her share in it is absolutely nothing. She can claim nothing, and he can if he choose, for a whim, or in a fit of spleen or spite, will it all away from her when he dies. For all her services rendered as a wife and a housekeeper she can claim only the lowest form of wages—a subsistence wage.

Lady Maclaren points out in her Women's Charter that although the law fixes upon the husband the responsibility of supporting his wife and children, yet it avoids the necessary steps to make this obligation legally effective:—

- (1.) By not compelling the husband to work.
- (2.) By not giving the woman any direct claim on his earnings even if he do work.
- (3.) By not fixing any scale suitable to his means on which a wife should be maintained so long as the two live together.
- (4.) By not admitting that a wife's work, either as housekeeper or as assistant in business, has any money value;
- (5.) And finally, by not giving to a widow any claim on her husband's property of which his will cannot deprive her.

"Constant and Well-grounded Fear."

Of course there are cases where apparent leniency is shewn to the woman, such as the rule which holds a wife free from criminal responsibility if the crime be committed in the husband's presence. But this privilege of exemption is based on the assumption that in such a case "she acted thus being in constant and well grounded fear, stronger than the fear naturally inspired by the law." A very interesting admission on the part of the law of the power of chastisement and authority vested in husbands, but not exactly a conception of matrimony tending to increase the self-respect and dignity of wives.

However, all these inequalities are inevitable under the present male monopoly of legislative power. The man voter and the man legislator must recognise the man's needs first, and Lord Curzon's touching faith in the willingness and ability of a male electorate to deal not only justly but generously by women cannot unfortunately in the face of such facts be shared by them.

"Some Objections—and the Antis."

In all the multitude of societies that have sprung up within the last few years around the now happily burning question of Votes for Women, none has added to the gaiety of nations (and the roll-call of the Suffragettes) as much as that eminently aristocratic body, the Anti-Suffrage Society. Their arguments have provided much food for thought—and laughter.

One is reluctant to attribute to them the once frequently-heard injunction to "go home and wash the baby," or "darn the socks," or "cook the dinner," for even the witless loafer is beginning to recognise that the woman's movement is not to be stopped or influenced by such remarks as these. The parrot cry, that the "woman's place is the home," is, however, still brought forward persistently by them, as if it were a well-founded and reasonable argument against the admission of women to political life. "The home is the place for women," they say. "Their interests are the rearing and training of children—politics do not concern them." Really, to hear many of the "Antis" talk, one would imagine that all the women of this country were sheltered inmates of happy homes—or that if they were not, it was somehow their own fault. Yet they must know as well as we that there are literally millions of women to whom such a statement is a mockery.

"In Poverty, Hunger and Dirt."

What kind of homes are the noisome, foul dens in which our sweated women workers drag out a miserable existence? Homes in which baby faces are white with hunger, baby feet blue with cold, baby hands set to hard and unfitting toil because the few miserable pence they can earn are necessary for the family exchequer. What time for the training and careful rearing of children has the mother, who must work for 16 and 17 hours a day to earn her pittance of a shilling, or even less? The case that was tried the other day in a London Court, when a woman who was summoned for not sending her children to school regularly, explained that she was compelled to do scrubbing at an Infirmary all day, and washing at "home" every night from eight to one or two o'clock, to support her family, is no isolated one of exceptionally bad conditions. It is common enough.

There are thousands of homes in this country that would not exist if the women did not go out and labour with their heads and hands to keep a roof over their own and their children's heads.

Of course, no one is foolish enough, or even desires, to deny that the women as a sex do spend more time in the homes than the men, and that the interests of great numbers of them are largely concerned with matters of home life. But this is an added reason for women having the vote, not one for denying it to them. Politics and the home life are intimately concerned with each other. The price of food, housing, sanitation, food adulteration—nay, even the sleeping and breathing space of the family, the baby's bottle and cradle and clothes—all these are made matters of legislation.

When we hear of statesmen discussing whether babies should be fed on natural mother's milk, humanised milk, or sterilised milk, whether they should sleep in bed with their mothers or in banana boxes, we realise how the most intimate duties of the mother are made the subjects of political discussion. The woman in the home needs to be an ardent politician indeed in these days, or she will be liable to find herself mulcted of many a fine for running counter to rules and regulations that have been passed over her head, with the best intentions in the world of merely doing her duty according to the light that is in her.

A Disappearing "Argument."

The contention that as physical force is the basis of Government woman must not be allowed to take part in it, because she could not, if necessary, compel obedience to the law, is an antiquated method of reasoning that even the "antis" are now beginning to abandon. Carried to its logical conclusion it would mean that the strongest men should be the lawmakers, and that politics should become a matter of fisticuffs or wrestling, in an even more pronounced fashion than it is to-day. Left to itself physical force is a blind and unintelligent power capable of neither government nor control. Mental and moral force directs it, and makes it, according to its direction, either valuable and helpful or dangerous and destructive. Women are just as capable of exercising mental and moral force as men. Government—the power to compel obedience—is not so much a question of strength of arm, as of strength of will.

Physical force can neither kill nor destroy a superior mental or moral force, as has been proved up to the hilt by the recent militant demonstrations of the Suffragettes. No amount of it has succeeded in putting back their agitation, or destroying their enthusiasm and devotion. No amount of it ever will.

The Adult Suffrage Bogey.

But it is the question of adult suffrage that seems to be one of the greatest stumbling blocks to many of the "antis." "If you give women the vote you are opening the door to adult suffrage," they say. Yet, that this is clearly a matter of personal opinion and speculative surmise is proved at every meeting they hold, for while the majority of the speakers will dolefully prophecy how adult suffrage will follow votes for women as the night follows day; there is sure to be one at least who will endeavour to prove that the granting of this measure will mean the submerging of Liberalism and the stoppage of all progress for generations to come!

As a matter of fact, neither of these prophecies is founded on reason and probability, but on a tyrannical desire on the part of both objectors to withhold power until they are assured it will be used in the way they would each prefer. One can imagine the storm of indignation that would be aroused if the question of how their vote would be cast were openly made the reason, by either of the political parties, for not extending it to any section of men. It

would be a wholesome reflection, too, for every working man who would block this reform to remember how every objection urged against extending the franchise to women was urged against its extension to himself by the holders of power in days gone by.

Unworthy Fears.

The fears entertained by Lord Curzon and others of his ilk that women would introduce an unbalanced, deplorable and unduly excitable element into political life, may surely be allayed by the experience of other countries. New Zealand, Australia, the four States of America, are all unanimous in stating that the women's vote has been used to accelerate social and moral reform: that sweated labour, bad housing, immorality, the drink problem, bad conditions affecting women and children, have all been made the subject of attack, and that, as a consequence of its effective help in these matters, the social, political, and moral status of the country has been raised. By what method of reasoning do these chivalrous gentlemen assume that English women will act differently, or in a worse way, than the women of other countries? It is not a very gracious or grateful attitude to assume towards those who have served their country as well as British women have; who have responded with such patriotic generosity when the nation has appealed for their aid in times of war and stress, who, by their high intellectual and moral standard have helped so materially to raise the level of English national life. To imagine that their influence will prove a menace to good and effective legislation is an insult that all self respecting women should resent.

The Matter in a Nutshell.

But all the objections brought against this question after all only serve to emphasize the fact that the opposers of it are actuated by prejudice, either blind or wilful, not by logic, or a sense of right and justice. For the one great salient truth remains, that no single reason can be adduced for giving the franchise to men that does not apply with equal force to women. Women need the vote for exactly the same reasons that men need it. Without it they have no means of redressing their grievances or voicing their special needs and desires. They deserve it for exactly the same reasons that men deserve it. They perform all the duties of responsible citizenship, they contribute valuable and indispensable service to the State.

In claiming it they are not begging for a privilege—

THEY ARE DEMANDING A RIGHT.

MARION HOLMES.

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THE "CONCILIATION" BILL

An Explanation and Defence

By H. N. BRAILSFORD

FORTY years of quiet argument more than sufficed to establish the theoretic basis of Woman Suffrage. Behind the arguments was the rush and pressure of economic facts. Women had left the home, five millions and more of them, to become wage-earners in shop and factory, while the State in its turn, perpetually intervening in the most intimate concerns of a woman's life, be she mother or industrial worker, has itself created the best of all cases for her citizenship. Five years of gallant and devoted agitation have given the question an immediate urgency. The debate of last July was a faithful register of the position which it now holds. The Government granted what no other Government has ever given before—two entire days for a comprehensive debate. The Conciliation Committee had to face obstacles which none of its predecessors encountered. Its Bill is a working solution, a practical compromise, framed to become law, and with no other object. It asked for no academic support. It lost on the one hand Liberal supporters who demand adult suffrage in one cataclysmal measure, and on the other Unionist supporters who fear that its Bill may eventually pave the way for that vast change. It was assailed as none of its predecessors had ever been by two of the most powerful Suffragist Ministers in the House, who directed all their ascendancy and eloquence to the end of defeating its Bill on the Second Reading division. The anti-Suffrage movement is at last alert and well organised, more especially on the Unionist side. In spite of all, the Conciliation Bill rallied a larger number of supporters than any previous Woman Suffrage measure, and was carried by a majority (110) greater than the Government has itself obtained for its own principal measures.

A Note on History.

To understand the fortunes of the "Conciliation" Bill it is necessary to retrace the history of Woman Suffrage in the last Parliament. The record is in the main that of a conscious attempt by a group of Liberal Members to force the question on to party lines. The old Bill, which first passed its Second Reading in 1870, was once more introduced in 1908 by Mr. Stanger. The division showed the immense majority of 179 for Woman Suffrage, though the total of the "ayes" (271) was smaller than that which the "Conciliation" Bill has since obtained (299). Meanwhile the various parties in the House had ceased to act together, and the Liberals had formed a separate party committee. Their proposal was that when the expected Reform Bill should be introduced towards the end of the life of the late Parliament, an attempt should be made upon party lines to graft Woman Suffrage upon it by means of an amendment. This strategy could succeed only if the Suffragists in the Ministerial ranks were united on the amendment in question, and only if these Ministerial Suffragists were able from their own numbers alone to command a majority of the whole House. In the following session an experiment was attempted which served to show how hazardous, even in a House dominated by the Liberal Party, this strategy must be. An Adult Suffrage Bill was introduced by Mr. Geoffrey Howard, once more on the understanding that it should not be carried beyond the Second Reading. The majority fell to 33; more significant still, the number of "ayes" dropped to a bare 157. Mr. Lloyd George was the only Member of the Cabinet who voted for this Bill. On the other hand, the Unionist Whips officially told against it. The opposition, none the less, included many Liberals, and even some Liberal Suffragists like Mr. Birrell. The lesson of that experiment was clear. A solution on party lines is the ideal method of dividing the Suffragist forces. Liberals cannot be united as a party in favour of Adult Suffrage, but Unionists can be united against it. It had no adequate backing even in the last Parliament, despite the fact that the Ministerial forces outnumbered the Unionists by 502 to 168. There is no possibility that it could obtain a majority in the present Parliament with its more even balance of 397 to 273. In a list published by the People's Suffrage Federation the number of pledged adherents of Adult Suffrage is given as 120. Nor is it only in the House of Commons that the adherents of Adult Suffrage are in a minority. It is a proposal which raises the maximum of opposition while it rallies the minimum of support. It affronts the opinions of professed Conservatives. Nor is the man in the street converted to it. The experience of the women who have worked during these years of propaganda at canvassing and street-corner speaking is that the plain man is ready to enfranchise "women who pay rates and taxes." He is prepared to give some women the vote, but he dreads a measure which would place political power in the hands of a majority of women. It is no part of democratic theory to override or ignore public

opinion, and for a measure which would add at one blow from eleven to thirteen millions of women to the electorate, public opinion is not prepared. English politics do not move on these revolutionary lines. It took half a century for our fathers to advance from the middle-class Reform Act of 1832 to the relatively democratic Reform Act of 1884. If men are enfranchised so slowly, what precedent is there for the sudden liberation of the whole body of women? Without the bold support of a strong and united Government the miracle is unthinkable, and for that we may wait a generation. Parties may be driven to extreme solutions in advance of public opinion by the authority of a great leader, the zeal of a united staff, and the pressure and coercion of party discipline. But the Liberal leader is hostile, the staff divided, and of the party machinery no use can be made. To wait for Adult Suffrage is to refuse the enfranchisement of women.

The Conciliation Committee was founded in the belief that the time had come to insist upon a prompt solution of this woman's question. For forty years there has been a majority in the House of Commons for the enfranchisement of women. Common honesty requires that Parliament shall give effect to its expressed convictions. No man who respects courage and perseverance can, without self-reproach, allow women to make the sacrifices which this long agitation has demanded, only to be insulted by repeated admissions of the justice of this reform and repeated refusals to give it effect. It was obvious that success could be achieved only by the united efforts of Suffragists in all political parties. The Committee is composed of a large and representative group of private Members of Parliament,* and there was little difficulty in finding a basis of agreement which united them all. Their several points of view were not irreconcilable. The Unionists demanded of any solution that it should be moderate and definite. The admission of women to the franchise is an immense innovation, both social and political. They asked for a cautious advance, and in this stipulation there can be no doubt that they reflect the typical English attitude. The Liberals (and with them most of the Irish and Labour Members) were chiefly concerned to insist

* The Conciliation Committee is composed as follows :—

Chairman : The Earl of Lytton.

Liberal Members of Parliament : Percy Alden, Sir T. Barclay, G. T. Bentham, Thomas Burt, Noel Buxton, H. G. Chancellor, Sir F. Channing, A. Cameron Corbett, Sir Wm. Crossley, Sir W. Howell Davies, J. A. Dawes, Ellis G. Griffith, Sir D. Brynmor Jones, J. McCallum, C. A. McCurdy, Sir Chas. McLaren, Walter S. McLaren, M. Muspratt, Walter F. Roch, A. H. Scott, Sir A. Spicer, G. Toulmin, Sir George White, J. H. Whitehouse, Aneurin Williams.

Unionist Members of Parliament : G. A. Arbuthnot, H. T. Barrie, Sir Wm. Bull, Captain Craig, H. S. Foster, C. S. Goldman, E. A. Goulding, J. S. Harmood-Banner, F. Leverton Harris, J. Henniker Heaton, Lord Lewisham, H. Mallaby Deeley, W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, Basil Peto, Sir J. S. Randles, J. F. Remnant, Sir John Rolleston.

Nationalist Members of Parliament : Sir T. G. Esmonde, T. M. Kettle, J. C. Lardner, Dr. Lynch, Hugh A. Law, J. P. Nannetti.

Labour Members of Parliament : J. Keir Hardie, John Hodge, J. B. O'Grady, F. W. Jowett, D. J. Shackleton, Philip Snowden.

Hon. Sec. : H. N. Brailsford, 32, Well Walk, N.W.

that if a limited number of women were admitted to the franchise, they must not be so selected as to give an undue advantage to the propertied class. They had dreaded that this result would have followed from the old Bill (last introduced by Mr. Stanger), which opened to women all the qualifications at present enjoyed by men. They pointed out that it might have been abused to increase plural and "faggot" voting. Plural voting would have been introduced through the ownership vote, and the University graduate's vote. The lodger vote is also said to be subject to abuse. Lastly, Mr. Stanger's Bill would have allowed a husband and wife to be qualified as joint occupiers only if the house which they occupied was of the value of at least £20 (*i.e.*, £10 for each occupier). In other words (it was argued), almost every wife of the middle and upper classes might have been enfranchised, but virtually no wives of the working class.

Fortunately a precedent exists which is open to none of these objections. Since 1869 women have enjoyed the vote for municipal purposes. The terms on which they possess it have never been a subject of party controversy. Neither party has ever brought in a Bill to reform it. Throughout these forty-two years, though Liberals have once altered and repeatedly sought to alter the Parliamentary Franchise, the Municipal Franchise has remained untouched and uncriticised. Here, clearly, was the basis of agreement and the line of least resistance. The Municipal Franchise includes no ownership, or lodger, or graduate qualifications. It gives no advantage to wealth. Its basis is not property but occupation. With the omission of these categories of voters most of the possibilities of plural voting disappear. A woman may own land in a dozen constituencies at once, and would, if ownership were a qualification, acquire a vote for each of the twelve. But she cannot "occupy" more than one dwelling-house. It may, in some rare cases, happen that she occupies both a house and an office, shop, or other "tenement." But the law allows her a vote only for one of these where they are both situated in the same borough or county division. The only possibility of plural voting which remains is where a woman occupies a house in one electoral area and a shop or office in another. A woman may live in Southport and conduct a business in Liverpool. But such cases are so exceedingly rare that it is quite unnecessary to burden the Bill by providing against them.

The first clause of our Bill runs as follows:—

Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of The Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.

Its effect may be briefly summarised. It will enfranchise two categories of voters:—

(1) The householder, who will account for about 95 per cent. of the whole of the new electorate. She will get a vote if she inhabits any house or part of a house,

be it even a single room, and however low its value, provided she has full control over it.

(2) The occupier of premises valued at £10 per annum. This will bring in the small shopkeeper, or the typist who has an office of her own. It also enables women living together in a house to rank as joint occupiers, provided the house is worth £10 for each occupier.

These two categories of voters are the women occupiers who at present figure on the register for Town and County Council elections on the English and Welsh basis.* Their numbers are known. In England and Wales, according to the official returns, there are 870,000 women municipal voters. Adding an estimate for the Scottish and Irish women, the total of the women occupiers in the three kingdoms will be not less than one million, while it cannot exceed a million-and-a-quarter. Our Bill, in short, will add one woman to each group of seven men who at present possess the vote. It satisfies both the axioms from which we started. It is moderate, and it confers no special advantage upon the propertied classes.

The Status of Married Women.

The main difficulty in devising any Bill to enfranchise women is to provide for the case of married women. The Municipal Franchise is in this particular a grotesque chaos. Married women may vote in Scotland, Ireland, and London. Elsewhere in England and Wales they are disqualified for voting, despite the fact that a recent Act made them eligible to serve on Town or County Councils. It was necessary, therefore, in our Bill to stipulate formally that marriage shall not disqualify a woman, if she is in her own right a householder or occupier. In the vast majority of cases the husband, in whose name the house is rented, will be the householder. But there are cases where the wife owns the house, and others in which she is the real breadwinner. Then, too, there are men who are frequently absent from home and are rarely able to exercise the vote—officers on foreign service, Anglo-Indians, commercial travellers, sailors, and fishermen. It has sometimes been proposed that sailors and fishermen should be enabled to record their vote by some specially devised machinery. They could if they chose arrange that their houses should be rented in their wife's name, a plan which would make her the "householder," and under our Bill confer the vote upon her. The clause dealing with married women runs as follows:—

For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided

* The Scotch and Irish municipal register is wider, and includes owners who are not occupiers and also lodgers. In two minute particulars our Bill departs from the English municipal basis. (1) It includes under householders service voters, a very small class. (2) In England an office or shop qualifies for a vote, however low its value. In Scotland and Ireland there is a £10 qualification. In practice the point may be ignored, for under modern conditions there are hardly any shops or offices that can be obtained for a lower rental than £10 per annum. It was necessary to introduce this slight anomaly in order to reach a uniform basis for the three kingdoms.

that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified in respect of the same property.

The purpose of the proviso in this clause will be readily understood. We had to meet the criticisms directed against the old Franchise Bill. The chief difficulty was that raised by the Joint Occupation Franchise. In Leaflet No. 1 issued by the People's Suffrage Federation this is described as "the franchise which is most dangerous to labour." In Leaflet No. 3 the point is thus put:—

A very large majority under this franchise would be well-to-do women. All men living in houses of a clear yearly rental of £20 could give their wives votes. Only in London and other highly-rented districts are working-class rents above £20. No agricultural abourer's wife could get a vote.

The Conciliation Committee was unanimously determined to draft no Bill which could be accused of creating an artificial party preponderance among women voters. Here clearly was a fear generally entertained by Liberals which had to be dissipated, if our Bill was to obtain their support. The Unionist members of the Committee at once assented to the proviso in Clause II. which disposes of it. Since a husband and wife may not both be registered in respect of the same premises, the Joint Occupation Franchise cannot be used to make this preponderance of propertied votes.

Faggot Voting.

The debate on the Second Reading showed that although we had omitted all the qualifications to which the democratic critics of the old Suffrage Bill objected, we had still left a loophole for attack. The Joint Occupation Franchise ("the most dangerous to labour") was gone. The ownership vote was gone ("everybody knows the ownership vote is a property vote."—Leaflet No. 3). The lodgers had been omitted ("A very large majority under this franchise would be well-to-do women."—Leaflet No. 3). Even the University graduates had been left out. We had left only the occupiers and the householders. Of the occupiers generally Leaflet No. 3 remarks: "The large majority in this class would be working women"; and of householders the same authority (Leaflet No. 1) has said: "The majority of the householder voters are poor." We had, in short, met all the criticisms against the old limited Bill, and met them in a way that involved considerable party sacrifices from Unionists. The People's Suffrage Federation, the only body of men and women who are actively working for Adult Suffrage, was satisfied that its objections had been met, and very candidly issued a whip in favour of our Bill. It was left to Mr. Winston Churchill, a recent adherent of Adult Suffrage, who had never before voted or spoken in its favour, to discover new objections to our Bill. He had authorised me to state that he "welcomed the formation of our Committee, and would favour a solution on non-party lines," but he held, as the event showed,

that this attitude was consistent with an uncompromising opposition to the Bill which our Committee was formed to promote. It is more usual for a critic who bases his objection to a Bill on some point of detail to stipulate on the Second Reading that his support is conditional on the removal of the blemish. Now the blemish which Mr. Churchill has detected may be removed by the alteration of a few words. His case was this:—

It is not merely an undemocratic Bill; it is worse. It is an anti-democratic Bill. It gives an entirely unfair representation to property as against persons. . . . I want the House to consider the effect of this on plural voting. At present a man may exercise the franchise several times, but he has to do it in different constituencies. But under this Bill, as I read it, he would be able to exercise his vote once or twice or three times in the same constituency if he were a wealthy man. If he had an office and residence in the same constituency he has only one vote now, but if this Bill passed he could vote for his office himself and he could give his wife a vote for his residence. . . . If he owned a house and a stable, another separate building, then under this democratic Bill he could give one vote to his wife in respect of the house and take the other himself in respect of the stable. I am told it is quite open to question whether it would not be possible for a wealthy man with a large family or retinue of dependents to multiply faggot votes by letting to them any property of the value of £10 within his own residence.

These possibilities were not new to us. All of them had been considered by the Conciliation Committee. It decided, after seeking the advice of an experienced revising barrister, that these are theoretic bogeys. Men do not at present on any considerable scale manufacture "faggot" votes for their male "retinues"; why should they do it for their female dependents? Nor was there any evidence to show that in Scotland, Ireland, and London, where it might be done at present, men confer "faggot" municipal votes upon their wives. If Mr. Churchill really feared these dangers a very simple remedy was open to him. He might have suggested the omission of the £10 occupation voters from the Bill. They are probably not more than 5 per cent. of the total number who would be enfranchised by it, and their omission would not seriously weaken the Bill. Such an amendment would have been in order. But it is not necessary to have recourse to a remedy so drastic. The Conciliation Committee has already drafted an amendment which deals with Mr. Churchill's cases. The original text of the Bill laid it down that a husband and wife shall not both be registered in respect of the same property. By forbidding their registration *in the same constituency*, we make it impossible for a man to endow his wife with any qualification which he cannot use himself—his office, or stable, or what not. With this amendment the safeguards against plural and faggot voting are complete.

To sum up, the Bill, with this amendment, now reads as follows:—

- 1.—Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of The Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.
- 2.—For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be

disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be registered as voters in the same Parliamentary Borough or County Division.

This Bill is not an arbitrary or a "fancy" franchise. It is the municipal franchise in which both parties have for forty years acquiesced. Our critics invite us to follow Colonial precedents by adopting Adult Suffrage. We have found a precedent at home. Women have won a footing in municipal politics. The natural course is to build on that foundation.

Household Suffrage.

The Parliamentary Franchise is an intricate chaos, and in order to show how the Conciliation Committee arrived at the present Bill, it has been necessary to wade through a mass of repugnant detail. But it is not enough to prove that a Bill is negatively free from the objections which either party may bring against it. It must have some positive merit. The aim of our Bill is, of course, to remove the insulting disqualification of sex. When it becomes law no woman will be disqualified from the exercise of a citizen's rights simply because she is a woman. But beyond that justification which might be urged even in support of a Suffrage Bill which was capricious and undemocratic, we must be able to show that our plan accords with some reasoned and generally accepted view of the franchise. The Prime Minister said that he was able to discern "no intelligible principle" in the Bill. Its principle lies on the surface. It is an attempt to make household suffrage a reality. Our existing franchise system is a mass of anomalies which history has accumulated. But the core and substance of it is simplicity itself. The one vital and important element in it is household suffrage which the country owes to the great Reform Act of 1867, which Disraeli carried with the help of a composite majority of Conservatives and Radicals. It conferred the vote in towns upon every head of a house who is a male "person," however poor his dwelling may be. Extended as it has been first by the Reform Act of 1884 and then by the "latchkey" decision, it now recognises as a voter any man who is the settled occupier of any part of a dwelling-house in town or country over which he has full control. But as John Stuart Mill pointed out, when the Reform Bill of 1867 was before the House of Commons, any system of household suffrage is partial which is confined to men. Its principle is clear and democratic. Every household is in a real sense a unit, which has, be it rich or poor, a concern in government and an interest in furthering good and checking bad legislation. The vote is naturally conferred upon the head of the house, who is responsible for the rates and taxes directly imposed upon it. But there are households whose head is a woman. She may be a widow with children, a wife with an invalid or absent husband, or a single woman who bears her own burdens as a bread-winner and a taxpayer without the help of

husband or father. Of these women householders there are in the three kingdoms about one million who satisfy all the tests which the law imposes on men. Our Bill confers upon householders who already bear the burdens and fulfil the obligations of their status the rights and privileges which it ought to carry with it. There could be no more equitable or intelligible principle.

It has been oddly said of these women householders that they are a "dependent" class who do not possess "the same strength and backing to resist undue influence as the wife of a working man would have" (Mr. Lloyd George, at Bodnant, August 11th).

Our Bill is first assailed on the ground that it would give a vote to "every lady of property throughout the country." When we reply that it gives no vote to owners of property as such, and go on to prove that it will enfranchise a majority of working women, we are told that these working women are too "dependent" to be trusted with votes. The theory is apparently that no woman has backbone enough to vote honestly unless she has a husband behind her. But to add to the confusion, Mr. Lloyd George went on to describe the condition of the working-class wife whom he is more particularly anxious to enfranchise—the woman living in a "squalid, miserable, impoverished home with its hungry and ragged children," receiving from "a husband given to excessive drinking . . . the miserable remnant of his salary." "No Woman Suffrage Bill," he declared, "which did not give the potent weapon of the vote to such a woman would ever obtain his support."

There is here some confusion of thought. It is legitimate to hold up the miserable wife of the slums as an object for pity, for care, and for remedial legislation. But if our object is to find a peculiarly independent class, we should do well to look elsewhere. To whom is she to look for "the strength and backing to resist undue influence"? To her drunken husband? The plain common sense of this matter is quite otherwise. So far from being a peculiarly "dependent" class, these women householders are the self-dependent women. They are the women who have learned to face the world alone, to meet their burdens unaided, and to bear the full responsibility for the households of which they are the heads. Poor they may be—most women are relatively poor in a world where women's labour is systematically underpaid. But they are at least their own mistresses, and the votes they gave would be determined by their own experience of life. These women who have had to struggle alone and to think for themselves are the class to whom one would naturally look to represent the distinctive woman's point of view on all social and industrial questions. On the merits of Adult Suffrage the Conciliation Committee as such has no opinion. It contains both adherents and opponents of this reform. I personally will use no argument which might seem to deny to any woman "the potent weapon of the vote." But this is common ground between opponents and supporters of Adult Suffrage, that women who are householders and

ratepayers can prefer a claim to the vote which is more direct, more obvious, and more certain to meet with the assent of public opinion than that which any other class of women can put forward.

Is the Bill Democratic?

The working women whom this Bill would enfranchise are not, it is said, "representative of their class" (Mr. Lloyd George, at Bodnant). There is no excuse for conjecture on this point. Exact knowledge is available. We contend, on the contrary, that the women occupiers are a miniature of the whole community, and fairly represent every class. The data in regard to London are known to every social student. In Booth's classical book, "Life and Labour in London" (vol. iv., page 391, second series) may be found the figures which show in detail the classes to which the women occupiers of London belong. There were, when this patient house-to-house canvass was taken, some 186,982 women occupiers in London. Of these nearly half were housewives, mostly of the working class. Rather more than half (94,940) were women who did other than domestic work. It is worth while to set out the more numerous categories of these:—

Charwomen, office-keepers, laundresses	...	...	30,334
Dressmakers and milliners	...	...	14,361
Shirt and blouse-makers, seamstresses	...	...	6,525
Waitresses, matrons, etc.	...	...	5,595
Tailoresses	...	...	4,443
Lodging and coffee-house keepers	...	...	4,226
Medical women, nurses, midwives	...	...	3,971
Teachers	...	...	2,198

These are the most numerous classes. Below 2,000 come lesser groups of artificial flower-makers, milk-sellers, bookbinders, etc., down to the 144 literary workers and the 140 Civil Servants. All of these possess the municipal vote already, and all of them would be qualified under this Bill. A fairer representation of the mass of working women could hardly be found. The educated women, doctors, nurses, and teachers are included in their due proportion. The poorer manual workers are the immense majority. The former will be enabled to give to the State the service of their trained intelligence. The latter will win the protection of the vote.

It is not possible to obtain exact figures as to the social standing of the women occupiers who are housewives only. But Miss Clara Collet, an expert statistician and the Senior Inspector for Women's Industries, writing in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* (September, 1908) estimated, on the basis of Booth's figures, that about 70,000 of the 90,000 keep no servant. Taking together the women engaged in work outside the home and the housewives who employ no servant, Booth's figures show that 89 per cent. of the women occupiers of London are working women.

There is other evidence available. The Independent Labour

Party conducted an inquiry some five years ago and found that in fifty towns or parts of towns where it had active branches, 82 per cent. of the registered women occupiers belong to the working class, a term which was defined to mean "those who work for wages, who are domestically employed, or who are supported by the earnings of wage-earning children."

Even more impressive were the results of an inquiry conducted in 1904 in northern towns by three women's organisations, which can be suspected of no bias in favour of property—the Lancashire and Cheshire Women Textile and Other Workers' Representation Committee, the Manchester and Salford Women's Trade and Labour Council, and the Women's Co-operative Guild. In Nelson two deputed inquirers, both of them Socialists, found that the proportion of working women voters on the register is 93 per cent. In Bolton, where there are over 5,000 women municipal voters, a very elaborate inquiry conducted in all the wards by Mr. Gerrey, the Liberal agent, gave a percentage of over 90. Wards in Leeds, Darwen, Kirkby Lonsdale, Barnsley, Horsforth, and Cambridge were also canvassed, with this conclusion, that "the average proportion of working women out of the total of women voters examined in all these places is 91 per cent."

Even in Kirkby Lonsdale, "a residential and shop-keeping town in which there is no special industry and where, if anywhere, one would expect the rich women to predominate," Miss Llewelyn Davies, a leading advocate of Adult Suffrage, could discover only "eight rich women and forty-nine trades and working women." A Cambridge ward showed "eighty-six working women occupiers and twenty-one upper and middle class." The joint report issued by these three organisations concluded as follows:—

Even in places where the professional and middle-class interest is strong, the working women's vote . . . will easily outweigh the propertied classes. On the other hand, in those great areas devoted to the Textile industries, the women's franchise will be almost entirely in the hands of the workers. This should cause no surprise, as it is only an illustration of the undeniable fact that in England there are more poor women than rich ones.

These careful statistical inquiries made by the leaders of working women's organisations are a sufficient answer to Mr. Churchill's casual verdict that a Bill which will enfranchise between 82 per cent. and 91 per cent. of working women is undemocratic, and even anti-democratic.

Mothers and Wives.

There remains only one possible meaning which might with any plausibility be attached to the charge that this electorate of women is not "representative." It will include comparatively few married women. "The basic principle of this Bill," declared Mr. Churchill, "is to deny votes to mothers and wives—that is to say, to deny votes to those who are upon the whole the best of their sex." There is here a double misconstruction. The Bill does not deny votes to married women. It bestows them upon all married

women who are householders and in the technical sense occupiers. If a wife satisfies the conditions imposed on a man, and if she has on her shoulders the responsibility before the law for the burdens of a household, she will be enabled to exercise the vote. Nor can it be said of a wife that under normal conditions she is wronged in quite the same crude way as a widow or single woman is wronged by the refusal of a vote. The vote is not a reward for excellence or virtue. It is a means of protection. Now the single woman, earning her own living, goes at present quite unrepresented. There is no one who can, however imperfectly, speak for her, and sometimes the men of her class or trade or occupation, so far from voicing her interests, are her rivals and competitors. Men doctors, for example, or men printers (as the recent strike suggests), would not use their votes to remedy any grievance of women doctors or women printers which legislation might touch. Their attitude towards the women of their own occupation is, speaking generally, one of antagonism and jealousy. These women then have certain interests which are totally unrepresented. It is otherwise with married women living under normally happy conditions. Their interests are in the main identical with those of their husbands on all the chief issues of legislation and taxation. This argument may easily be pressed too far. Every wife has her own personality, her own angle of vision, and in some measure her own distinct interests. But in so far as her chief interests are those of the household and the family, they are not unrepresented at present. But it would be a serious objection to our Bill if it left the special standpoint of the married woman unrepresented. She has her own problems—questions connected with her status before the law, with divorce, with the custody of children, and above all with the education and rearing of children. But the widow will come to the poll with all the wife's experience behind her, and of the women qualified under our Bill a large proportion will be widows and mothers. The widow will not have forgotten (to take Mr. Lloyd George's illustration) what she suffered from the drunken husband who gave her only the "miserable remnants" of his wages. Freed from his brutal presence, indeed, it is probable that her vote will be more truly her own than it could ever have been while she was actually a wife. But it is needless to labour the point. Will anyone assert that an electorate which includes a million women, whatever be their status, would fail to insist that more attention shall be paid to the needs of married women than is paid to them by governments responsible only to men? No woman elector, for example, married or single, widow or wife, would tolerate the harshness of the Midwives' Bill for which the present Government is responsible. The prospects and interests of every woman, married or single, will be forwarded and not injured by our Bill. This insistence on the special case of married women has come solely from men, and chiefly from men like Mr. Churchill, who have never by vote or by speech sacrificed an hour of their leisure to forward the cause of women's enfranchisement.

From the Women's Suffrage Societies, which include a large proportion of married women, not a word of protest has reached us. They have all, both militant and non-militant, party and non-party, supported our Bill. It is significant that we can cite the support of the only organisation which has a right to speak for married women of the working class—the Women's Co-operative Guild. It accepts our compromise while maintaining its ultimate demand for Adult Suffrage.

But why, it will be asked, did the Conciliation Committee so draft its Bill as to exclude the mass of married women? The answer lies in the conditions of our problem. We had to satisfy Suffragists of all schools and parties; on no other terms could we have obtained a majority. I was allowed, while we were preparing our Bill, to examine the pledges and answers to questions collected by the Suffrage societies during the General Election. They revealed the greatest divergence of opinion on this very point. The 120 Liberal and Labour Members who are pledged to Adult Suffrage would, of course, have preferred to enfranchise all married women. On the other hand I counted about forty Unionist and twenty Liberal Members who stated that they were prepared to enfranchise "widows and spinsters only." Our solution is a compromise. It recognises the principle that marriage ought not to disqualify, but in practice it admits only a limited number of married women to the vote. Adult Suffrage is confessedly unable to command a majority in this Parliament. Is there any middle course? A proposal has been put forward by Mr. Denman, based on an earlier Bill introduced by Mr. Dickinson. It is that the wives of all male householders should be qualified by virtue of their husband's qualification. There are about seven millions of qualified male householders. Of these presumably between five and six millions are married. We proposed to enfranchise a million women, and this even Mr. Churchill, with all his ardour for large solutions, described as "an enormous addition to the franchise." Is it probable that Conservatives, who frankly prefer a cautious and moderate measure, will accept an addition of six or seven millions? The probability is not increased when one learns that the group of Radicals which is promoting this suggestion expressly declares that it does not propose to consult Conservatives, or to seek their co-operation. A scrutiny of the division on our Bill offers a fair test of the probable fate of such a measure. Most, if not all, the Unionist Suffragists (I write after careful inquiry) would vote against it. Not all the Liberal Suffragists would vote for it. Defeat is inevitable.*

* The division on the second reading of our Bill gave this result, excluding the tellers:—

	FOR.	AGAINST.	
Liberals	161	60	
Unionists	87	113	
Labour	31	2	
Nationalists	20	14	
Total	299	189	Majority 110

As the title of our Bill stands, an amendment to extend its scope by admitting the wives of all householders would be out of order. But Mr. Snowden, in the course of the debate on behalf of the Committee, offered to re-commit the Bill in respect of its title, an offer which will be renewed when Parliament reassembles in November. If the Prime Minister will grant the further facilities which the Conciliation Committee seeks, the title can be altered and this amendment may be moved. Our object in giving the Bill a restricted title was to limit the time which might be spent in debate. We were suitors for time. The Government had refused even the week which we thought adequate, and our opponents had threatened obstruction. But if the Government will grant the time necessary for the consideration of the "whole question," the sense of the House can be taken on this proposal. It is not a proposal which a non-party committee can itself put forward. It would divide the Conciliation Committee, as it would divide Suffragists generally. For my part I do not believe that it could be carried, but the experiment is one which may fairly be tried. The event would show, I believe, that the Bill which we drafted after a careful study of all the available data, is the largest measure of Woman Suffrage for which a majority could be obtained in this House. It is a frank compromise, and it has succeeded in rallying sincere Suffragists of all schools to its support. There is another school of Suffragists—the school in whose eyes the chief defect of any Suffrage Bill is that it has a majority behind it.

The position of those who are determined to block our Bill from a "democratic" standpoint, I take to be this. Women have asked for a small boon. Like Alexander the Great, Mr. Lloyd George declares that what may be good enough for women to receive is not good enough for him to give. The lowest number of women which he will consent to enfranchise is apparently seven millions. Unluckily he is not at present in a position to give. There are other questions which interest him more. His proposal is that women should ignore the efforts of those who are prepared to help them now, in the hope of receiving from him at some date unspecified a Bill for which there is in the Commons no majority, and for which in the Lords there would be still fewer supporters. On other questions Mr. George will compromise. He will spend half a year in seeking some arrangement of the constitutional controversy with the Unionist leaders. It is only where women's interests are at stake that he insists on an unbending party attitude. It would be a sorry task to make light of the daring

Of the Liberals who voted against our Bill, only seven have ever voted for a suffrage Bill before, while another seven have in some way at some time pledged themselves to woman suffrage or adult suffrage. The remaining 46 are anti-suffragist. These 14, with the two Labour opponents, would probably vote for such a Bill as Mr. Denman proposes. If we transfer these to the "Ayes" and the Unionists to the "Noes," the result would be: For, 228; Against, 260; Majority against, 32. But even this estimate is too favourable. There are probably about 20 of the Liberal supporters of the Conciliation Bill who would not support a wider measure.

of a man who proposes to embark on so high and chivalrous an adventure. But what does he risk? He compared this question to that of Home Rule, and asked the women to put their faith in the Liberal Party with as great a patience as Irishmen have shown. Mr. Gladstone staked on Home Rule the fortunes of Liberalism, made it a government question, faced a rift in his Cabinet and a schism in his party, and went gallantly into the wilderness for his convictions. Mr. Lloyd George will not do that. Liberalism is to monopolise the credit, while it refuses the risks. It is to veto a non-party settlement, while it declines to use its resources as a governing party to impose a settlement on party lines.

The Future of the Bill.

Enough has been said to explain the origin and to defend the scope of our Bill. Nothing stands in its way save the Veto of the Cabinet. It can show every mark of popular favour which a democratic Government might require. The great organised bodies of women unanimously support it regardless of party or class. In impressive processions and in vast mass meetings women have demonstrated in its favour. While every party question slumbers, they have proved their zeal and their determination by a ceaseless propaganda. Public bodies like the Town Council of Glasgow and the Dublin Corporation have petitioned that it may pass into law. Above all, the representatives of the people, by a majority greater than is held to be necessary to carry the largest constitutional changes, have given it the stamp of their approval. It cannot be said that the question is not yet ripe. The Prime Minister himself, on the eve of the General Election, undertook that the Parliament then to be elected "should be given an opportunity of expressing its views." It has expressed its views. Are they to have effect? No one can pretend that the vote in our favour was academic.* Our two most formidable opponents, Mr. George, and notably Mr. Churchill, challenged the House from the Government benches to vote for the Second Reading only if it wished that the Bill should "be passed into law this session," "wanted it as it is," and "wanted it now," were "prepared to send it to the House of Lords," and "to fight the House of Lords if they reject it." We are entitled to conclude that the House of Commons wants all these things, and to demand that "the will of the people shall prevail."

No material obstacle stands in the way. This is an idle session

* The Prime Minister has laid stress on the fact that many of our supporters declined to back Mr. Shackleton's motion to send the Bill to a Grand Committee. But this implied no lack of sincerity or zeal. Unionists have always opposed the use of Grand Committees for important or controversial Bills. Several of them have publicly protested against this interpretation of their vote. Three of them made the best speeches delivered on our side, a fourth is a member of the Conciliation Committee, and a fifth was speaking five days later from our platform in Hyde Park.

—a period of truce. Not one of the pending party controversies can be touched. No elector, however anxious he may be to see Home Rule, or Welsh Disestablishment, or Education or Licensing dealt with, could complain, if time which cannot be used to further his own questions were given to the women. Both parties have agreed to make a vacuum. What occasion more suitable could there be for the consideration of a non-party issue? A unique opportunity has presented itself, which may not for a generation recur. Time there is to spare. A week will suffice for the further stages of our Bill. When once the truce is broken, and the normal course of party politics is resumed, every measure which has behind it the pressure of some disciplined body of male electors will claim and receive pre-eminence. Mr. Lloyd George has already announced that nothing must be done to satisfy the claims of women—claims which Parliament has recognised by vote upon vote over a period of forty years—until the Welsh Church has been disestablished. Mr. Redmond has an urgent claim to press. The Labour Party demands instant attention for the situation which the Osborne Judgment has created. If the opportunity which this year has brought with it is allowed to go by, if it ends in an academic and fruitless Second Reading, women will feel that a great chance has been used only to insult their hopes. If the moment is lost, men indeed may return to their party questions, but women will be left to meditate on the still unsolved problem of how best a voteless class may impress the handful of men who control the time of the House. A spectacle more repugnant to the whole spirit of representative Government it would be difficult to conceive. Parliament admits the wrong of which women complain. A remedy is devised by Members of all parties, meeting as the Constitutional Conference itself meets, in an atmosphere of peace and a spirit of good will. The remedy is accepted by Parliament in an overwhelming vote. It votes, but because certain Ministers dissent, it is apparently prepared to allow its vote to count for no more in the counsels of the nation than a resolution passed by a students' union. Yet the question is perhaps the gravest which any modern society can face. It touches every moral and social issue of our time. It has stirred the best women of our generation to an incessant and self-forgetful toil. They have braved for it the ridicule of the streets, defied custom, and faced in their hundreds the degradations of prison. It is difficult to believe that a body of men who have the power, the time and desire to right this grievance, can fail to be moved by the spectacle of such devotion to make the effort that will give their will effect.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.

The above Act now contains the law on the subject of Factories and Workshops, and the following is a summary of certain provisions relating to the employment of women, young persons, and children. In a leaflet it is impossible to deal with all the exceptions for special trades; these are best explained at meetings of workers where such trades are represented.

Scope of Act. The Act deals broadly with two classes of works: (1) Factories; (2) Workshops.

Definition of Factory and Workshop. A *Factory* is a work-place in which machinery is moved by steam or mechanical power, and certain other places, such as book-binding, letterpress printing works, etc. Factories are sub-divided into (1) textile (2) non-textile, the provisions for the two differing in matters of detail. A *Workshop* is, speaking generally, a place in which *no* mechanical power is used. Workshops are again distinguished from "Domestic Workshops" that is, places in which the only persons employed are members of the same family dwelling there.

Sanitation. Every factory, workshop or laundry must be kept clean, well ventilated, free from bad smells and overcrowding, and at a reasonable temperature. Not less than 250 cubic feet of space (400 in overtime) must be allowed for each worker.

In all factories and steam laundries the duty of seeing that these provisions are carried out belongs to the Factory Inspector; in workshops and hand laundries to the local authority.

Safety from Fire. The local authority is requested to visit factories and workshops in order to ascertain whether there are sufficient means of escape in case of fire. In London this duty devolves upon the London County Council.

Definition of "Child," "Young Person," and "Woman." The working hours vary for children, young persons, and women. A "child" means a person who is under the age of fourteen years; a "young person" means a person between fourteen* and eighteen years of age; a "woman" means a woman of eighteen years of age and upwards. The period of employment for young persons and women in factories and workshops is limited to the hours between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., or 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., or 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. In textile factories two hours must be allowed for meals (one of them before 3 p.m.), and work must not be carried on for more than 4½ hours without an interval of ½ hour for meals. In non-textile

* Children of 13 years of age may be young persons under certain conditions.

In Non-Textile Factories. factories and workshops $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours must be allowed for meals (one of them before 3 p.m.), and work must not be carried on for more than 5 hours without an interval of $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for meals.

On Saturday. In textile factories, where work begins on Saturday at 6 a.m., if not less than one hour is allowed for meals, manufacturing processes must cease at 12 noon, and employment of any other kind at 12.30 p.m. If less than one hour is allowed for meals, manufacturing processes must cease at 11.30 a.m. and employment of any other kind at 12 noon. When work begins at 7 a.m., manufacturing processes must cease at 12.30 p.m., and employment of any other kind at 1 p.m.

Non-Textile. In non-textile factories and workshops, the hours of employment on Saturday may be between 6 a.m. and 2 p.m., or 7 a.m. and 3 p.m., or 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. In the case of both non-textile and textile factories and workshops, an interval of not less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour must be allowed for meals.

For Children. Children employed in factories and workshops may only work half-time; that is, either in the morning or afternoon; or on alternate days.

A child under the age of 12 years must not be employed in a factory or workshop unless lawfully so employed at the commencement of this Act (1st January, 1902).

For Jewesses. Special provisions with regard to employment on Saturday and Sunday are made for young persons and women of the Jewish religion.

Overtime. "Young persons" are only allowed to work overtime in certain exceptional cases. Women may work 2 hours overtime (including interval of $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after 5 p.m.) for not more than three days in one week, or thirty days in one year in case of press of work, or where materials may be spoilt by the weather. Women may also work overtime on perishable articles for not more than three days in one week, or fifty days in one year.

Laundries. The period of employment in laundries, exclusive of meal hours and absence from work, must not exceed, for children, 10 hours; for young persons, 12 hours; for women, 14 hours out of the 24 hours. The weekly total must not exceed, for children, 30 hours; for young persons and women, 60 hours. No child, young person or woman may be employed for more than 5 hours without an interval of, at least, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for meals. Women may work overtime, provided that no woman works for more than 14 hours in any day; that the overtime does not exceed 2 hours in any day; and that it is not worked on more than 3 days in one week, or 30 days in one year.

Sanitation, etc. In every laundry in which steam or mechanical power is used, the provisions of the Act as to Sanitation, Safety, Accidents, Notices, and Abstracts of Acts, apply as if it were a factory; and in every other laundry as if it were a workshop. In laundries using steam or mechanical power, a fan or other means for regulating the temperature of every ironing-room, and for carrying off the steam of every washhouse, must be provided and used. Stoves for heating irons must be sufficiently separated from every ironing-room; gas irons giving out noxious fumes may not be used; and the floors must be kept in good condition and well drained.

Exemptions. These conditions do not apply to any laundry in which the only persons employed are inmates of a prison, reformatory, industrial school or charitable institution; nor to any laundries where the only persons employed are members of the same family, dwelling at the laundries, or where not more than two persons dwelling elsewhere are employed.

Out-Work. Employment outside a factory or workshop, in the business of that factory or workshop, before or after working on the same day inside, is forbidden for children. It is also forbidden for young persons and women who are employed inside both before and after the dinner hour. Work given out, or allowed to be taken out, is treated as employment on that day.

The occupier of a factory or workshop or laundry may not, to his knowledge, employ a woman within 4 weeks after she has given birth to a child.

Notices. Notices must be sent to the Inspector within one month of the time when work is begun in any factory or workshop.

Of Registration. All occupiers of existing workshops must (unless they have already done so) send their names and addresses, and particulars of the work carried on in such workshops, to the Inspector.

Of Overtime. On any evening when it is intended that women shall work overtime, notice must be sent to the Inspector before 8 p.m.

Of Accidents. Notice of all accidents causing loss of life must be sent to the Certifying Surgeon of the district; and all other accidents (whether caused by machinery or not) whereby the person is prevented from working for at least 5 hours on any of the 3 days following the accident, must be reported to the Factory Inspector. A register of such accidents must be kept, to be open at all times to inspection.

To be affixed. An Abstract of this Act, with the names and addresses of the Inspector and Surgeon of the district, the hours of

employment and times of meals; also a notice stating the total cubic space and the number of persons who may be employed, must be affixed in every factory, workshop and laundry, in such a position as to be easily read. Occupiers of "domestic workshops" are *not* required to send or affix notices.

Lists of
Out-Workers.

The occupier of every factory and workshop, and every contractor employed by such occupier, shall, if the trade is included in the order of the Home Secretary, keep lists of the names and addresses of all persons employed as outworkers, such lists to be open to inspection by any Inspector under this Act, and by any officer duly authorised by the District Council; also he shall send copies of such lists to the Inspector upon his request, and further copies on or before the 1st of February and the 1st of August in each year to the *District Council of the district in which the factory or workshop is situate. This regulation includes as a "workshop" any place from which wearing apparel is given out to be made.

Obstruction.

Any person obstructing or delaying an Inspector in the performance of his duty is subject to a penalty of not more than £5; or when the offence is committed at night, £20. It is deemed that an Inspector is obstructed if a child, young person or woman is concealed or prevented from appearing before an Inspector, or if any person fails to comply with a requisition of the Inspector made in accordance with the Act.

For not complying with any of the foregoing provisions the Act has fixed penalties which may be inflicted when a conviction is obtained.

It is very desirable that any person who is aware that these Acts are not being carried out should give notice to the Inspector or Sanitary Officer. It is not necessary that the person sending should be the worker, and no name or address need be sent, so that the complainant cannot be identified if there is any reason to fear loss of employment.

All information should be addressed to H.M.'s Inspector of Factories, Home Office, Whitehall, S.W.; or to the Principal Lady Inspector of Factories, 66, Victoria Street, S.W.; or to the Sanitary Officer of the District.

Letters containing complaints can also be addressed to the Women's Industrial Council, and will be treated as confidential and forwarded, without names being given, to the proper quarter.

* "District Council" means "Court of Common Council" in the City of London, and "Borough Council" in other parts of London

Women's Industrial Council,
12, Buckingham Street,
7, JOHN STREET, W.C.
ADELPHI.

Margaret McMILLAN

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(21)

15313✓

Feeding London's School Children.

I.—HOW NOT TO DO IT.

THE following is written with the object of calling the attention of the Independent Labour Party to the manner in which the feeding of the underfed school children is now being carried out in London, and to shew that the two most important facts, the Child and the Food, are being wilfully neglected.

The twelve organisers appointed by the London County Council are instructed to use all their efforts to raise the family, and so obviate the necessity for providing food for the children. In connection with their work a system of investigation on charity organisation lines is instituted calculated to deter all self respecting parents from making an application on behalf of their children.

In some cases the investigation even includes inquiries of the employers as to wages paid, which might have serious consequences for the applicant.

The wish of the Council being to avoid the supplying of food, it is not surprising that no arrangements have been made for its preparation, and in the whole of London, only one small kitchen has been equipped by the Council, where well-selected food can be properly cooked, and some attention paid to the children's diet. In all other feeding centres the children are contracted for. No qualified persons with a knowledge of domestic economy, or management, have been appointed by the Council to organise the work.

Later on I shall quote from Canon Barnett, who though a strong supporter of the Charity Organisation Society, expresses his disapproval of the system of investigation as at present carried out.

The first portion of my paper deals with the actual condition in London. The second portion with my attack on the Report of the Chairman and Organisers of the Sub-Committee on underfed children, in twelve selected schools in London, as published by the London County Council.

In 1905, an attempt was made to put the feeding of the necessitous school children under the Poor Law Administration, but the Local Government Board Order became a dead letter, and other means had to be taken in order to stop the physical deterioration which was so apparent in the youth of the nation.

By the passing of the Provision of Meals Act in 1906 the responsibility of school feeding was definitely imposed on the Education Authorities, and the care of the physical well-being of the child came under the Educational Administration of the Country. It was left for the local authorities to decide

whether the necessary money should come from voluntary funds, or whether a special rate should be levied for the purpose of providing food. London made great efforts to raise a voluntary fund to meet the necessary expense. Urgent appeals were made to the charitable public, dramatic entertainments were given, newspapers opened their columns to subscribers, and one last desperate appeal was sent out by the Lord Mayor. The public, however, would not respond. Charity had failed. Charity, which could relieve poverty and sickness in the small communities of mediæval times, is powerless before the misery and destitution prevailing under our present complex industrial system, when all human relationship between rich and poor ceases to exist. No charity can relieve the thousands of hungry children who fill our schools to-day. Dr. Eichholz, one of H.M. Principal Inspectors of Schools, put the number of underfed children in the Schools in London at 122,000. No charity can give employment to the thousands of men and women asking for work, for employment depends, not on the needs of Labour, but on the profit that Labour will yield.

Charitable aid having failed, London is now obliged to follow the example set by some other cities, and out of the local rates obtain the money needed. There are, however, disadvantages in taking more money from the already over-burdened ratepayer, whose condition is often little better than the condition of those for whose benefit the money is to be used. The Distress Committees have forwarded to the Children's Care Committees names of children as necessitous, whose fathers are themselves ratepayers. It is to the national revenue rather than local taxation that we should look for the bulk of the money needed for the feeding of the school children, though the administration must rest with the local education authority.

A very interesting article by Canon Barnett on the subject of the children's feeding appeared recently in the *Westminster Gazette*. In it he pointed out some of the difficulties which stand in the way of the successful carrying out of the work. "Underfed School Children must," he says, "without question be fed. They cannot learn if their brains are insufficiently supplied with blood, and if they do not learn, the commonwealth will suffer. The country cannot prosper if the richer class shuts up its bowels of compassion and fails to do its duty, and if the poorest class has insufficient food and fails to do its work." He gives a picture of the feeding as it actually takes place in many parts of London, under the chaotic conditions which prevail at present, "children will be fed just as if they were hungry animals, and not human beings, who in breaking bread might get to know the meaning of human communion. . . . The food will often be eaten in restaurants, in the streets, or in corners. There will be greed, and there will be waste, and destruction of school lessons in manners and morals."

I also wish to call the attention of the Independent Labour Party to the system of investigation at present insisted upon by the Council, and which also Canon Barnett condemns. "It is both costly and ineffective," he says, "it humiliates those whom it accepts and embitters those who are refused." As an immediate solution he

would substitute free breakfasts, open to all, without investigation. This, however, would hardly satisfy the medical experts, who will now have an opportunity of giving their opinion on the physical needs of the children.

In London itself, all is dire confusion; the feeding is haphazard and insufficient, and the conditions under which it is often carried out are demoralising. Teachers have refused to add to their already heavy duties the additional work of supervising the children's feeding. Kitchens are not in readiness, halls cannot be found where dinners can be served in a decent or orderly fashion, and public caterers have had to be called in, or neighbouring cookshops made use of, each to take their share of profit from the children's food. While all the time at the back of the official mind remains the conviction that upon the Education Authorities has been thrust the work which should belong to the Poor Law.

The Education Committee of the London County Council has delegated the carrying out of the feeding to the Children's Care Committees which have been appointed in connection with single schools, or groups of schools. These committees are composed of the head teachers of the different departments of the schools, three of the managers of the groups, and co-opted members. The committees meet weekly or fortnightly for a couple of hours during the afternoon, and much of their time is occupied in considering the investigations which have been made into the circumstances of the necessitous children. No rules have been laid down to guide the different committees, and their decisions have no kind of uniformity.

Very much depends upon the personal feelings of the teachers, and in the better class schools the teachers often oppose the starting of feeding, for fear of lowering the prestige of the school by acknowledging the poverty of the children. Sometimes when teachers and managers are ratepayers, their opposition comes from a fear of increasing the rates. Some committees insist that an application should be made to the head teacher by the parent before a child may be fed. There are some which require a personal application to the committee on the part of the parent. Others allow the teacher to admit the child to the dinners and arrange for the investigation to be made later. In every case the parents are given a printed form which demands repayment for the meals, and threatens legal proceedings should the child be proved to be non-necessitous.

Some committees refuse to feed the children whose parents receive poor relief. Other committees object to supplement wages, and the child pops in and out of the dining hall according as the father is in or out of work. Over every committee hangs the fear that, by feeding the child, "parental responsibility" may be destroyed, and the money saved spent on drink. The feeding of the children, I contend, is a NATIONAL question, which has for its object the building up of a strong and healthy race; and the child, and *not* the education of the parent, must be the object of our solicitude. In every case there are the almost insurmountable difficulties of procuring a suitable hall, providing properly cooked food, and securing the necessary supervision of the children.

It is not, therefore, surprising that at the present moment there are in London, 364 schools in which there is no feeding at all, and in many others the feeding consists in the children being given a pennyworth of food at the neighbouring eating house or fried fish shops, which they eat at the street corners. Week after week Care Committees sit sifting fresh cases, trying without either principle or method to decide which children are necessitous. In the schools a new class—that of “necessitous children”—is being formed; this is detrimental to all training in self-respect. The present methods of selection deter the independent and self-respecting parents from making an application for the feeding of their children. So, poor, ragged, neglected children are gathered together in mission halls and cheap eating houses to intensify their dirt and misery, and without the leaven of cleanly humanity, which might act as an example and an encouragement.

As I mentioned in my introduction, the London County Council have issued a report of their organisers on the Home Conditions of the necessitous children attending 12 specimen schools in different parts of London. The homes of 3,344 children were visited, representing 1,218 different families, and out of this number, 2,630 children were passed as necessitous, and the remaining 714 children were found non-necessitous.

I now proceed to quote from the Report the method adopted by the Council's organisers to obtain information as to the home conditions of the “necessitous children.”

“As soon as the investigators' reports reached us we passed them through the hands of the teachers, attendance officers, relieving officers, and clerks of distress committees, for such further information as these were able to give. Then the evidence was taken of the church and chapel workers, London City missionaries, settlement workers, charity organisation committees, nursing associations, bible women, and police. In some cases the large employers of labour in the district, landlords and shopkeepers (including the pawnbrokers) were all consulted.

“In all cases we found it necessary to guarantee that the information was to be treated as confidential. In this way valuable facts were disclosed which would have been inaccessible to a more strictly official inquiry. Save in the one case of the Lambeth Distress Committee we were never refused the most ungrudging assistance, and for this we cannot sufficiently acknowledge our indebtedness. We were able to check the information supplied by the investigators, and also to supplement their reports with evidence of character that alone could be had from people possessing good local knowledge.”

Almost as an after-thought comes the account of the child's own condition. “We have been asked to say how many children of those investigated were ‘necessitous’ in the more definite sense of ‘wanting food.’ In giving an opinion we must point out that *we have seldom seen the children themselves*, but, if we had done so in every case, were we in a position without medical assistance to diagnose the state of the child's nutrition.” (The italics are mine.)

In order to obviate the necessity of themselves providing

food, every other method in dealing with the necessitous children is recommended by the organisers and by the chairman of the sub-committee of the underfed children, under whose auspices the London County Council's Report is presented. They maintain that, “where there is an effective Care Committee at work, with regular sympathetic home visiting, the parents are not allowed to become careless with regard to the feeding and clothing of their children;” that, “as the home is watched over, any parental tendency to get into bad ways is combated, and in many cases the early sympathy of a competent visitor will often prevent a man or woman from degenerating into habitual drunkenness;” that, “while the worst cases will have to be dealt with by the industrial school solution, the others may be helped to save themselves.”

“Therefore,” the Report concludes, “we come to the conclusion that at the moment, out of the number of school children investigated, 78·88 were necessitous in the sense of lacking sufficient food, and 21·12 were non-necessitous, and that school meals will be required by the former until effective Care Committees are able to check the diseases attendant on partial employment, bad housing and other evils.”

Can Miss Morton and Mr. Pepler, whose names appear at the foot of the Organisers' Report, be so ignorant of the great economic and moral causes underlying the poverty of the masses, as to believe for one moment that any Care Committees can possibly cope with the terrible social evils of poverty and degradation which exist in our cities to-day? Blinded by the folly of such statements the London County Council continues to neglect attending to the proper feeding of the children, or attempting in any way to improve their physical condition. Waste, disorder, confusion and neglect will continue until the Council accepts the feeding as part of the school curriculum, and sees that the same care and attention are bestowed upon the well being of the school children in the elementary schools as on the physically and mentally unfit in the hospitals and asylums of the country.

The organisers further suggest that in order to prevent the teachers being turned into relieving officers, all responsibility with regard to the feeding should be taken from them, except that of notifying to the Care Committees, of which they would no longer be members, the names of necessitous children attending the school. “Then as the child may be sent to the cleansing station and cleansed, so it may be sent to the mission hall or cooking centre and fed.”

Far from eliminating the teachers I would bring them into ever closer human fellowship with the children. The teachers have already knowledge and sympathy, they only need to be given more time and greater leisure, and no longer condemned to merely class-work, they will have the opportunity to direct the physical as well as the mental education of the child.

In conclusion I wish to state the four points which I am especially anxious to emphasize.

- (1.) That it is the physical condition of the children themselves, and not the education of the parents we have to consider.
- (2.) That the only reason for placing the feeding in the

hands of the Education Authority, is to secure that the same attention shall be paid to the physical, as to the mental development of the child.

(3.) Recognition of the fact that the Care Committees can only ameliorate results; they cannot influence the causes of the prevailing poverty and degradation in our cities.

(4.) That the necessary funds must come from Imperial taxation, not from local rates.

A. COBDEN-SANDERSON.

II.—HOW TO DO IT.

"Thanks be to God we eate plentifully, and be not gone crokyed and hungry as others are."—Old English Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It has often been noted that great reforms are brought about through the influence of passive, as well as humble beings, but it is especially true of schools that they owe much to the weakest scholars. The baby—the two or three year old child—made the old discipline and methods of infant schools appear absurd at last in the eyes of all. The defective and abnormal child has stimulated the best kind of teachers to make studies that are resulting in improved methods. It is now the turn of the starveling to enter the arena, and it is pretty certain that his little person will be the centre of even a greater reform.

Three questions face the members of Education Authorities to-day in connection with the carrying out of the Act. They are, "What are we to give the children to eat?" Also, "Under what circumstances and surroundings are they to eat it?" And lastly, "How and where is this food to be prepared, and how distributed?"

This little pamphlet is not written in order to give finished, perfect, and authoritative answers to all these questions. The materials and the warrant for such dogmatic teaching cannot yet be claimed by anyone. In so far, indeed, as two of the three questions are concerned, only one or two education committees have any experience at all that is likely to be of great value, and these know quite well that every locality has to face a problem that is not exactly that of any other. A certain amount of experience is, however, already to hand, and so we may venture to offer a few suggestions as to the practical steps involved in carrying out a scheme of school meals in London.

What are the children to eat? "Give them anything," says the man in a hurry; "if they're hungry they'll be glad of it." But the famishing are not, as a rule, very hungry. Every organ is weakened as the result of starvation—more especially the organ that has to deal with food. The experience of the Captains of Salvation Army Shelters, as well as of teachers in slum schools, is that half-famishing adults and children sitting down for the first time for weeks to a good meal, eat little, and are on the sick list as the result of eating even a very small meal. Well-fed boys in public schools are ravenous—eager for "hampers" from home, and ready to patronise tuck shops. The starving will often turn away from a good dinner.

In the first days the helpings should be small. It may be

necessary to give on the first day or two only liquid—or light farinaceous food. After a short time, however, the symptoms of chronic starvation will pass off, and the child will seem to get hungrier every day.

To return, however, to our question. What kind and quantity of food does a child of school age require? Dr. Clement Dukes has worked at the answer in the interest of the preparatory school boy. A child under fourteen (and over nine, we may say,) requires, he declares, weekly

STARCHES.	Bread	90 ounces
	Oatmeal	
CARBO-HYDRATES.	Sugar	16 "
	Fat	2.5
	Butter	8
	Milk	200
	Soup	20
PROTEIDS.	Meat	64
	Fish	10
	Cheese	2

This dietary is interesting, not because we can attempt to supply it, but because it indicates the needs of growing children. The large quantity of meat— $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. per day—indicates the great need of *proteid*—which, however, can be got from other foods, such as oatmeal, pea meal, lentils, and cheese. The misfortune of the child of the poor is that, in many cases at least, he has always had to eat as if he were an adult. Although, needing only one-ninth part the proteid and carbo-hydrate of a full-grown man, he requires one-half as much fat daily as the adult. Yet he may have had to eat from infancy just as his parents ate. No one was at hand to say that growing was a process that needed a good supply of fat. The food of many of our elementary school children has been dreadfully lacking in fat, and in proteid. The results are before us

We do not need the school doctor in order to learn that the wretched teeth, and soft twisted bones of thousands of poor school children are a symptom and result of a lean and starchy diet. But how rapidly a better diet may improve them, few can have realized, before Dr. Ralph Crowley made his memorable experiments in child feeding in the spring and early summer of 1907. The record of this experiment is now familiar to many. Yet we may review the facts here. Dr. Crowley gave two meals daily to the children with whom he made his experiment. Breakfast consisted of oat meal porridge, not milled English meals, but genuine Scotch oats, and milk. Dinner, though not always including meat, had always the right amount of proteid, in pulses (beans, lentils, peas) or cheese—also the right amount of fat (in butter, milk, etc.). The results were amazing. The children after a week of extraordinary gain in weight (one child actually gained over 3lbs. in a week!) attained a new level as it were in nutrition and began to grow healthily, gaining at the rate of 5 oz. per week in weight. Formerly, when home fed, they were, like their companions, gaining only 1 oz. per week.

But there are well-nourished children who are very light

and very small, and there are large and very heavy children whose output of energy is pitiable! But Bradford, and the Open-Air School of London—where children are fed regularly—can supply evidence of quite another kind. Dr. Frederick Rose has had photographs taken of children entering the out-door school, and other photographs some months later of the same children after they had enjoyed out-door life and regular meals for some months. The mere gain in weight is weak evidence as compared with the change, or rather the transformation, visible in the faces of the children. In so far as some of the scholars are concerned it is a *new* soul that looks out from the young face, a soul whose very existence was formerly unsuspected. All signs of deterioration, the working, wrinkled forehead, the stolid eyes, the coarse lips even, have disappeared, and in their place is a calm, bright face, a face of dawning beauty and intelligence.

The point that needs to be emphasised is that Imagination and Intellect cost something. The brain and nervous system are expensive, draining the whole system as they do for nourishment. The Bradford Education Authority have really gone beyond mere teaching. They are trying to grow Nervous Systems. The food given in their dining halls is of the best quality.* It is prepared with great care and cleanliness. And last of all it is not *dull* and one might say "*stupid*" feeding. It is varied so that the same dinner is not set before a child twice in 17 days. The average cost per head is from 1d. to 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., though one dinner of the 17 falls as low as three farthings without going below the standard in essentials. These figures apply, of course, to the mere cost of food, and do not include service and apparatus.

But it is not through the work of one authority, but through the efforts of many that all the problems of diet will be solved. An immense opportunity is now offered to raise the physique of the whole nation. To put children off in future with any kind of weak soup, to offer them any order of "filling" pudding, to feed them with jam and starchy bread, will now mean the flinging aside of this opportunity.

The choice of the dining hall depends now on the school accommodation. In a few elementary schools in Bradford at least a dining-room is built. But in many schools, hall and class-rooms are used, while halls are hired as in London for the use of some children. In Germany the gymnasium—which is to be found in every modern school—is used as a dining-room. The problem is largely one of service, however, as well as of space. Young monitors help in a wonderful way to get rid of the difficulty of service.

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*It is not therefore dear food. "Luxurious" feeding is, of course, most unwholesome—more especially for children. The strongest men, and some at least of the more intellectual races appear to live simply. Oat meal was the staple food of the Scottish people. The magnificent teeth of old Highlanders, and the massive skeletons found in old church-yards, as well as the high thinking of the leaders of all ages prove that expensive foods are not necessary for fine structures.

possible. The early age at which the children leave school baffles the teacher's efforts on every hand, yet in spite of this a beginning has to be made. The elder girls may be told off in turn to lay the tables, serve the food, and attend to the little ones. It should be part of their duty to see that the infants come to table with clean hands and faces, and also with clean handkerchiefs. (Dr. Kerr says that half of the education of a child of four consists in learning to use a handkerchief. Anyone with the smallest experience of little children in very poor neighbourhoods will bear him out in this saying. Speech troubles, throat and nose troubles are connected largely with the neglect of such training as a nurse or elder sister gives in this little matter in well-to-do-homes). The dirty clothing of children in some areas is another great trouble. The table cloths can hardly be kept clean for a day, rubbed as they are by dirty sleeves. Some kind of cheap overall should be worn at table, until public opinion decides that these dirty clothes are not to be worn at all in schools. Elbow sleeves and aprons are worn to-day by the little monitors in Bradford schools—who are indeed in many instances models of neatness. Unfortunately, baths are not to be found in London elementary schools. It is therefore difficult to insist in every area on the keeping up of a high standard of cleanliness. With the help of school nurses and monitors it should be possible, however, to ensure that no child should sit down to table in a very neglected state.

The furniture should be fitted to the age and size of the children. The little ones should sit on small chairs at low tables, and should not be crowded together on forms. Otherwise the meal cannot have any educative value. It would be well, too, if the tables were fairly numerous, and in any case the groups should be well divided, and every group (of little ones) have its own monitor. Grace is sung in Bradford, and even the secularist can hardly fail to admit the great beauty and educational value of this custom.

The process of Digestion, we are assured, begins in the mouth—and should begin *well* there. Many children bolt their food—more especially children who are stunted and hurried over their meals. Dr. Hall, of Leeds, found that the slum children he fed did not chew at all, but swallowed their food whole. "They put it in their mouths, and down it went like a letter going in a letter-box," he said in amazement. Later, he had all the food cut up and minced fine so that it was eaten, like soup, with spoons. But this is not desirable. It is paying too little respect to the teeth. Every doctor insists that children should not be hurried in eating, that they should be encouraged to chew well, and that hard crusts should be given sometimes. Dr. Henry Campbell thinks that the failure of learning to chew is one cause of adenoids, that it checks the circulation of the blood and lymph in such a way that the palate and mouth becomes mis-shapen. In any case it is a cause of other evils too numerous to mention.

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some cannot chew. They having nothing to chew with.* The nurses and monitors should see that the children clean the teeth after eating. At the school meal food that will help to make good teeth will be given, but, in the first years there will be sad revelations.

Manual training does not begin with woodwork or even with clay-modelling. It may be carried on all the time, and nowhere in a more educative way than at table. Many neglected children do not know how to use a knife or fork. They do not even know how to hold and use a spoon. But after a very little training they manage very well, and never lose the good, new habit. Here again, however, a great deal depends on space and *comfort*.

As a little child's *new* movements are *large* movements, he cannot make much progress at a crowded table. He wants space—even to learn to eat. After a little time he can manage even in crowds—but not at first.

Flowers and leaves to make the school table pretty will be a *very* good investment. But one need not spend the rate in order to make the school table look charming. The children can bring flowers at almost every season. After the first delicious shock the least fortunate accept the new and pleasant ways, and grow to resent ugly and unpleasant associations in eating—and that is education. Reading and writing are only convenient arts; but new habits and ways are something more, and something different.

For the well-to-do or wealthy child, meal times are usually hours of drill and discipline as well as of pleasure—unless of course he always eats in the nursery. Even then he has to sit up nicely, and to keep quiet, and to use his napkin. At the school table the children should sit up, but it is not advisable to insist on silence, since they are already subject *all* day to a discipline that may be necessary (in view of the large numbers) but is very repressive and certainly does not induce self-control. At dinner it should be relaxed—and what Mr. Bray calls “orderly disorder” should be encouraged. There should be no shouting—but plenty of smiles and laughter. An entirely new range of opportunity come into view along with the school table. “Does the sacredness of Home depend on the family pudding” asks one reformer. The answer is that in a large measure it does. If the school meal is not carried out quite brutally, it must mean the making dear and sacred a larger group than is the family group. It seems that the member of groups, large and small, become known to each other in the breaking of bread.†

*Dr. Marion Hunter in reporting on Infants five years old and under at the time of admission, testifies that of 700 “infants” only 20 had perfectly sound teeth; 153 from 3 to 5 bad teeth, but some were in a worse case. Here are some cases: Boy of 5 years old—no teeth only decaying stumps. Boy of 3—had seven teeth out and 5 stumps remaining. Three other boys of four years old had only stumps, and one girl of 5 had only two teeth left.

†In Bradford the Deaf children dined at school 10 years ago, and always the teachers, and also somehow a School Board Member were often of the company. These children, though deprived of hearing, became the frankest, the most lovable, in the city—after the meals were started. Nearly all paid for their food. The head teacher went on for a long time dining at school because as she said “the children were quite different if you ate with them.”

This is one reason, too, why the teacher should sit at the head of the school table. Without her, or him, the whole venture will fail miserably on the educational side. The writer wishes to give her strong testimony that never in her experience has *any* effort to benefit school children been a success from which the teacher stood aloof. It is not to be expected that the school dining scheme will prove an exception to this rule. The question is not “Should the teacher be present?”* but “How is her presence to be assured and her best services made available.” To begin with, nothing in the way of an attendant's duty should be required of teachers. They should *not* serve the food. They should not wait at table. They should not assist to bring in cans, plates, etc., or even help to marshal the children. They should simply enter as a mother or governess enters to preside, and to be the head, and as far as possible to be the Soul of the daily gathering. Again when dinner is over—they should have no duty but the duty of preparing by rest and recreation for afternoon work. Attendants, nurses, should be engaged for other duties, helped by monitors. Otherwise the educational side of all the work will be nil.

Needless to say, such perfectly natural, and home-like arrangements have not yet been made—even in Bradford. The initial difficulties have been faced there and are being conquered because of the help rendered by brave and self-forgetting men and women-teachers who have been willing to serve as well as teach the poorest children. (One of these is a highly qualified Master in a Secondary School, others are Headmasters and Mistresses with splendid records.) These receive now a small remuneration of 5/- a week for their work in the dining halls, but they could render a more valuable kind of service if they were entirely relieved of some of their present tasks.

Not the teacher alone, however, should break bread with the Citizen of To-Morrow. The school manager, the education committee member, the stranger within our gates might surely honour the children's table. Let one but think how little bright converse, how little change relieves the days of thousands of children who, week by week, year by year, hear at their movable eating hours nothing that stimulates or cheers—but only anxious questionings, sordid details of a hard life or in some cases it may be, bitter reproaches, breaking long spells of brutish silence. There *are* children who come down to lunch as people go to the theatre. Silent they are indeed, and well drilled. Yet how full of interest are the grave eyes they fix on the stranger who brings with him airs of a new life! Many a career has been fixed, and many a life directed by the words and presence of a visitor who is not talking to “the children.” But to the little slum dwellers there are no such experiences. No relief comes, no new delight in the person of a guest. Yet he could listen and learn and enjoy as well as the other. It is life as well as

*Let it be said again here that the child of the People is not essentially different as regards his needs from the child of the privileged class. What mother would say to her governess “You need not preside at the school-room meals. You have given lessons and this other duty is no concern of yours.”

bread that *all* our children want. In giving one of these we should at least attempt to give the other also!

"How is the food to be prepared and distributed?" Every locality will solve these problems according to its own needs. But there can hardly be any doubt that the Education Authority would be well advised in having the food prepared by its own officials and, if possible, in its own buildings, rented or otherwise.

To begin with, this appears to be the more economical method. The room where the food is prepared need not be a very large one. In Bradford a partition of the not very big gymnasium of Green Lane School has served very well as a kitchen, where food is prepared daily for three thousand five hundred children. Neither does the matter of fuel mean a great expense. If the heat from the boilers by which schools are already warmed can be utilized and returned—as in Bradford, where the steam from the school baths is used for the heating the great vegetable and soup pans, as well as for the ovens—the cost will be small. Moreover, the apparatus needed in a school kitchen is not expensive. A small machine for paring and coring fruit (which may be fixed to a table) costs twenty-five shillings. The vegetable cleaning machine is not a serious item. The whole of the apparatus used in Bradford has not exceeded the sum of £600—and this apparatus, one must remember, is not of a perishable character, and will not have to be renewed in a short time.

For the work of distribution, vans would appear to be necessary. The food must be delivered rapidly. It must be distributed at various centres in a large area within forty or fifty minutes, so that the dinner hour need not be postponed to any serious extent for any group of schools. All this cannot be done without rapid transit. Large motor vans may not, however, be necessary in every school area. Where the number of diners is small a cheaper kind of vehicle, such as one sees to-day in the streets driven by employees of tradesmen, may be used, and in some crowded areas a school may be used as a feeding centre, and also as a central dining-room.

It is probable that a bolder expenditure in the beginning would be the more economical way of doing the work. The Bradford Education Committee are extending their Feeding Centre. They are adding a large drying-room (heated to 120 degrees); and a vast oven with a draw-plate inside 12ft. by 6½, the bottom of which is pulled easily, backward and forwards, on wheels. But a small kitchen, and a small staff of 5 or 6 (all told), has been large enough to carry on the work of feeding thousands.

Communal dining has many aspects which have not been touched on here at all. A highly civilized race like the ancient Greeks understood them—and for them a brilliant citizenship was possible. We, however, are still at grips with starvation.

MARGARET McMILLAN.

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THE ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD.

By HENRY D. HARBEN.

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THE ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD.

"It were good that men in their Innovations would follow the example of Time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived. . . . It is good also not to try experiments in States except the Necessity be urgent, or the utility evident: and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation."
—BACON, "On Innovations."

The Need.

It is one of the paradoxes of our present stage of democracy that public attention is habitually rivetted on the discussion of those questions on which men differ most, instead of on the furtherance of those measures upon which they most agree. Were it not so, the proposals that have been made in certain quarters of late years for the endowment of motherhood, for maternity pensions, or, at least, for some form of insurance against some of the initial expenses of maternity, would surely have been more favorably noticed. To raise the economic status of women by a method which would emphasize and appreciate at its full value their work as mothers of the race is an aim in which Suffragists and Anti-Suffragists, both male and female, find themselves in accord. To focus the collective energy of the State on the task of building the homes of England anew, should reconcile to Socialism those whose opposition is at present most reasoned and most sincere.

The proposals contained in the present paper are advanced from the standpoint of our present social conditions, and of the present attitude of the public towards them. There are those who believe that if we could wipe out the world and begin creation afresh we should make a much better job of it; but whether this be so or not, in any move towards political progress we have to start from where we are, and deal with the world as it is. Ideals have their value. There is an ideal state in my own mind where all babies would have the best chance of growing up into perfect men made in God's image, where all mothers would have pleasure in the beauty of their motherhood, and receive the meed of care and reward that is their due. Such a state is in my mind, such a state on this earth and in this England I believe one day may come to pass; but I have no intention of describing it. For no ideals are worth much until in our imagination we have succeeded in linking them on to the present state of things, until we have formed an idea of how we are to make for them. And it is this next step which is my humble subject here; humble, because it is small, imperfect, and somewhat uncertain; and yet not without value if it leads out of the confusion of to-day towards the saner order of a future time.

What then is the present condition of things from which, as I have said, we must start, as they affect the mothers and the children during the crisis of maternity?

Millions of our people live in poverty, and it is just at the period of child-bearing that the shoe of poverty pinches most. Not only are its effects most disastrous, but actually there are a greater proportion of our families in poverty at that time than at any other. Men or women while single can keep themselves with comparative ease. After fifteen years of marriage the elder children begin to bring money into the home to supplement the parents' earnings. Later on the children marry and are off the parents' hands altogether; and even for the helplessness of old age there is now a pension in store. But in the early years of marriage the earnings are smallest, the expenses highest, and the proportion of poverty is greater than at any other time.* Such are the circumstances of motherhood and child-bearing in the present conditions.

The result can be measured in the figures of infant mortality, but they only tell half the tale. The holocaust of little children may have its problems for the next world, but once they are dead we have no more to do with them; it is the survivors that matter most, and though they may come out of the fire alive, they are in most cases not unscathed: they carry in one form or another through all their remaining years the heavy handicap of the conditions which environed them even before they were born, and made their coming more than half a tragedy. It is because of the survivors more than for its intrinsic importance, that it is worth while to draw attention to infant mortality—the danger signal of modern family life.

Infant Mortality.

The death rate among infants during the first years of life is still excessive, although at last it shows signs of diminishing. Owing to the advance of medical knowledge and the improvement in hygiene, the general death rate has declined during the past 50 years, but the infant death rate shows no equivalent change. The mortality of children between the ages of 5 and 10 has been reduced from 7·8 per thousand in 1857 to 3·4 per thousand in 1907, but the mortality among children under 5 has been reduced during the same period only from 67·8 to 40·9. And the mortality of infants under one year actually increased from 145 in the decade 1845-1854, to 154 in the decade 1891-1900. It has however declined to 138 for the 5 years 1901-1905, and still further to 118 for 1907.†

Half the deaths of infants under one year occur in the first three months. Three times as many babies die in the first month as in any subsequent month. Of the deaths in the first month, the greatest number occur in the first week. If babies went on dying at the same rate as they die in the first week, none would live to be a

* See this brought out with impressive effect in "Poverty: a Study of Town Life," by Seebohm Rowntree.

† Local Government Board Report on Social Conditions, 1909.

year old. Of these deaths in the first week, the majority occur on the first day.*

The chances of infant life may be thus expressed: The highest death rate is on the first day. It declines gradually during the rest of that week, falls enormously the second week, remains about stationary the third week, falls again considerably the fourth week, falls enormously in the second month, after which it continues to fall slowly during the rest of the year.

The figures vary according to locality, but, speaking generally, they are highest in mining and industrial districts, and especially where women are employed in industry. The worst county for 1907 was Lancashire with a mortality of 161 per 1,000. Nine rural counties had a mortality of under 90. The rate of infant deaths in the three worst towns is double that of the three worst counties. In 1907, Stalybridge had a mortality of 219.†

But these oft-quoted figures do not tell the whole tale, for high as the rate of infant mortality is for the whole population, the rate for the unskilled working class is far higher still. When the general infant mortality rate at York was 176, Mr. Rowntree calculated that for the poorest section of the working class it was 247.

If any person in the prosperous middle or upper class will take the trouble to compute how many babies have died in their first year of life in his own family and in those closely connected with him, he will find that this mortality does not amount to more than two or three out of a hundred births, or at the rate of 20 or 30 per thousand. In families in which adequate food and attention can be given, the infantile death rate, even in towns, is already kept down to such a figure. Here are some official statistics.

INFANT MORTALITY PER 1,000 BIRTHS. †

England and Wales:—

1873-1877	...	...	...	...	148 (average)
1892-1902	...	...	...	...	152 "
1907	...	...	...	...	118 "

London and ten urban counties for the same period:—

1873-1877	...	...	...	...	161 (average)
1892-1902	...	...	...	...	165 "
1907	...	...	...	...	128 "

In sixteen rural counties:—

1873-1877	...	...	...	...	127 (average)
1892-1902	...	...	...	...	125 "
1907	...	...	...	...	99 "

* "Infant Mortality," Dr. Geo. Newman.

† The figures for illegitimate children are of course higher than for legitimate children. In Manchester, with an infant death rate of 169 for legitimate children, the figure for illegitimate children was 362.

‡ Local Government Board Report on Social Conditions, 1909.

The nine counties with infant mortality rate under 90 in 1907 were: Dorset, Wiltshire, Hertfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Herefordshire, Cambridgeshire, Surrey, and Sussex.

Infant mortality in Europe 1896-1905 per 1,000:—

Russia	268	Italy	168
Austria	223	Belgium	153
Hungary	215	France	149
Prussia	196	England	147
Spain	178	Holland	144

Causes of Infant Mortality.

The principal causes of death are—

- (a) In the first three months—diseases of immaturity.
- (b) In the second three months—diseases of digestion, *e.g.*, diarrhœa.
- (c) In the third three months—diseases of respiration, *e.g.*, pneumonia.

The deaths from these three causes are steadily increasing in proportion, in spite of the advance of medicine, which saves the lives of thousands of children in other diseases.

The causes of these three groups of disease are roughly as follows:—

(a) *Immaturity* is mainly due to over-fatigue of mothers when pregnant, coupled with under-feeding, and the sort of bread-tea-and-pickles diet in which so many women indulge, in some cases perhaps through vitiated taste, but more often the direct result of their low economic conditions.

(b) *Gastric trouble*.—Diarrhœa, which carries off so many victims in the second three months of life, is mainly the result of neglect and mismanagement; in fact, of bad mothering, due to poverty, drink, or ignorance; dirt, dirty bottles, improper food, and above all, irregular feeding, contribute principally to this group of diseases.

Epidemic diarrhœa is most prevalent in the third quarter of the year. The worst month is August. Here are the figures:

Mortality from epidemic diarrhœa:—

Rural districts generally	5 per 1,000
Wigan and Liverpool	20-30 "
Manchester	30-40 "
For the whole country (average) 1891-1900...	27 "
" " 1901-1906...	25 "

(c) *Respiratory Diseases* are principally due to exposure. Leaving babies to lie in wet clothing, exposing them to sudden changes of temperature in the air they breathe, from the hot stuffy upper room to the door-step, from the warm, crowded mothers' meeting to the frosty night air outside—these things affect the bronchial tubes and lungs of a baby however well wrapped up, and claim their victims by the mass.

Present Provision for Maternity.

I have said enough to call attention to the havoc of human life and health which is being wrought under present conditions in English homes, and yet in our haphazard way there is a great deal that we do already, both individually and collectively, to meet the needs of maternity at the present time, and in order to be in a position to grapple with the problem, it is necessary to realize just what is now being done by the State, by charity, and by individual thrift.

(a) The State aid has been so fully dealt with in Chapter III. of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission that it need not be explained in detail here.

In the first place there are some 15,000 babies born in Poor Law Institutions. Then there is the large number of mothers who receive medical (including midwifery) orders, sometimes with, sometimes without, outdoor relief. The number of infants under one year maintained on outdoor relief is about 5,000. The policy that governs the provision of relief and medical aid varies with the locality, and the relief when given is as a rule inadequate and wholly unconditioned, the welfare of the child not being taken into consideration.

Side by side with the Poor Law there is the intervention of the local health authorities with their provision of midwives and medical advice, in some cases even of milk. Their activities are less universal than those of the Poor Law, but the principles that guide them are more rational, aiming as they do at education rather than mere relief, dealing with the future welfare of the child rather than with the present destitution of the mother. By the establishment of health visitors alone, quite extraordinary results have been already obtained in some districts.

Now that midwives are under the statutory obligation by the Midwives Act of 1902 to call in a doctor when certain difficulties occur, local authorities often, though not always, pay the doctor's fees in such cases, and this practice will become more general.

The Minority Report lays stress on the need for a unified service for birth and infancy, and also for the co-ordination and amplification of what has already been done by the community as such.

(b) Turning to charities, there are:—

1. *The Maternity Hospitals*.—These are fewer than might be expected. There are seven in London, which in the year 1905 dealt with about 12,000 patients, or under ten per cent. of the births of London. In the rest of the United Kingdom there appear to be at least nineteen, of which six are in Ireland.
2. *The General Hospitals, including Hospitals for Women*.—The bulk of the indoor cases treated in the general hospitals are cases that have serious complications, but there are a large number of outdoor cases treated by students for the purpose of education.

3. *Nurses and Midwives whose fees are partly paid by charitable bodies.*—There are at least twenty such charities in London.

(c) There are a few friendly societies which give maternity benefits; for example, the Hearts of Oak pays thirty shillings to the husband, and the Royal Oak Society two pounds, but most of the other friendly societies make no special provision for maternity at all.

In women's friendly societies confinements would be reckoned with other illnesses.

There are of course in existence numerous medical clubs which provide a doctor on payment of a weekly sum of money, and many slate clubs pay for doctor and midwife during confinement.*

It will be seen from the foregoing that an immense amount of care and expense is already being devoted to maternity and infancy in this country, and yet the result is as I have described above; inadequacy, diversity, overlapping, want of system, mark all that is being done. The money spent, welcome as it is in individual cases, is largely wasted in so far as the community is concerned; for the problem, as a whole, has not yet been faced, the enemy is still at the gates.

Immaturity, digestive disease and respiratory disease—the three main causes of infant mortality—are still sapping the fitness of the surviving population. If we are to safeguard and strengthen our race, we must roll back the attacking armies as they approach along these three main lines of advance. The critical period is the first three years of life; the battlefield is the home.

The Community must Step In.

People must soon realize, however anti-social their prejudices may be, that home life in its old sense has been half destroyed by our modern industrial system. It is no use prating of its sacredness, and of the value of parental responsibility. Such homes as unfortunately exist by thousands in our industrial centres are not sacred; they are blighted; a healthy nation has no use for them; they must be either ended or mended. In one form or another the community must interfere.

Two principles should guide our interference. The first is the simple proverbial one that "prevention is better than cure." If we are to assume, as we do assume, and have assumed for centuries back, the responsibility for the motley wreckage of human society in the form of old people, sick people, paupers, wastrels, criminals, lunatics and the rest, it is plain common sense not to let our State activity begin there, but to assert also the right to interfere with the conditions out of which this wreckage is produced.

The second principle is a financial one. Money spent on the beginning of life is more economical than money spent on the end of life. Money spent on a child is returned to the community in two ways. First, in saving of expenditure at the other end of the scale; secondly, in the actual production of future wealth. It should

* "The Endowment of Motherhood," Dr. Eder.

be regarded as an insurance against the expense of wreckage in the future. It may also be regarded as an investment bearing interest in the shape of health, energy, intelligence and labor power in the coming generation. It is financially well worth our while to develop our children, or at least to safeguard them sufficiently to enable them to accomplish the work that lies before them in life,—whether mental or physical, whether as citizens or as rulers, whether as wage-earners or as captains of industry.

Granting the need of State intervention, what form is it to take? Are we to replace the home by State institutions, or shall we set ourselves to build the home anew? There is much to be said for either alternative.

State Maintenance.

On the one hand, the State maintenance of children would probably enable the physical welfare of the growing race to be most efficiently safeguarded. Plato advocated State nurseries more than two thousand years ago, and various modifications of his plan have attracted advanced thinkers of all ages since his time. In some respects modern practice in England is tending in that direction. Compulsory State schools on the one hand, and the participation of women in industrial occupations on the other, tend more and more to divest the parents of their old responsibilities and force the community to take them up. It is only a few steps in one direction from the present state of things to the complete State maintenance of children, and the practical abolition of the family as a social unit. We might have State or municipal hospitals with maternity wards to which every woman could have access, where babies could be launched into life under ideal sanitary conditions, be fed well, nursed properly, and given the best possible start. Then we might have public endowment for the encouragement of nursing mothers, side by side with public crèches into which the children would be drafted, and remain under perfect conditions of food, air and nursing until old enough to go into the public nurseries or kindergartens which would replace our present infant schools, and where physical and mental development would be carried out on a progressive system until the children were of age to enter the public elementary schools. In the schools, too, meals and games would be arranged for as at present in the upper and middle class schools. Perhaps the buildings, instead of being dotted about, would be grouped in open spaces, with playgrounds in accessible suburban spots to and from which free trams could convey the thousands of children whose homes might still be in crowded districts. And perhaps, too, dormitories could be provided for the children of those, who, like the parents of the middle and upper classes, might prefer the boarding school to the day school as affording better discipline and training of character. By some such means as these, the budding citizens could be rescued from the evils that beset them now, and home-life, already more than half destroyed by modern industry, could be supplemented and replaced out of the wealth that industry produces.

Such an ideal is well worth notice. It could easily be linked on to our present conditions; it would strike at the root of the deterioration over which the public shed their unanimous but futile tears.

Objections to State Maintenance.

But it has two great disadvantages.

The first is on the merits. The death rate of infants, not only in workhouses, but also in well managed private institutions, compares most unfavorably with that in the homes, even of the worst districts. The Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission (pages 100 and following) shows that the infant mortality in Poor Law Institutions is between two and three times as great as in the general population; and that this is not entirely due to mismanagement is shown by the fact given in the same report that "3,000 infants attended to in their homes—poor and wretched as were those homes—by the competent nurses of the Plaistow Maternity Charity, had a death rate during the first fortnight after birth considerably less than that in *the most successful voluntary hospitals.*"*

The following are the rates of infant mortality for first fortnight per 1,000 births.†

In four large maternity hospitals of London	...	30
For whole population ... ..	...	31.1
In poor law institutions of London—		
Legitimate children	... ..	47.2
Illegitimate children	... ..	46.1
In poor law institutions outside London—		
Legitimate children	... ..	51.2
Illegitimate children	... ..	53.6

These statistics must be taken with some reserve, and are not by any means conclusive; but they point to the peculiar danger of institutions for infants which, although it is at present unexplained, we cannot afford to ignore, and they certainly justify the conclusion arrived at by the signatories to that report: "It may well be that human infants, like chickens, cannot long be aggregated together even in the most carefully devised surroundings without being injuriously affected."

On the other hand, Dr. McVale in his report to the Poor Law Commission is impressed by the admirable work done in the maternity wards in the large city infirmaries. "There could be no comparison between the comfort and safety of midwifery practised in such surroundings and that conducted in the homes of the labor classes. . . . I see no reason not to give institutional treatment."

Apart from these facts altogether the institutional solution savors too much of what a great philosopher calls "regimentation." It might tend to cut the race all to one pattern, to turn out citizens after the fashion of machine-made articles. It might tend to stifle true

* Of 3,005 infants attended at birth by the nurses of the Plaistow Maternity Charity in the mother's own home in one of the most poverty-stricken districts of West Ham, 47 died in the first fortnight, or 15.33 per 1,000 births.

† Minority Report, Part I, Chapter III.

individualism, which it should be the aim of Socialism to enfranchise and uplift.

The second objection is one of expediency. Every step towards such an ideal as this would meet with the bitter opposition of that powerful class of opinion which wages perpetual warfare against any interference with the sanctity of home life. The ignorance of facts, terrible every-day twentieth century facts, shown by such people when they talk loosely about home life is pitiful enough, but their motive is genuine and sincere, and if this problem can be dealt with within the family instead of outside of it, by rebuilding the home instead of replacing it, the task of popularizing it will be far easier and, other things being equal, the method is preferable. There are signs that the desire to supply brand-new State institutions on hard and fast lines is giving way to the more elastic theory of State improvement and encouragement of existing conditions. The latest instance in point is old age pensions. We might have had communal almshouses on modern lines provided out of public money and not out of charity, enjoyed as a right and not as a favor, but instead of that we are pensioning the old people in their homes, and it is probably the extension and development of this policy that the future will bring.

So too will it be with the problem of the children. We have gone almost as far as English public opinion will ever go in the direction of State interference outside the home. Free and compulsory education, free and compulsory medical examination in the school, free and compulsory vaccination, free meals at the expense of the rates supplemented by voluntary hospitals, voluntary crèches, nursing systems, etc.—all these things have developed during the past generation. And yet it is not enough. The problems of health are not seriously grappled with even now. A step must be taken by the community, and taken soon, to safeguard the future race from the effects of the wide-spread disease of poverty which attacks our children by millions, spreading physical and moral devastation in each new generation; and if I believe that the response of the community to this call will be to build the home afresh instead of replacing it, it is not that, in the abstract, one theory is necessarily superior to the other, but because the English people have always chosen to transform rather than to abolish, and because the endowment of motherhood, while it will, like all forward steps, be first urged upon the community by Socialists, will command the support of those whose opposition to Socialism is based on the extraordinary error that its aim is to destroy the home.

The Scheme.

The need of State action has now been sufficiently emphasized, so too has the economic wisdom of it. Reasons have been adduced to show why such an action should be brought to bear *within* the home and not outside of it. Starting with these premises and bearing always in mind present conditions and the present state of public opinion, we have now to consider what scheme is possible.

The first step must be the establishment of a system of complete public provision for all the extra expenses incident on maternity.

Medical Attendance.

First and foremost comes the need for qualified medical and nursing attendance on the mother and the newly born infant. At present many mothers go almost unattended in their hour of need; many tens of thousands more have attendance that comes too late, or is quite inadequately qualified; hundreds of thousands of others fail to get the nursing and home assistance that is required to prevent long-continued suffering and ill health to mothers and children alike. This lack of qualified midwifery attendance and nursing will become even more apparent within a year or two, when the provisions of the Midwives Act come fully into force, and none but certificated midwives are allowed to practise. The local health authority ought to be required to provide within its area qualified medical attendance, including all necessary nursing, for all cases of childbirth of which it has received due notice. There is no reason why this should not be done as a measure of public health, free of charge to the patient, in the same way as vaccination is provided for all who do not object to that operation; and on the same principle that led to the gratuitous opening of the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to any person suffering from particular diseases quite irrespective of his means.* What is, however, important is that the necessary medical attendance and nursing shall *always* be provided. If the community prefers to recover the cost from such patients as can clearly afford to pay—say, for instance, those having incomes above a prescribed amount—instead of from everybody in the form of rates and taxes, this (as with the payment for admission to an isolation hospital) may be an intermediate stage. In one way or another, there must be no childbirth without adequate attendance and help to the mother.

Pure Milk.

We have next to consider the need of sustenance, both of the mother and of the newly born citizen. At present many tens of thousands of these infants perish simply from inanition in the first few days or weeks after birth. In town and country alike many hundreds of thousands of families find the greatest difficulty, even when they can pay for it, in buying milk of reasonable purity and freshness, or in getting it just when they require it, or often indeed in getting it at all. The arguments in favor of the municipalization of the milk supply are overwhelming in strength.† But an even stronger case can be made out for the systematic provision by the Local Health Authority, to every household in which a birth has taken place, of the necessary quantity of pure, fresh milk, in sealed bottles, delivered every day. Whatever else is left undone, the

* Diseases Prevention (London) Act, 1883; Public Health (London) Act, 1891.

† See Fabian Tract No. 122, "Municipal Milk and Public Health."

necessary modicum of pure milk, whether taken by the mother or prepared for the child, might at any rate be supplied as the birth-right of every new-born citizen.

These two measures—the universal provision of medical attendance and nursing and the universal provision of milk—would go very far to meet by the co-operative State organization represented by the local health authority, the actual extra expense which a birth causes to the average household. But the provision cannot be deemed complete unless an independent provision is made for the maintenance of the mother during the period for which she ought, in the public interest, to abstain from work.

Maternity Pensions.

The next step therefore must be the establishment of a system of maternity pensions on somewhat similar lines to the old age pensions, which, after much promising, have at last arrived.

These maternity pensions must be free, universal, and non-contributory, for reasons which are familiar to all who have followed the controversy over old age pensions. If they be not universal, they will come as of favor, and be open to the objections rightly urged against all doles, public or private. A contributory scheme could only exist as part of a universal sick fund, and State insurance would be a new principle in this country.* If the contributions were optional, the poorest mothers would get no pension at all. If they were compulsory on a fixed scale, the scheme would still further impoverish those it is intended to benefit. If the contributions were on a sliding scale, the pension would be smallest just where it is most necessary.

Four questions immediately arise:—

How much is the pension to be?

How long is it to last?

How is it to be administered?

What would it cost the community?

The amount of the pension will of course depend upon the view taken by the community of the purpose it is intended to serve.

To work out a pension scheme, for instance, on the basis of compensation for loss of the mother's earnings would at once involve a sliding scale such as is in force in Germany and Austria, which would be unfair in the working, and benefit the poorest least. Moreover, the theory is fallacious, inasmuch as it views the woman as a worker and not as a mother. Let the pension be regarded rather as the recompense due to the woman for a social service, second to none that can be rendered. The time will come when the community will set a far higher value on that service than it does at present, and will extend the moderate pension scheme here proposed into the full endowment of motherhood. But at present the main point is to tide the mother over a time of crisis as best we may.

* Should the State, as seems likely, inaugurate a scheme of sick or unemployment insurance in the near future, such change in the premises from which the argument starts would, of course, carry with it the necessary modification of the argument itself.

On the one hand then it can be argued that any sum, however small, would be a relief in many cases to the pressure of want. On the other hand, it could fairly be urged that at such a time no reasonable sum, however large, would be wasted, so many are the extra needs of the mother and the new-born child, so all-important to the future is their full satisfaction. For the purposes of this paper, I suggest that a middle course be adopted, not because it is a middle course—for the golden mean is often the worst course of all—but for the following reasons. Too small a pension is uneconomic; unless it secure to some extent the object in view, the expense would not be worth while. Five shillings per week for a month would be money thrown away. On the other hand, a large pension extending over a long period, say, one pound per week for nine months, would cost so much that public opinion would not seriously consider it, and given the present standard of life, it is quite likely that much of it would be wasted. Let us begin with a sum far less than will be provided eventually by a far-seeing and progressive community.

I suggest, therefore, ten shillings per week as being ample to cover the proper maintenance and feeding of an ordinary working-class maternity case. The cost of a maternity case in Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital for provisions alone works out at 7s. 7d. per week. But food can of course be bought by a hospital in large quantities, and therefore at a much lower price than would be possible to a private family.

HOW LONG SHOULD THE PENSION LAST?

The average duration of a maternity case inside a hospital appears to be a fortnight. The statutory minimum of nursing under the Midwives Act is ten days. The normal period during which upper class mothers keep their beds is three weeks, but for some time after leaving bed, the mother is incapable of any active work without harm to herself. Many internal diseases and nervous complaints, as well as a good deal of the drinking among women, have their origin in getting about too soon. For some weeks at least, whether the mother nurses her baby or not, she requires much more than ordinary rest and nourishment. These considerations apply also, though in a less degree, to the period preceding confinement.

Under the law of Great Britain, the period of enforced cessation from factory work is four weeks. The same period is prescribed in Holland and Belgium. In Switzerland the period is eight weeks.

These laws, though of great value, are often cruel in the working, as they deprive the woman of wages without compensation just at the time she needs money most. The result is they are often evaded. Germany and Austria have recognized this. In Germany women are forbidden to work for six weeks after confinement.* But the insurance law of Germany provides women with free medical attendance, midwife and medicine, and in addition with an allowance not exceeding seventy-five per cent. of her customary wage for the

* The period may be reduced to four weeks on production of a medical certificate.

six weeks. There is further a provision that pregnant women unable to work should be allowed the same amount for not more than six weeks previous to confinement. A similar insurance system exists in Austria and Hungary. In some parts of Germany, the municipality goes still further. In Cologne, the working mother is given a daily grant to stay at home and suckle her child, and visitors see that this condition is fulfilled. The Cologne system has been adopted by some municipalities in France. In Leipsic, every illegitimate child becomes a ward of the municipality, which puts it out to nurse with certified persons who must produce it for inspection on demand.

These provisions enable the government of Germany to enforce the law against the employment of women in the last period of pregnancy without hardship to them, and only when some such measures are adopted in England will our law cease to be evaded, and become a real safeguard instead of a dead letter.

The compensation given to German mothers, though far in advance of anything we have in England, is already felt to be insufficient, but there is a difficulty in making it more generous arising from the fact that the system is a scheme of insurance; the benefits cannot be increased without a rise in the contribution. In a free pension scheme, this difficulty will not occur. A small beginning might be made by way of experiment to familiarize the public with the advantages of caring for maternity, with a knowledge that its scope could be extended indefinitely without dislocation of the scheme.

But the period like the amount must be substantial even at first. If the pension is to have any permanent value it should extend, I suggest, over a period of at least eight weeks: about two weeks before and six weeks after the date on which the birth is expected to take place. I attach no importance to the particular period of eight weeks, which must be regarded as a rough minimum chosen to afford a basis for preliminary calculation of the cost of the scheme to the community.

The Scheme in Working.

The pensions might be administered on the following lines, to the details of which no particular importance need be attached.

The first payment should be made a fortnight before the anticipated date of confinement, on condition that the recipient was not at this time engaged in any occupation likely to prove injurious to her health or to her offspring. Most women would willingly comply with this condition could they afford to do so.

Application should be made at least a month before the first payment.

If, as I suggest, the scheme were accompanied by free nursing and supervision, the case would at once be placed in the hands of the nurse in whose district it fell, who would pay a preliminary visit to the applicant's home, arrange with her as to the best place in the house for the lying-in, and give her good advice as to care and diet.

If any symptoms were unsatisfactory, the applicant would be advised to see the medical officer. Special cases could then be scheduled and watched. Difficult and abnormal cases could be removed to the infirmary in good time where they could be treated more conveniently than in the home, and where recovery would be more rapid. In such a case, the pension, or part of it, would presumably pay for the patient's treatment in hospital. In serious cases it might be possible, on the report of the medical officer, to make grants for extra nourishment, even before the pension became due, and in the same way to keep cases of slow recovery furnished with money longer than the prescribed eight weeks.

There would be no need to tie a patient down to a particular doctor and nurse, provided the persons chosen by the patient were approved of by the pension authority.

Women would be encouraged to make their application as long before the statutory month as possible. At first they would not wish to do so; but in a few years, and especially in first pregnancies, many young mothers would come to feel that they had somewhere to go for advice, and would seek out the pension authority early. Much folly would thus be avoided. The mere handing of a one-sheet pamphlet of elementary rules of health to each applicant would not be without its effect in removing some of the ignorance that at present prevails. The women would talk it over on their door steps and in their courts, and gradually the old wives' tales and remedies would give way to a few tags of sound hygiene.

The pension authority would, as tactfully as possible, use the pension as a lever to promote a higher standard of health in the applicant's home. For instance, as regards overcrowding, if it transpired at the preliminary visit that the only room available for the confinement was one in which not only the woman and her husband but also several children slept, temporary arrangements could be insisted on for the reduction of this number during the receipt of the pension. For a small sum per week, which the pension money would far more than provide, accommodation could be obtained for most of the family elsewhere in the same house, or at least in the same street. Both the mother and baby would thus get a national minimum of air for the time being, and in the course of time, a higher standard of opinion would be set up in the matter of house room, and the way be paved for future reform.

There are numerous other ways in which the local authority might, through the medium of the pension, increase the standard of health. If it be true, as the experts tell us, that breast feeding is all important to national health, then special advantages might be offered to nursing mothers under the scheme.

Supposing a fee for the requisite nursing and medical attendance were charged and deducted from the pension, mothers would still be better off than at present, but if the nursing were free, as suggested above, the cost that would be added to the pension scheme would be compensated for by a considerable saving in our present voluntary machinery.

Each case, as I have said, would be in the hands of a certificated nurse, but much of the routine work could be performed under the direction of the nurse by less skilled women who would play the part of mother substitute as well, for the medical aspect of the case is by no means the most important. When the mother of a family is laid by, few workmen can afford to pay for extra help, and so the children are neglected, go to school unwashed, with dirty clothing, and unbrushed hair, and without properly cooked meals at home. Under the pension scheme, as is the case even now in many country districts under private nursing institutions, a mother substitute, or a pupil nurse, could be provided to be manageress to the family during the first three weeks.

What would the Scheme cost?

First, as regards the provision of nursing and medical attendance, with the necessary supply of milk.

The cost of nurses varies according to density of population, cost of living, etc., in the various localities. Moreover, in some districts, the average duration of labor is three or four times as long as in others; the cases in such districts require far greater attention during recovery, occupying more of the nurse's time, and therefore costing more. In some town institutions, medical and nursing expenses work out at only 10s. a case, while in some unions and hospitals the out-door cases are reckoned at 15s. a case. We are told that the State does things expensively, and certainly its standard should be as high as that of the best poor law or charitable administration in a matter of this kind; so we will take this last figure as our estimate, and adding thereto the cost of milk for eight weeks, at perhaps another 15s. per case, we shall arrive at an outside figure of £1 10s. per case for nursing, medical expenses, and milk.

Now, as regards the cost of pensions.

The total number of births in the United Kingdom for the year 1907 was 1,148,573. Some of these of course were twins, or even triplets. In such cases I do not suppose a full 10s. would be given for each child. More probably it would be decided to augment the pension by a small sum, say only 2s. 6d. per week extra, for each additional child; but this is a mere matter of detail, and need hardly enter into our rough calculation. Without making any allowance for this, the pension of 10s. per week for eight weeks on the basis of the 1907 figures would involve a cost to the community of £4,600,000 per annum. If ten per cent. be added for the extra cost of special cases, we get £5,000,000 as the outside cost of pensions. With the addition of £1,750,000 for the cost of provision of nursing, medical attendance, and milk, the total is £6,750,000.

If the pension were paid through the existing old age pension authority, the cost of administration would be almost negligible.

But this is only the gross cost. From it must be deducted a sum for non-claimants, the number of whom would depend on how far the scheme were accompanied by inspection and other requirements which would keep off those who did not really need it. Speaking

roughly, we may take it that the servant-keeping class would not be likely to apply for the pension. This class was estimated by Mr. Booth at 11·3 per cent. in London, and by Mr. Rowntree at 28 per cent. in York. It is reasonable to suppose that at least 20 per cent. of the mothers would not apply for pensions under the scheme suggested, in which case the amount to be written off under this heading would be £1,350,000, leaving a total of £5,400,000.

This expense, which in round figures may be described as five and a half millions of money, would be accompanied, of course, by a considerable saving in three directions: i. the rates; ii. charity; iii. friendly societies, etc.

i. If the estimate I have quoted above be correct, namely, that fifteen thousand children are born every year in poor law institutions, and five thousand infants under one year subsist on outdoor relief, it is evident that from the cost of the scheme there must be subtracted the expenses under this head.

In England and Wales, the proportion of illegitimate births in workhouses is estimated at seventy per cent., but there is a growing tendency among respectable married women to use the workhouse as a maternity hospital. This tendency would undoubtedly be arrested by the pension scheme now proposed, but the great bulk of the maternity work under the poor law would probably continue because it deals with those without homes, casuals, illegitimate cases, etc. These persons would be relieved as at present, but the expense, instead of falling on the rates, would be defrayed out of the pensions to which they, in common with the rest of the community, would be entitled.

ii. There would also be an enormous saving in the expenses of hospitals, nursing institutions, and other charitable agencies.

The general hospitals take in cases with serious complications and treat outdoor cases for the purpose of educating their students. This would continue as at present and work in with the scheme, the hospitals being paid for the work done out of the money voted for the maternity law. Thus their sphere of usefulness would probably be enlarged and their finances at the same time relieved.

The lying-in hospitals would find that some who at present used them would, under the pension scheme, prefer to remain in their own homes; but the more complicated cases, which now remain ill-attended at home, would be removed under doctor's recommendation to the lying-in hospitals, which would thus find their activity increased and their work paid for. Over nine per cent. of the births of London are treated by lying-in hospitals at a cost of about £25,000 a year. Under this head alone then this sum would be saved to the charitable public of London every year and be liberated for use in other ways. Similar amounts would be saved in other centres.

As for the nursing institutions, their great work would at last be nationalized, or, if the institutions remained under private management, the nurses they provide would be paid for by the community for the cases they attended.

It is impossible to estimate what the saving to charities would be without far fuller details as to the expense of hospitals and other charitable agencies than I have found it worth while to obtain; but if the saving under this head is less than might be supposed, that is only another way of saying how inadequately maternity is provided for under our haphazard charity system, which does not, indeed cannot, attempt to cover the whole ground.

iii. Lastly, there would be a small saving in the benefits given for confinements by thrift societies and clubs. The money would be thus liberated for fuller benefits in other directions.

Objections to the Scheme.

A host of objections present themselves to the mind against the scheme I have outlined. They may be divided into two heads—practical and theoretical.

The first practical objection will come from enthusiasts who will say that 10s. per week is not enough: it will not replace the wages in many cases, much less afford the extra comfort and nourishment required at such a time.

But the fact is that the better-class working woman who is earning more than 10s. per week is not likely to be so near the poverty line as her poorer sister, and the pension, though acceptable, is not so absolutely vital in her case. The 10s. will be all to the good for her, while for the very poor it will more than replace anything they could earn, and will go some way at least towards securing that national minimum of comfort at a time of crisis in the life of the individual and of the community which is the main purpose it is intended to serve.

Another objection is that in many households the 10s. may not be spent on the mother and the baby: the husband would drink the money. My belief is that these cases will be far fewer than is often supposed. Even rich people, if they found themselves in such a position that they could not rely on a future more than a few days ahead, if they lived in a world of destroyed illusions, where memory is all and hope has little place, would probably do much as the very poor do; they would drop calculation and let things slide. But give the poorest even eight weeks during which they can see their way clear, and they will feel less helpless, they will derive a stimulus from the new sensation, they will behave more sensibly. Still the objection has force none the less, and be the cases few or many, they must be guarded against. The nurse will see at once how the land lies, and acting on her report, the local authority should schedule the case, and pay the pension in kind through the nurse, or through inspectors or health visitors, whose business it should be to look after such cases. The difficulty is there as in the case of out relief. It has to be met, but it is not insuperable. It would be ridiculous to deprive the whole nation of a beneficial scheme just because there are rogues about.

Another difficulty I clearly foresee is that of arranging the staff of nurses, doctors, etc., so long as the hospitals and medical schools

remain in private hands. As things are at present arranged, there would inevitably be overlapping and jealousy and undue expenditure. Indeed, if overlapping is not now apparent, it is merely because there is no attempt by voluntary agency to cover nearly the whole ground, which is strong evidence of the need of the scheme. But the time is not far distant when the health services will be socialized, and the first beginnings of a far humbler scheme than that mentioned in the present paper would tend to hasten the event.

Finally, there is a powerful theoretical objection to any scheme which lessens the burden of maternity, namely, that it will tend unduly to increase the number of births amongst the poorest classes.

Three considerations must be urged in answer to this :

- (a) The poorest classes already breed almost as fast as they can, faster than any other part of the community.
- (b) The tendency of parents is to become more prudent in proportion as they have more chances in life and a better position to lose.

The more comfortable working classes, as represented by members of friendly societies and trade unions, for instance, have not, on the average, so many children as the unskilled laborer.*

- (c) In Germany, where compensation, fifty to seventy-five per cent. of the wages lost, is paid to the mother, this payment for confinement, so far from increasing, is a diminishing proportion of the total sick pay.

But it is possible that, apart from increase of births, there might, or indeed there probably would be, an increase of population due to the reduction of infant mortality. This is not necessarily an evil. Whether it is so in fact or not depends wholly on the character and quality of the increased population. Surely an increase due to causes that make for a higher level of health all round cannot be said to be an evil except by those who are haunted by the ancient bogey of over-population.

Our object is not to increase the population, but to obtain a national minimum of health for the race. What though this incidentally increase the population, too? If the future race is only sufficiently healthy and efficient, over-population will be no danger to it. It will not allow the few to displace it, to monopolize the land, to pin it into slums, and to live upon it; but it will claim its heritage, it will survive in the struggle for existence, it will be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, replacing, if need be, more effete and less healthy peoples. The modern topsy turvey view of a child as an expense, instead of a source of wealth, will not survive the economic disorganization from which it springs.

Advantages of the Scheme.

Over against all such objections there stand out clearly the advantages to the whole nation of such a scheme as I have outlined.

* See Fabian Tract No. 131.

To the individual these advantages are obvious. They may be summed up as follows :

1. Money at a time of crisis in the home. As Bernard Shaw has truly said, "What is the matter with the poor is poverty."

2. Health to the mother and the child consequent upon the increased care and attention at that time. Moreover, the mother would be saved many of the future consequences of bad recoveries. Thousands of women take to drink at first purely to gain temporary relief from ailments consequent upon unhealthy conditions of motherhood.

3. The husbands would be saved much worry and expense due to the incomplete recoveries and ill-health of their wives.

4. Above all, there would be increased affection between the mother and child springing up in the golden days of rest that will replace the present nightmare of worry, affection that will bear priceless fruit in the home life and conditions of the future.

Great as the boon would be in individual cases, the advantages to the community would be greater still. In the first place, the rate of infant mortality would be reduced, and at the same time would disappear the degeneration of the children that survive. It is impossible to over-rate the value of the health lessons that would be received in the home during the regular visits of the nurses. Little by little, closed windows, dirty bottles, "comforters," ignorance of management and feeding, wanton exposure of children, and the hundred-and-one details that go to pile up our figures of mortality and disease and leave their legacy of trouble and expense to the survivors, would disappear before the method and common sense of a more enlightened generation. Once establish your national minimum in so important a sphere of life as child-bearing, and the seed is bound to grow. It will develop into full endowment of motherhood, and bear fruit in the ever-increasing freedom and health of the coming race.

"Superfluous Women."

In the second place, there seems every reason to believe that with healthier conditions the present disparity of number between the sexes would also disappear. In 1907 there were living in this country 16,879,509 males and 18,066,091 females. This excess of females is not due to an excess at birth, for there are always more boys than girls born, the mean proportion for the decade 1897-1906 being 1,037 boys born for every 1,000 girls. It is due simply to the fact that male children succumb more readily to the dangers that await them in infancy. The proportion of deaths to 1,000 births in 1907 was as follows :—

Under 1 day	-	12.90	males	and	9.71	females
" 1 week	-	14.78	"	"	11.26	"
" 1 month	-	46.17	"	"	34.98	"
" 1 year	-	130.26	"	"	104.49	"

The death-rate under 5 years per 1,000 living was 44.77 males to 37.02 females.*

* See Registrar-General's Reports for England and Wales.

Now, as these infant deaths arise largely from causes that are preventible, and are more active in urban than in rural districts, it follows that the present ratio between the sexes is abnormal, and would be modified by legislation of the kind proposed.

Although this scheme was drawn up before the appearance of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, and although Maternity Pensions are not suggested there, yet I venture to think there is nothing in the scheme inconsistent with the principles underlying that report, or with the facts and figures contained therein. Indeed, it would seem to fulfil completely two conditions upon which the Commissioners lay great stress; first, that the service of birth and infancy should be unified, and secondly, that the normal place for the mother and the child is the home.

It has often been urged that the endowment of motherhood would tend to facilitate early marriages, and in this way prevent much misery, immorality and disease consequent upon the economic impossibility of recognized relations between the sexes at a time when the passions are strongest. I do not think the present scheme would achieve this. It would hardly touch the middle classes, and among the poorer classes of the community, which it would undoubtedly benefit, marriage is already embarked upon at a sufficiently early age.

Conclusion.

One word in conclusion. Twice, and twice only, in modern history, according to Dr. Newman, has the mortality of the little children of the working classes been sensibly reduced. Once was during the cotton famine in Lancashire, the other was during the siege of Paris. In both cases, poverty and privation sent up the general death rate whilst reducing infant mortality, in Paris by as much as forty per cent.*

The paralysis of industry spelt life for the race. Why? Because the parents were at home and the children had their meed of care and kindness.

What does this mean? It means *that we buy our industrial wealth at the price of our national health.*

We are, in fact, living on capital all the time. Financiers refuse to see this. They calculate in terms of money, and dub the rest of the world sentimentalists; but human life, human labor, are not sentimental, but material, considerations, and social problems are not antagonistic to, but essentially a part of, sound finance. The civilization that survives will be that which takes the social items into its account. This can never be done while the two sets of items are in different hands, while the profits of industry are swept into private coffers, and the wreckage and waste of capital is made good out of the public treasury.

Every step taken by the public towards assuming responsibility that is theirs brings the day nearer when in self defence they will

* Dr. Newman, "Infant Mortality."

insist on drawing up a national balance sheet of their own on sane lines. And there is, I venture to believe, no responsibility at present neglected which they ought in common sense to assume before that of the mothers and the little children, the breeding ground of ages long past, the infinite potentiality of the super-race that is to be.

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The Citizenship
— of Women —
A Plea for Women's
— Suffrage —

By

J. Keir Hardie, M.P.

Fourth Edition.



PUBLISHED BY THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY,
23 BRIDE LANE, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.

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NOTE TO THIRD EDITION.

During the four months which have elapsed since the second edition of this tract was issued, the Women's Social and Political Union has kept the agitation for the political enfranchisement of women going with increased vigour. Great demonstrations have been held in nearly all the big centres of population, and Miss Kenney has suffered a second term of imprisonment—this time of six months' duration, a fate shared by two other working-class women, Mrs Sparboro' and Mrs Knight. Miss Billington was also incarcerated for a time, but was forced to leave because some unknown person had paid her fine. The Press gives considerable prominence to the doings of this intrepid band of agitators, and women of all classes are joining them in considerable numbers. The advanced women of several continental countries, particularly those connected with the Socialist movement, are beginning to take a quickened interest in the movement for the enfranchisement of their sex, partly due to the fact that in the new constitution for Finland women are given political equality with men. *Per contra*, the British Government has excluded the women of the Transvaal from the franchise, despite the unanimous appeal on their behalf made by the Boer leaders, and the example thus set has been followed by the Shah of Persia in the scheme for creating a representative system of government for his people.

September, 1906.

J. H. K.

FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION.

The following pages were written in the summer of 1905, and first appeared in Mr Stead's series of "Coming Men on Coming Questions," issued from the *Review of Reviews* office. A demand having arisen for a second edition, Mr Stead has consented to the tract being re-issued by the Independent Labour Party.

Prior to and during the General Election campaign of this year the question of the political enfranchisement of women was much in evidence. Bands of women haunted political meetings demanding a pledge from prominent leaders of parties to give Votes for Women the first place on their programme. At a great Liberal gathering in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, when Sir Edward Grey was the principal speaker, the women demonstrated so effectively that they had to be removed by force, and two of them, Miss Christobel Pankhurst and Miss Annie Kenney—the one a university student, the other a working mill girl—subsequently suffered terms of imprisonment in connection with the disturbance. This in no wise daunted the spirits of the Revolutionists, and right down to the end of the election campaign, at every political gathering at which a member of the newly-formed Liberal Government was announced to speak, the members of the Women's Social and Political Union were in evidence. The older and more staid Women Suffragists, for the most part, disclaimed all sympathy with these noisy tactics, forgetful of the fact that 36 years of "tactful" and "constitutional" work had left little if any mark on the history of the movement. In May this year a few of the ladies of the new movement made a disturbance in the gallery of the House of Commons whilst a suffrage resolution was under discussion. Mainly as a result of these tactics a very widespread interest is now felt in the question. The present House of Commons is, I think, overwhelmingly in favour of granting the suffrage to women, but they must not leave anything to chance or take anything for granted. A big sustained agitation, in which all sections of the movement will combine their forces, would, I feel assured, result in securing the passage of an enfranchising Bill in time to enable women to vote at the next General Election. For the second time success is within their reach if only women will not be content to be put off by fine words and sympathetic professions. These are all very well in their way, but they are a poor substitute for an Act of Parliament.

May, 1906.

J. K. H.

Votes for Women.

IT is not my purpose to write a learned dissertation or even an elaborate essay on the Woman question; this has been done by men and women well qualified for the task, and doubtless will be again. My present object is to re-state in plain and homely language the case for Woman Suffrage. To deal with the Woman question as a whole would involve a long inquiry into the causes responsible for the differences in the status of the sexes, including woman's economic position, the marriage laws, and our social polity. These are all subjects interwoven with the position of women, but they are beyond the scope of my ability, and, for the moment, I leave them aside and confine myself to the one question of their political enfranchisement. I do so mainly because that is a question ripe for settlement by legislation. The other questions hinted at may be left to evolve their own solution as time and chance determine. None of them are within the ken of politics, nor should they be brought into the political arena until women are in a position to influence equally with men the creation of opinion upon them, and, where necessary, the legislation which may be required to assist in solving them. John Stuart Mill declared it to have been one of his earliest, as it remained one of his strongest, convictions, "that the principles which regulate the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by principles of perfect equality admitting no power or privilege on the one side nor disability on the other." I hold it to be true with those who say that the foundation upon which this "perfect equality" is to be reared is the political enfranchisement of women.

In sentiment we have advanced somewhat since 1790, when a learned writer of the period explained that people who should not be included in the county franchise were those who "lie under natural incapacities, and therefore cannot exercise a sound discretion, or (who are) so much under the influence of others that they cannot have a will of their own in the choice of candidates. Of the former description are women, infants, idiots, lunatics; of the latter, persons receiving alms and revenue offices." We do not now speak of women as being in the same category as "idiots" and "lunatics," but for political purposes we treat them as if they were.

No one seeks to deny the existence of differences between the sexes, differences subtle, deep seated, and ineradicable. But these, being admitted, afford no justification for the usurpation by man of the right to say what duties and responsibilities woman may be allowed to undertake, and what must be withheld from her because of her sex. Such a theory can only be upheld on the old tradition of the East that woman is one of the lower animals over whom lordly man was given dominion. The harem is the logical outcome of this belief. It is only by removing the disabilities and restraints imposed upon woman, and permitting her to enter freely into competition with man in every sphere of human activity, that her true position and function in the economy of life will ultimately be ascertained. We can at present form no conception of what woman is capable of being or doing. We have no data upon which to base any real conclusions. Nowhere is woman treated as the free and equal companion of man. Amongst coloured peoples living in a state of nature and in a tribal environment which has evolved itself, and wherein custom is the only law, the woman, though far from being the degraded creature which she has so often been pictured by superficial observers, is still her husband's drudge, and frequently a part of his wealth. In the military stage of social evolution, or the age of chivalry, as it has been dubbed by persons of a poetic temperament and a vivid imagination, the woman is pictured as being the weaker and more spiritualized sex, requiring to be protected by her lord, and almost worshipped as a superior creation. "Half angel, half idiot," aptly describes this conception of woman. This is but a perverted way of declaring her inferiority; the homage paid to her is like that we should pay to a child: in no sense is it a recognition of equality; very often it is the exact opposite. In modern life we get back to the savage stage. Woman of the working class is again the drudge who does the menial work. Her husband works for, and is dependent for the opportunity to work upon, a master; his wife works for, and is dependent for her livelihood, upon a husband. That there are varying degrees of this feeling of subjection goes without saying, and I think it could be shown that the position of women, as of most other things, has always been better, more near an equality with man, in Celtic than non-Celtic races or tribes. Thus in Scotland a woman speaks of her husband as her "man, whilst in Staffordshire the term used is nearly always "the master."

The universality of this subjection of woman is assumed by many as an infallible testimony to the truth of the theory that woman must in some way be inferior to man. Were it not so, say these quidnuncs, there would be some exceptions to prove the contrary. They overlook the one obvious explanation which

explains everything—Motherhood. In the early days of the race, the days of the huntsman and the warrior, when the spoils of war and the trophies of the chase were the only wealth of nations, child-bearing must have been a serious handicap to the woman: add to this the fact that war meant prisoners, and that from the very first, probably, even when men captured in warfare were killed as an incumbrance, women, for reasons which will be understood without being stated, were spared by their captors, and coming down to later times, when men captives were made slaves, and women-raiding became a favourite pastime, we can see explanation enough of the position which in process of time woman came to occupy, and from which she is only now slowly and toilsomely emerging. Already we see how the intensity of the struggle for political recognition is developing, in individual cases, those qualities of mind and brain which man has been wont to assume as being his special monopoly; and from these cases we may infer how richly endowed the field of human thought will become when enriched by the products of the brains of men and women working together on terms of equality and free from the debasing and sinister influences which subjection, in any form, imposes alike upon the subdued and the subduer. So true it is that one end of the chain which binds the slave is fastened round the life of his master, that the emancipation of women will also infallibly give freedom to the man.

Curious are the changes which a quarter of a century produces in the political arena. Questions arise, which after being ignored and jeered at, are ultimately brought by the force of agitation within the arena in which the political strife of the day is being waged, and keep gathering in importance until they obscure everything else. They are debated, wrangled over, and made leading issues at General Elections, and even whilst the strife which their coming has caused waxes hot, they begin to move away from sight without having been resolved. Disestablishment and Republicanism are questions which illustrate my meaning here. But so also does Woman Suffrage. In the days of the franchise agitation, the enfranchisement of woman, promoted by Mill and strenuously supported by Fawcett, Dr. Pankhurst, and other leaders of reform, promised to become a question of first political importance, but the passing of the one and then of the other of the friends of the movement, leaving no successors to carry on their tradition, it gradually passed into semi-obscurity. As it is again emerging and showing fresh vitality,* it may not be amiss to briefly record its history, particularly as it connects itself with the various Reform Bills.

* On Friday, May 12th, 1905, when the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill was down for second reading, there were 300 women in the lobbies canvassing for

In the Reform Act of 1832 the word "male" was interpolated before "persons." Never before and never since† has the phrase "male persons" appeared in any Statute of the Realm. By this Act, therefore, women were legally disfranchised for the first time in the history of the English constitution. In 1851 Lord Brougham's Act was passed, providing that the word "man" should always include "woman," except where otherwise stated. That seemed to clear the ground, and give women the same legal status as men. But, alas!

In 1867 the Representation of the People Act came before the House. John Stuart Mill's amendment, that it should be made expressly to include women, was defeated, but so also was the amendment that the phrase "male persons" of 1832 should be replaced. The word "man" was used instead. During the discussion the Hon. John Deman, Justice of the Common Pleas, asked the following question:—

"Why, instead of the words 'male person' of the Act, 1832, the word 'man' had been substituted in the present Bill? In the fifth clause he found that after saying that every 'man' should be entitled to be registered, it proceeds to say, 'or a MALE PERSON in any University who has passed any senior middle examination.' In the light of Lord Brougham's Act, if the Court of Queen's Bench had to decide to-morrow on the construction of these clauses, they would be constrained to hold that they conferred the suffrage on female persons, as well as on males."

After the Bill became law, it was thought, therefore, that women were entitled to vote, and in Manchester 5,347 women got on the register as voters. In Salford 1,500 (about) were registered, and large numbers in other places. Great uncertainty prevailed as to how to treat them, but most revising barristers threw them out. The Manchester women consolidated their claims, and appealed against the decision, and the case of *Chorlton v. Ling* was heard in 1868.

The case was tried in the Court of Common Pleas, with Mr Coleridge, afterwards Lord Coleridge, and the late Dr. Pankhurst representing the women. It was argued that inasmuch as women had in the middle ages been recognised as voters by the State, and as that right had never been expressly taken away, therefore they had a *prima facie* right to vote. Further, it was contended that under Lord Brougham's Act, referred to above, the Franchise Act of 1867 must apply to women, since the term used was "men," and not "male persons," as in the Act of 1832.

the Bill, and when it was talked out, these marched out and organized a meeting in the open air. The opposition to the Bill came from both sides of the House in about equal proportions.

† Whilst these sheets are being revised a Bill comes to me, introduced by W. R. Cremer, M.P., and others, which proposes to confer the vote upon every "man" and "male person" of full age.

Despite this pleading, the judges decided that no women had no statutory right to be recognized as citizens, and that until that right was expressly conferred upon them by Act of Parliament, they must remain outside the pale of the franchise.

In 1884 Mr Gladstone procured the rejection of the amendment to his County Franchise Bill, which would have enfranchised women, by threatening to abandon the Bill if the amendment was carried. In 1899 came the case of *Beresford Hope v. Lady Sandhurst*, in which it was decided that women were incapacitated from being elected members of a County Council. The case is important from the point of view of the Franchise (Parliamentary) question, because the judges quoted, approved, and confirmed the decision in the case of *Chorlton v. Lings*. One of the judges, Lord Esher, Master of the Rolls, delivering his judgment, said:—

"I take the first proposition to be that laid down by Justice Wills in the case of *Chorlton v. Lings*. I take it that neither by the common law nor the constitution of this country from the beginning of the common law until now can a woman be entitled to exercise any public function. Justice Wills said so in that case, and a more learned judge never lived. He took notice of the case of the Countess of Pembroke in the County of Westmorland, who was hereditary sheriff, which he says was an exceptional case. The cases of an overseer and a constable were before him, and what I deduce from his judgment is, that for such somewhat obscure offices as these, exercised often in a remote part of the country, where nobody else could have been found who could exercise them, women had been admitted into them, by way of exception, and that, striking out these exceptions, the act of voting in such matters being a public function, *prima facie* and according to the constitutional and common law, a woman cannot exercise it. But that case goes further. It says that this being the common law of England, when you have a Statute which deals with the exercise of public functions, unless that Statute expressly gives power to women to exercise them, it is to be taken that the true construction is, that the powers given are confined to men; and that Lord Brougham's Act does not apply."

The judge had in this case to interpret the Municipal Corporations Act, in which the word "PERSON" is used throughout. In addition, there is an interpretation clause (63rd section) which provides that for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to vote at municipal elections words in this Act importing the masculine gender include women. It was held that the right to be ELECTED was not conferred by the Act, but only the right to VOTE, the word "person" not being regarded by the judges as including women, Lord Justice Fry going so far as to say:—

"I regard the 63rd section as ascertaining both affirmatively and negatively the rights which have been conferred upon women; ascertaining them affirmatively by express statement, and ascertaining them negatively by necessary implication. What is given to them is the right to vote, what is denied by the necessary implication are all the other rights which may be conferred by the Statute. I do not regard the negative implication arising

from that section (63rd) as applying to the whole Act, as applying to crimes, or to the obligations on the duties of witnesses or matters of that sort, but I regard it as applying to the RIGHTS granted by that Statute."

In Miss HALL's case, 1900, the right of a woman to become a law agent in Scotland was denied by the judges on the ground that "person" when it is a case of exercising a public function means "MALE PERSON." The judges relied on the case of *Chorlton v. Lings* as the ground of their decision. Now, in view of these decisions, the situation is quite clear.

A woman, for the purposes of citizenship, has no legal existence in Great Britain, and has to be created before she can be enfranchised. To the uninitiated this may appear absurd and ridiculous, but it is plain unvarnished truth none the less. A woman may be a criminal, a queen, a tax and rate payer and owner of property, but she may not be a citizen of Great Britain and Ireland until a right to become such has been created by Act of Parliament. If only people would bear this fact in mind they would be saved from much error when considering her claims to the franchise.

During the past few sessions of Parliament a measure has been introduced, originally at the instigation of the Independent Labour Party, having this for its object. It is a Bill of one clause, which reads as follows:—

"In all Acts relating to the qualifications and registration of voters or persons entitled or claiming to be registered and to vote in the election of members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the masculine gender the same shall be held to include women for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding."

There are those who see in this innocent-looking measure a sinister attempt to extend and strengthen the property qualification, and by enfranchising propertied women enable these to range themselves on the side of the reactionaries in opposing the enfranchisement of working-class women. Needless to add, a strong section of the Liberal Press adopts and enforces this misstatement with all the ingenuity which a fertile and untrained imagination can lend to a bad cause. One would have thought the record of the Liberal Party in connection with Woman Suffrage would have chastened the ardour of those organs of Liberalism which are opposing this Bill in the interest of "true female suffrage"; but the gift of perspective is rare in politics, and a strict desire for accuracy an inconvenient failing when there are party ends to serve. The late Mr Gladstone, as already stated, threatened to abandon his Reform Bill in 1884, if the

Woman's Enfranchisement Amendment were carried. There have been three Conservative premiers who have publicly committed themselves, in speech at least (none of them have acted), to this reform, which has yet to find the first Liberal premier who will say a word in its favour. (Since the foregoing was written the present Prime Minister has informed a deputation of 400 women that he is in favour of their enfranchisement, but could hold out no hope that the reform would be passed by this Parliament.)

Any one who takes the trouble to read the Bill quoted above will note that it does not propose any franchise qualification, but asks that, whatever the qualification, women shall enjoy the franchise on the same basis as men. It is a Bill which only proposes to do one thing, and that is, to remove the sex disability which debar a woman, because she is a woman, from becoming a voter. If the qualification for men be a property one, it shall be the same for women, no more and no less; and if it be a manhood suffrage, it shall also be a womanhood. A woman may have the brain of a Bacon, the talent of a Shakespeare, the eloquence of a Demosthenes, and the wealth of a Cræsus all combined, but being a woman she may not vote for a member of Parliament, and this Bill proposes to remove the disability which stands in the way of her becoming a citizen; to remove her from the category of "idiots, lunatics, and paupers," and to recognize that, woman though she be, she is a human being who may become a citizen.

And now let us ascertain, if we can, what women would be enfranchised under the terms of the Bill quoted above.

There are four main heads under which the franchise qualifications fall to be grouped—(1) Owners of property; (2) Householders; (3) Lodgers; (4) Service. One set of opponents of the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill say that it would be from classes one and three that the new citizens would be drawn, which, if true, would leave working-class women out in the cold. Few working women own property, and not many earn wages enough to pay the four shillings a week for unfurnished apartments, which is necessary to qualify for the lodger franchise. By what has become known as the latchkey decision the Appeal Court has now held that every male occupant who occupies an unfurnished room, irrespective of the amount paid as rent, and who has the free use of the room, is entitled to go on the voters' list as a householder. Rich men, they assert, would be able to put their wives and daughters on as voters and outvoters, which would tend to greatly increase an evil which is already of sufficient magnitude. Fortunately, we have already an index to guide us as to the extent to which this statement is true, even were the worst fears of our opponents to be realized.

There are, roughly, 7,000,000 electors in Great Britain, of whom 220,000 are lodger voters. A very large proportion of these are workmen, and it is doubtful whether rich men's sons, qualifying from their fathers' property, account for more than 20,000 of the whole. Even were a like number of daughters to be put upon the voters' roll, they would not, save in those few constituencies where the property vote is already overwhelming, and where, therefore, they could do no harm—save in these few cases, I say, they would not constitute an appreciable fraction of any constituency. As for the outvoters, we may surely anticipate, with some degree of assurance, that the Liberal Government will at least put an end to their existence, and so we need not worry ourselves about them one way or the other. In so far as the service franchise will give women the right to vote, those brought in will be working women, and we may pit these against the daughters of the rich. It will, I think, be conceded that the great bulk of those who will be enfranchised by the Bill will be householders, and here, I repeat, we have we have reliable data upon which to base our conclusions. Women may not be elected to a town or burgh council, but they may vote in the election of such councils. Owing to a difference of opinion in the ranks of the Independent Labour Party over the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill, it was decided to make a serious effort to obtain from the municipal registers some guidance as to the class of women already registered as municipal voters, and who would be entitled to be placed upon the parliamentary list should the Bill become law. Accordingly, a circular was issued to every branch of the party, some 300 in all, containing the following instructions:—

The returns to hand are not yet complete, but they comprise fifty towns or parts of towns, and show the following results.—

“We address to your branch a very urgent request to ascertain from your local voting registers the following particulars:—

“1st—The *Total* Number of Electors in the Ward.

“2nd—Number of Women Voters.

“3rd—Number of Women Voters of the Working Class.

“4th—Number of Women Voters not of the Working Class.

“It is impossible to lay down a strict definition of the term ‘working class,’ but for this purpose it will be sufficient to regard as ‘working class women’ those who work for wages, who are domestically employed, or who are supported by the earnings of wage-earning children.”

Total Electors on Municipal Registers	372,321
Total Women Voters	59,920
Working Women Voters, as defined above ..	49,410
Non-Working Women Voters	10,510
Percentage of Working Women Voters ..	82.45.

As will be seen at a glance, the proportion of women voters on the registers tested for the purposes of the above return—and these were not in any way selected, but were included because they were in the ward or parish within which the branch was situated—is equal to one-sixth of the whole. Assuming, as we may fairly do, that the same proportion obtains for the country as a whole, it would give us 1,250,000 women municipal voters, of whom 82 per cent. are working women, and every one of whom would at once be placed upon the parliamentary register were the Bill now before Parliament to become law.

Here, then, we have it proved beyond cavil or question that whatever the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill might do for propertied women, it would for a certainty and at once put 1,025,000 working women on the parliamentary voters' rolls of Great Britain, and a like proportion in Ireland. The fact speaks for itself. The Woman's Enfranchisement Bill does not concern itself with franchise qualifications; it is for the removal of the sex disqualification only; and yet on the present franchise qualifications and reactionary registration laws it would at once lift 1,250,000 British women from the political sphere to which “idiots, lunatics, and paupers” are consigned, and transform them into free citizens, and open wide the door whereby in the future every man and every woman may march side by side into the full enjoyment of adult suffrage.

Hitherto I have been dealing with those opponents whose objection to the Bill is that it does not go far enough, and who prefer waiting for a measure of adult suffrage under which every man and every woman, married and single alike, shall be enfranchised at one stroke. Now, I have had some experience of politics and of political methods, and I give it as my deliberate opinion that nothing would so much hasten the coming of that much-to-be-desired time as would the passing of the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill. If the workers were prepared to lay every other reform on the shelf, and begin an agitation for adult suffrage, they might, if specially fortunate, be successful in getting it about the year 1929. Manhood suffrage could probably be secured almost at once and for the asking; but the complete enfranchisement of all men and all women at once would be resisted bitterly by all parties. And the main difficulty in the way would be the enfranchisement of all women, married and living with their husbands, as well as single. The leap from what is now to what this proposes is too great for the mind of the British elector to grasp, and not by any means the least of the opposition would come from the working classes. Reformers gain nothing by shutting their eyes to facts which stare up at them from every part. I speak what most people know to be true when I say that the chief obstacle to reform of any

kind in England is the conservative, plodding, timid mind of the average man. Hence the reason why all our reforms have come to us, not leaping and bounding, but slowly and hesitatingly. Even the franchise, such as it is, has been dribbled out to us in almost homœopathic doses. This difficulty applies to women's enfranchisement in a special degree. The male man, even he of the working class, will not lightly or all at once part with the authority which has so long been his, and admit the wife of his bosom to a political equality with himself. But once women are admitted to citizenship and some women become voters, the male mind will insensibly accustom itself to the idea of woman citizenship, and the way be prepared for adult suffrage, complete and unrestricted by sex, poverty, or marriage.

To those who are opposed on principle to women having the vote at all I have little to say. These I find it easier to pity than to reason with. But when they foresee the deluge following upon the enfranchisement of women I refer them to the Colonies. There women are citizens and voters, but they have not because of that ceased to be wives—even housewives, or mothers. Their outlook on life has been a little broadened by the possession of the vote which, willy nilly, forces them to interest themselves somewhat in political and social questions. They are thus in a fair way to become better companions to their husbands, and—and I say this with deep conviction—better mothers. Women whose circle of interests is circumscribed by her pots, pans, and scrubbing brushes, varied by an occasional gossip with a neighbour or quarrel with her husband, can never, however affectionate, be other than a curb upon the opening, eagerly questioning intelligence of her children. Broaden the outlook of the mother, and you open a new world for childhood to grow in, and bind many a wild, wayward youth to his home-life who is now driven out into the hard world for lack of that sympathetic, intelligent companionship which an educated and enlightened mother can alone supply. Colonial statesmen and social reformers all admit that woman's influence in the sphere of politics has been healthy and quickening, and, as it has been there, so undoubtedly would it be here.

The "Half angel, half idiot," period is over in the woman's world. She is fighting her way into every sphere of human activity. Her labour is coming into competition with that of man in nearly every department of industry. The women's Trade Union movement is growing by leaps and bounds. In the learned professions she is forcing herself to the front by sheer determination and force of intellect in a way that will not be denied. Sooner or later men will be compelled to treat with her and recognise her as a co-worker, and they could not begin better than by admitting her right to be a co-voter. Those who prate so glibly of adult suffrage

might surely learn something of men's opinion of women by taking note of the way in which lawyers and doctors are resisting her encroachments upon their preserves. A woman may be Queen of England, but she may not enter the profession from which Lord Chancellors are drawn.

The enfranchisement of women is not a party question. Its supporters and opponents are distributed over all parties. The measure is again coming well within the sphere of practical politics, and it is for women to see that it is kept there until a settlement is reached. If they will, as I think they should, make it not a test but *the* test question at elections, and resolutely refuse to work for or in any way countenance any candidate who is not whole-heartedly with them, they will, if not in this Parliament, then certainly in the next, secure the passage of a measure through the House of Commons at least which will place them on terms of political equality with men. If this comes as part of a measure for giving complete adult suffrage, well and good; but political equality they should insist upon, whatever the conditions of that equality may be.

Disraeli, speaking on this question in the House of Commons, said:—

"I say that in a country governed by a woman—where you allow women to form part of the other estate of the realm—peeresses in their own right, for example—where you allow a woman not only to own land, but to be a lady of the manor and hold legal courts—where a woman by law may be a churchwarden and overseer of the poor—I do not see, where she has so much to do with the State and Church, on what reasons, if you come to right, she has not a right to vote."

And with these words I conclude.

J. KEIR HARDIE.

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THE POINT OF HONOUR:

A CORRESPONDENCE

ON ARISTOCRACY AND SOCIALISM.

By RUTH CAVENDISH BENTINCK.

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THE POINT OF HONOUR.

DEAR CHRISTOPHER,—

My attachment for you personally was, as you know, very great. It is therefore a dreadful shock to me to be forced to recognize a rebel and a traitor in one who was a relation and a friend; but to me it seems demoralizing to remain on good terms with bad people—a man's character being shown by the company he keeps—so I find it impossible to associate with a person of your stamp, just as it would be impossible for me to keep up a friendship with a forger or any other immoral person. Forgive my plain speaking, but I am a plain man and about to speak out my mind for the last time.

I have tried to make every allowance for you. You have always been endowed with an unfortunate disposition, intolerant of anything savoring of restraint, impatient of procrastination, and contemptuous of prudence—which I even recollect your calling a "ditch-begotten virtue," an expression which of itself betrays you as an intolerant crank.

The Dangers of Too Much Knowledge.

Owing to various deplorable circumstances, and also in a large measure to your own reckless and headstrong disposition, you have, I admit, been brought into contact with many facts which are not generally realized; and these you have only looked at through your own perverted spectacles, which incline you to attribute all those things, which you ignorantly and arrogantly assume to be unmitigated evils, to the defects of our present social system.

As you see, I have taken all the extenuating circumstances into account. I will not even ask how it is that one brought up as you were can so forget our family traditions and the ideals pertaining to his rank as actually to avow himself a Socialist. I have made full allowance for the causes which may have induced you to adopt the mischievous course you are now pursuing. I own you have seen things which at first sight may arouse indignation. Your spirit revolts at what you consider to be "injustice"; but *is* it "injustice"? A better balanced mind would penetrate below the surface of things and realize its own inability to define abstract justice.

Sentimentalism in Foreign Policy.

For instance, when justice is meted out to some person or persons in Spain or Russia, Egypt or India, you and people of your kidney are apt to jump to the conclusion that it is an "injustice" because the sentence does not happen to meet with your approval.

This frequently leads you into making seditious utterances provocative of endless ramifications of disorder; and yet you know perfectly well that it is not possible for a government office to vouchsafe a reason for its actions, therefore the justification for them does not get published, and many are led astray by misguided and shortsighted sentimentalists who refuse to see any but one side of these questions. You do not consider that the men on the spot have spent their lives in studying the best means of dealing with the native population, etc., and are therefore better able to say what is considered "justice" in those regions than people who have never been in the country, and cannot expect to grasp the full significance of its problems in the same way as the officials, or even as well as those who go to such places in search of sport.

The Uses of Aristocracy.

With regard to our own country, how could it get on without the aristocratic class? Look at the work, often hard, generally tiresome, and always unpaid, which they do on county and district councils, school boards, magistrates' bench, etc., to say nothing of various charities.

Of course there are black sheep in every flock, and I do not deny that the "smart set" gives occasion for anything that Socialists may say of them; but, after all, they are not many in number, and are mostly aliens or risen from the middle classes, therefore the present argument does not apply to them. I own that many things in England are far from being perfect; but this is the case in every civilized country, and it would benefit no one were I to go and live in some mean and monotonous street amongst the myriads of beings who are degraded beyond redemption in our filthy cities. Most people in our class will do more good by keeping an oasis, where culture and beauty, art and literature, may find a home and not be overwhelmed by the ocean of brutal ignorance and coarse hideosity surrounding us.

That is my ideal and the work my artistic perception prompts me to carry on. There will always be squalor and ugliness enough for you to wallow in, because as fast as you sweep it up in one place it will reappear in another, so long as every individual unit does not "do his duty in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call him"; or, in other words, till everyone tidies up his own pigsty before attempting to clean up the farmyard—and if all the pigs did that there would be far less dirt in the world.

The Responsibilities of the Classes.

I have a strong belief that the thing nearest one's hand is one's first duty; that we have inherited certain work and responsibilities; and that if we neglect those and plunge into work of our own choosing, we are not doing what God intended, and end in doing more harm than good. As it is, I think most people of our class are honestly endeavoring to tidy up their own corner of the world before trying to tidy other people's. This is the duty which I hope

and believe I should endeavor to fulfil were I the meanest mole-catcher on the estate instead of its owner, and I only wish you could say as much instead of spending your time in making discontented and disloyal citizens; for this is a sorry occupation any fool is capable of, though it takes a wise man and a truly religious one to make people happy and contented, each in his sphere.

Do you remember our early days and all the "secondary gods," as you were pleased to call them—old Hannah, the stud-groom, the keeper, etc.? They gave you a very good example, for were they not all absolutely contented in their several positions? Would that you had assimilated some of their strong common sense! But your rebellious and predatory instincts were apparent even as a child. I have not forgotten your nocturnal expeditions to the lower gardens nor the fruit you kept hidden in the moat. I know your people pretend to be amused by the words "robbery and confiscation," but the aim of the equal distribution of wealth, though in itself ideal, is an object which can only be attained by appealing to man's predatory instincts, and the proposal to despoil one set of people for the benefit of another can only be called "confiscation," and, as such, can hardly fail to produce demoralization.

Socialism Demands a Higher Morality.

I do not, of course, share the ignorance of those who confound feeble and isolated instances of Communism with Socialism, and I am well aware that Socialism has never been tried by a nation. This in itself proves nothing, though the probability is that the experiment would have been undertaken long ago had there been any reasonable expectation of success; but the success of Socialism presupposes an improvement and elevation in human nature which we are not justified in anticipating: it assumes the complete eradication of all selfish instincts, the surrender of all natural affection, and the grinding down of all degrees of intelligence to a common level. The realization of Socialism suggests a barrack-like monotonous existence in which one set of people will be perpetually watching another to see that no unfair advantage is being taken, a life in which there will be little or no scope for originality or independence, and in which there will be nothing to look forward to, as the incentive to progress will be absent.

And even then the inequality and "injustice" will remain. To take only one instance. I am less physically attractive than X., although perhaps equally deserving. Why should X. enjoy the privilege of ensnaring the affection of some desirable female, whilst I am spurned?

In the interests of common justice I demand that X.'s classic features and model proportions should be planed down or distended to my own level. X.'s attractive exterior is in no sense due to his own exertions; it represents an unearned increment to which he clearly has no right, and it is only fair that he should be called upon to sacrifice it on behalf of the community of which I am one. This argument applies with even greater force to the opposite sex.

No. If you got your Socialistic State to-morrow and everybody equal and enjoying the same advantages, in six months' time those with brains and intelligence would come to the front and those without them would sink, for the former would take advantage of the latter. The whole idea is so Utopian, so idealistic, so totally unpractical! What man who has had to deal with men and their administration on a big scale has ever been a Socialist? Poets, dreamers, ranters, people with an exuberance of philanthropy and no practical knowledge, people who are dissatisfied with their conditions, those who have sunk to the lowest depths and have nothing to lose—there is your Socialist raw material and I wish you joy of it!

Fatalism.

Believe me, the huge fabric of modern civilization is working out its own evolution, and to try to increase the speed of the machine by pouring cans of liquid into it which it is totally unprepared to assimilate, will only result in a shudder of the machine, a spitting out of the liquid, and procedure by evolution as before.

In the vast network of most complicated inter-relations which builds up the civilized world, can you honestly believe that it is possible to straighten out the tangle and have everything nice and smooth, and everyone doing exactly as they should for each other's benefit? The modern industrial world is, alas! so constituted that the conditions you deplore must ever be with us in some form or other, and nothing that you or I can do is capable of altering what may, for all practical purposes, be looked upon as one of nature's laws.

There are other countries besides our own, and the adoption by one nation of a purely Utopian idea would dislocate the whole machine to its own injury; other nations would take advantage of the madness, and the crazy people who had accepted this form of social conditions would be crushed out of existence, for its Socialism would be an *unnatural* state, and therefore doomed to extinction.

Our Nation of Shopkeepers.

Great Britain is a kind of vast shop, which either handles and distributes the goods of foreigners, or supplies other countries with its products. The vast majority of the population is employed in distributing or producing these goods, and the sale of the goods is dependent upon their being of the same, or better, value than those which are produced elsewhere. Eliminate competition between British producers, and the value of the goods will diminish and their price increase. What, in that case, would become of the millions of men and women whose labor produces the goods in question?

The British Isles, already overpopulated, are incapable of sustaining the forty-four millions who now inhabit them unless the product of their labor can be exported, and it is impossible to believe that a nation which forbade private profit could compete successfully with rivals who adhered to the system of competition.

It is futile to talk of Socialism as a cure for all ills as long as the world is what it is. You cannot make people subservient to an idea and go against their natural inclinations and interests for the *sake* of an idea.

Classes a Law of Nature.

Look at nature; and if you can find a successful state of Socialism among animals or plants, I will take all this back. But until you do, I shall continue to assert that Socialism is not only a waste of your time, but a wicked waste, inasmuch as you are now spending your life in rousing a turbulent and dangerous spirit which, when once called forth, you may find it is beyond your power to allay; and you may yet live to regret your reckless wickedness in appealing to men's baser passions and setting class against class. But I will not enlarge on this theme; I have already written enough to show you how deeply I regret that we have indeed arrived at the parting of our ways, and that in future we must be as strangers to one another.

PONTEFRACT.

DEAR P.—

So our divergent opinions have strained your friendship to the breaking point; but mine is still intact, although you call me a philanthropic, idealistic dreamer and a wicked thief appealing to men's baser passions, all in one breath.

Do you remember that legend about the first Norman robber recorded in our line? How he, being about to engage in battle, rode down the lines, reviewing his forces and giving orders? He commanded one of his officers to begin the attack by storming a certain position. This wretched fellow, glancing at the site indicated, replied that it could not be done. Our ancestor lifted his brows. "What, then, do you suggest?" "I cannot say," replied the captain, helplessly. Whereupon, without further waste of time or talk, it is related that our amiable forefather, "raising his battle-axe, clove his head in twain," remarking that "it contained neither courage nor ideas, but only a mouth to eat," and so rode slowly on down the lines, the matter being of no great importance.

"Toujours l'Audace."

Now that callous old savage was right. If we have neither courage nor ideas, and placidly proclaim our inability to attack and deal with the difficult questions of the day—riding the while decked out in burnished armor, exacting respect from those we imagine ourselves born to lead, and expecting to have our greedy mouths filled with the choicest food the army commissariat has to offer—well, then we deserve to have our handsome, but inefficient, heads "cloven in twain," that's all. And yet this is the position you take up when you say "we cannot alter present conditions." Is not the present chaotic industrial system of man's own making? If so, it is capable of amelioration, alteration, and eventual reconstruction by

man: it is no more a law of nature than that we should wear trousers or tall hats. But it is a natural law that certain people should feel impelled to persuade their fellow men that humanity is capable of attaining something incomparably higher and better than that which it has already reached. But for these restless individuals we should all still be happily engaged in scratching up roots and trapping birds for our meagre sustenance, coloring our bodies with clay as our only artistic effort, lining our fœtid caves with dead bracken as our only luxury, and killing one another as our only pastime.

Nowadays these pioneers are styled "agitators" because they disturb the brain calcifying prejudices which so agreeably numb our intellects, and they, deeming themselves the unworthy little tools God is pleased to work with, consider it is their duty to ensure that the world does *not* remain what it is. They believe mankind is improving steadily, and, at times, even rapidly. So surely as I am like a god compared to palæolithic man—hairy, bull-necked, long-armed, flat-headed—so surely will the man of one hundred and fifty thousand years hence be as a god compared to me.

Our Intolerable Civilization.

Already you are yearning for an improved environment. The thousands of "mean and monotonous streets," with their myriads of stunted and misshapen beings, breathing dirt-laden air and thinking with dirt-laden minds, disgust you. Then why tolerate them? Your artistic and fastidious nature prompts you to flee from all that is abominable and shut yourself up on your own estate, surrounded only by people or objects whose companionship and contemplation strike no jarring note; but this does not prove you superior to the struggling millions, toiling in crowded towns under conditions which do not admit of their developing any sense of beauty. I can only admit your claim to excellence when I find your artistic perceptions strong enough to goad you into fighting ugliness outside your walls as well as in, and not acquiescing in its prevalence in your country any more than you would in your individual home.

The Ideals of Aristocracy.

You reproach me with forgetting the ideals of our class, but it is precisely these traditions and ideals that have made me a Socialist. The only reason that every intelligent member of our family is not one is due to the fact that most of the others were sent to school young or had these ideals destroyed otherwise.

All things carry within them the seeds of their own dissolution, and aristocracy is no exception to this rule. I maintain that no one, saturated as we were in the spirit of a once proud race, could fail to grow up into an uncompromising Socialist the moment he applied his tenets to modern conditions—unless some powerful influence counteracted his early training.

Let me remind you of the two dominant ideas which were set before us from the beginning.

The Governing Class.

Idea No. 1 was that we were unquestionably superior beings. The world was full of inferior beings placed there on purpose to do our bidding and minister to our wants. These inferior beings were good creatures in their way, so long as they did as they were told, behaved respectfully, and were content "in that state of life" in which God "had been pleased" to place them. Any inclination on their part to leave this "state of life" was little short of blasphemy. Any leisure they might have must be spent, not as they chose, but as the superior beings thought best for them, any claim they might make to appreciate art of any sort instantly became a jest. You may still find traces of this lingering in *Punch*: Mary Ann going to a Wagner concert after cooking the mutton, or a blacksmith in a picture gallery, both still serve as side-splitting jokes (though one wonders if any prehistoric beast can still be found to emit simian cachinnations over them). In short, life for these inferior beings was to be a life of hard work, and they ought to enjoy it—but as for enjoying life itself . . . ! That was reserved for the superior beings.

Fight for the Weak.

Idea No. 2 was that we must always fight for the weak against the strong, against the oppressor for the oppressed, for the forlorn hope, in the losing cause, and this against all odds and at the cost of any personal sacrifice. If you were one of three hundred on a sinking ship, yours the right to be the two hundred and ninety-ninth person to leave that ship—the proud and enviable position of being the three hundredth belonging to the captain. If adrift in a boat, your honor required that you should do your share of the rowing and do without your share of the food. If lost in the desert with only one tepid water-bottle between three people, it was for you to see to it that the water was only drunk by two and that neither of these two should answer to your name—and so forth.

All children are by nature generous and heroic; they respond readily to such teaching, probably only because it appeals to their artistic and dramatic instincts; but, whatever the cause, they undoubtedly respond. Not that they become little angels revelling in self-denial. We were selfish little brutes and fought like demons; all the same, you remember, we formed a high ideal of what the imaginary person would do or say under any given circumstances, and we made up stories and planned adventures in which this splendid individual did all manner of brave and impossibly quixotic things.

How Children see it.

Now you will take note that once these two ideas are thoroughly assimilated, once you have imbued a child with the conviction that it is his privilege to fight for the rights of the down-trodden, and you at the same time place a down-trodden people of his own race under his nose, whose rights he feels he ought to do battle for, then you have already—so far as ethics are concerned—your Socialist to hand!

You have only to add a few elementary principles of political economy and you have your practical Socialist up-to-date. The thing is inevitable. Inevitable, too, the fierce resentment I experienced on discovering that the aristocracy were not attempting to live up to their own ideals, dead within them, and out of whose detritus the fungus of pocket-politics now sprouts instead. Inevitable, too, my exultation on finding the old ideals enshrined in the hearts of the people as they prepared to follow the fiery pillar to the promised land.

It is well to remember the "secondary gods." They were about as contented as governors of provinces usually are—and we owe them much—especially the great man who kept the cinnamon turkeys and always held his hat in his hand, even when ropes of rain were coming down, so great was his respect for all superior beings, even when they were very small indeed; and the coachman who, when out riding, never forgot his "place," but kept so far behind us as to render ordinary intercourse impossible—a pompous proceeding which so enraged us that you recollect we crossed and recrossed the ford after rain, knowing his horse had a fancy for lying down in water and always hoping we might drown him—a pious wish which was once nearly fulfilled, the horse rolling over his leg in a strong current, causing us much terror and hard work in extricating him—still speechless and respectful—from the river bed. Yet this man's abject servility furnished us with our first chance of seeing English people who were not personal retainers. Do you remember the wild gallops to distant villages? the sweets and nuts flung over playground walls to amuse children who surely thought us mad? the poacher? the pastrycook? the gipsies? and all the wonderful people outside the park walls? . . . and now you have shut yourself up and out of England again, and tell me that "justice" is an attribute I am unable to estimate correctly!

Here we both see the same fact under different aspects. Surely if each man's individual conscience does not revolt at what he personally thinks unjust, there would be no justice at all! The unjust would have it all their own way, whilst the righteous ones sat in a subdued row, twiddling powerless thumbs and softly murmuring, "What we see appears to *us* cruel and unjust, but let us not oppose it till we are quite certain that we are capable of arriving at a correct definition of abstract justice." So one might sit gazing contentedly at the Crucifixion. Thus in point of fact many *did* sit. Yet I do not seem to notice that later generations have specially revered those "well-balanced minds" for the part they played on that occasion.

Roughly speaking, injustice is strength taking advantage of its power to crush weakness. Injustice implies a lack of imagination. "Justice" should be impartial, but no human being has sufficient imagination to place himself in the position of another so entirely as to be absolutely impartial. For that reason, "justice" *untempered* by mercy—which is merely the result of imagination—is invariably injustice: a truth which the great Duke of Wellington perceived in

that moment when he asserted that "military law" was no law at all.

The Men on the Spot who Know.

You hold that the omniscience of the "man on the spot" should be taken for granted, and that no action of his should be criticized. In 1567 you would have maintained that the Duke of Alva was right in his treatment of the Netherlands because he had a great knowledge of the world, and that therefore his "bloody council" was assuredly the best means of dealing with and governing people. You would have maintained that the views of the one hundred thousand artisans who emigrated to England were not worth listening to, and that the "strength of mind" Alva showed in sending Counts Egmont and Horn to the block was beyond praise. Yet, in spite of his methods of "dealing with problems on the spot," his fleet was eventually destroyed, and he was only too thankful to leave a country where he boasted of having executed no less than eighteen thousand men.

In our own days the "Congo atrocities" were perpetrated by Christians who had "studied the problems on the spot." It is the carping spirit inherent in a few people which acts as a necessary restraint on those who might otherwise get drunk on overmuch authority. Their vanity makes them susceptible to public opinion, and they weigh their actions a little more when they know these are liable to be criticized by somewhat exacting compatriots. Lord Acton said, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." I only object to this wielding of absolute power.

You accuse the "misguided sentimentalists" of never seeing any but one side of the question. This is indeed true. No matter what paper you take up, you are sure to see "necessary measures of repression" commended, exhortations to a greater display of "firmness," etc.; and all this from panic-stricken, pale-faced persons, wielding pens to order at their dreary desks, and who, never having been on the spot, are no more fit—according to your own theories—to form public opinion than those "sentimental cranks," who have, at any rate, the courage of their theories, and who may frequently be found to have formed the same because they have roamed the world in many an unbeaten track.

Patriotism no Monopoly.

I dwell upon this at some length because it is a pose of our "class" to speak as though they had a monopoly of patriotism. If any reform is proposed at home they scream, "Think of its effect in India!" or "Do not indulge in parish politics, but remember the susceptibilities of the Fiji Islanders and Basutos!" Well and good; but let an Englishman raise his voice in protest against some arbitrary measure or unfair sentence passed in any of our distant dependencies, let him hint that our country's honor is at stake, and the aristocratic imperialists fling themselves on him at once. He is a "traitor," he "ought to be shot," and so forth.

If your imperialist carried his "man on the spot" theory to its logical conclusion, he would believe that only men who have lived with and amongst those they legislate for are capable of knowing what it is they require. In this case the interests of miners would be handed over to those who had themselves worked in mines, and the concerns of cotton spinners to those who had spun cotton. But no; the leisured class fancy themselves born with a sort of marvellous intuition that takes the place of knowledge, and expect everyone to acquiesce in their decrees, when these should in "justice" only apply to the one and a quarter million people in this country whose interests the deer park dwellers may fairly be said to understand.

Aristocrats as Administrators.

You ask me to look at the work done by the upper classes on county councils, as magistrates, etc. It is precisely because I *have* looked that I accuse. They are mostly so unwilling to attack the more serious problems of our time that they even display an occasional activity in opposing those who would. Hence a fitful interest in local matters, usually in order to prevent any progressive measures being enforced, and to guard what they conceive to be their own interests. One hears rich men derided for not giving larger sums to the party funds. On enquiring why a man who appears to take no interest in politics should spend his money thus, the reply is, "Well, it's a very good form of investment." This sentence sets one thinking.

Of course, many rich people and numerous captains of industry do excellent work; but I doubt your finding these exceptions invariably belong to the ancient nobility, who, taking it all round, resist most strenuously any attempts on the part of the working man to manage his own affairs. Now I agree that every pig should attend to his own sty, but I see certain pigs attempting to compel other pigs, less fortunately situated, to restrict their energies to attending to the upkeep of the selfish ones' styes, and prevent them from bestowing any attention on their own! I note, in passing, that to my simile of an armed knight proudly asserting his right to lead the attack on apparently invulnerable enemies, you retort with an appropriate comparison concerning swine.

Is Sport Culture?

You suggest that those who feel unequal to the task of fighting our twentieth century dragons are keeping "culture, beauty and art" alive in some restful oasis. Let us be candid. Do the leisured class fulfil this function? You and I have been associated since our childhood with people who did little, when they had money, except spend it on idle ostentation. Their lives were supported in luxury by a host of parasites ministering to their self-importance, and you are well aware that the character and general upbringing of this class tends to produce a highly conventional, ill-informed and narrow-minded type. Our sons are hardly brought up to this duty of "sheltering culture" or encouraging science in the expensive schools

we send them to. The more intelligent may tell you the difference between Lybia and Lydia, or afford some immaterial detail concerning the Hittites, but their ignorance as to the history, laws, literature or geography of the Empire they are taught to boast of is phenomenal. Other contemptible nations may have a history, or even laws. These are beneath our notice. Political economy would be classed as "rot." No; games are of paramount importance to the "governing class," therefore what the oasis really shelters is "sport." Mill said, "Science takes cognizance of a phenomenon, and endeavors to ascertain its law; art proposes to itself an end, and looks out for means to effect it." Which of these two processes is going on at the present time in any of the "oases" known to you and me? Even the cultivated oasite is not clamorous in his demands that others may share in, or be given opportunities for learning to appreciate, those things which are, after all, the only ones that make life worth the living. Surely he may be compared to a man who is being rowed by others in a heavy sea, whilst he sits warmly clad on the dry seat, nibbling *pâté de foie gras* sandwiches, sipping champagne, and occasionally throwing the dripping oarsmen a weevilly dog-biscuit in order that their strength may be kept up sufficiently to go on rowing him! Would you be surprised if some day they heaved him overboard? No; you would do it yourself. We are not so unlike after all, and perhaps our quarrel—if quarrel it be—lies far back in those fruit-stealing days when, having committed every possible crime, you repaired to the billiard-room and practised skilful strokes, whilst I, no less steeped in sin, vanished in the library behind fat tomes on anthropology, whose musty and alluring smell is in my nostrils even now, and whose precepts I never forgot. Your very letter proves a transition in human nature. Here you are, an avowed opponent of my every thought and deed, actually endeavoring to "make allowances" for me! Time was when the only allowance you would have made would have been one of distance as you aimed a sharp stone at my head, or of quantity as you poured some death-dealing drops in my drink. In these days you find yourself weighing extenuating circumstances in my favor. It is but a short time ago that we burnt heretics and witches at the stake, and starved people to death, and, in some countries, reserved that worst torture of all, the "Iron Maiden," for the worst criminals of all, namely, those who desired to improve their country's condition. Some might still wish to see those methods made use of now, but public opinion—which is after all only private opinion in the aggregate—has changed, and, with it, our customs. Even I recollect men denouncing trade unions and declaring that the sooner English workmen imitated the Chinese and learnt to live on a handful of rice the better for them and for the country! What fool would say this now? And this process of amelioration which manifests itself in ever greater tendency towards concerted action and combination would not seem to you a "despoiling of one set of people for the benefit of another" if you studied the writings of modern economists more carefully.

The Failure of Individualism.

The prejudice against Socialism is due to the prevailing habit of looking at all the existing evils caused by an obstinate individualism and then saying: "That is what Socialism will be, only ten times more so!" At present a cut-throat competition forces selfishness upon us, insecurity and grinding poverty destroy natural affections, and want and destitution reduce millions of intelligences to one common level of devitalized incapacity. The passions—not the reasoning powers—survive. Mournful, barrack-like institutions *are* here now testifying to the failure of a system which denies men security in their own country, and assumes the only incentive to be money—forgetting appetite, not to mention vanity. It is an insult to all the finest minds of any and every epoch to suggest that the alteration of a vicious system would eradicate the wish to excel from our nature. Only we hope to do so in future without materially injuring others. Socialists desire that "those with brains and intelligence" should "come to the front," but they also claim that those less gifted should enjoy security, respect, and leisure as citizens performing necessary labor for the welfare of a grateful community.

You confound natural with fictitious inequalities when dealing with the "unearned increment" of X.'s physical attraction. We want to enhance natural advantages by giving all equal opportunities of developing mentally and physically to the utmost. Look at our women! See how these fictitious and cruel disabilities now prevent girls—intended by nature to grow into beautiful women—from becoming real "women" at all—battered, twisted caricatures, with drawn faces and cunning or heavy eyes. The same applies to men. May God forgive you your insolent allusion to "physical inequalities" which conjures up such visions that, for the moment, I cannot. Socialism being a comparatively new faith, it is remarkable how many of those holding it have already been found in positions where they had to deal with men on a large scale. Dozens of names suggest themselves to me had I the space, but I must confine myself to reminding you that the father of English Socialism, Robert Owen, managed a cotton mill at nineteen, and was part owner of the New Lanark Mills when twenty-eight.

Concerning "Utopia," I am tempted to tell you how I once accompanied a motherly primrose dame of high degree when opening a crèche in a foul industrial town. She made a short speech, in which she said a crèche was a temporary measure to palliate temporary evils, but that she hoped for a day when mothers would be enabled to feed and look after their own infants. Every subsequent speaker (they were all millowners!) alluded to Lady T.'s "Utopian ideas," with sarcastic smiles. Driving home, the dear woman protested, wearily, "I've had nine children and attended to each one, and I do assure you that nursing an infant is *not* the occupation I should select in paradise. Men have such odd ideas concerning Utopia."

Socialism and Competition.

But let us turn from her to our old friend Chambers's Biographical Dictionary. Here we see that "Marx's aim is *not* to propound Utopian schemes, nor even to offer programmes of social reform, but to elucidate an historical process which is inevitable"; and in this you concur, for you admit that the huge fabric of modern civilization is working out its own evolution, only you are annoyed when it betrays a tendency to evolve without consulting you. History shows that it is the backward nations, slow to adopt new ideas and unwilling to evolve, who get into an "unnatural state"; and that the more advanced ones, having adopted new methods, are obliged by force of circumstances to crush the laggard peoples out of existence. Moreover, if Socialism is impossible, why oppose it so fiercely? As to Socialism eliminating competition between British producers, *would* the value of British goods diminish and the price increase? Gigantic combinations are now, in the interests of private profit, gradually achieving the elimination of competition; and when you find that these amalgamations cause the price of goods to increase, you will also find that your only remedy lies in Socialism. Goods manufactured on a large scale might show better value than those turned out by numerous struggling competitors, with antiquated plant and cheap labor, on a small one. John Bright said that adulteration was a form of competition. Indeed, the dictionary recognizes it as such: "Adulteration. The act of debasing a pure or genuine article for pecuniary profit by adding to it an inferior or spurious article, or by taking one of its constituents away."

When you speak of England as "a kind of vast shop handling and distributing goods," and appeal to my better nature by asking "what would become of the millions of men and women whose labor produces the goods in question" if competition were eliminated? my heart remains as the nether millstone, and for obvious reasons. *What becomes of them now?*

A Little Lower than the Angels.

Nature shows it is useless to fling all manner of seed at random on a rough bit of ground with some ill-considered remark about "the survival of the fittest" as one lies down to watch the result. Nor, should you desire to plant an oak for future generations, will it avail you to stick an acorn in the crevice of some wall and tell it that if it is really an acorn it will become an oak anywhere. So it may: a little dwarfish caricature of what might have been one of the most magnificent growths in creation. Yet these incredibly silly things are what we do with the young of our own kind.

You want me to take the example of animals. You have already done so, selecting pigs. I refuse to compare mankind to the rest of the brute creation: till you can show me animals that cook their food, wear clothing that is not an integral part of their bodies but made for them by other animals of their own kind, or sacrifice their

lives deliberately, not only for the sake of their own young, but for strangers, or even merely an idea. Even "those who have sunk to the lowest depths" are capable of dying for another. True, it is difficult for their atrophied brains to grasp an idea. Even if they could, their devitalized natures and anæmic bodies would be incapable of working for it. This explains why *no Socialist has or ever will* come from the slums. All our recruits hail from the artizan or professional classes, men who have known responsibility and had practical experience. The "submerged tenth," oddly enough, share your views concerning our faith. They cannot see that ideas *do* rule the world; that men *are* subservient to them, and *will* "go against their natural inclinations and interests" for the sake of the "vision splendid" God has vouchsafed them.

Come out of your hole into England once more. Cast away the prejudices which blind you, and you will find a nation of aristocrats forming up swiftly, silently, shoulder to shoulder, in the cold grey dawn, preparing to stem back the great hosts of materialism which have gathered in such force on every side. I entreat you, fight with and not against us, for a long, fierce conflict it will be, during which many will fall; but they shall reckon their lives well lost, dying, as they will, with the ideal ever before them and the sun rising in the East.

Yours,

CHRISTOPHER.

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BY MRS. HYLTON DALE.

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CHILD LABOR UNDER CAPITALISM.

The Industrial Revolution and Child Labor.

At the end of the eighteenth century England ceased to be predominantly agricultural and became the most important manufacturing country in the world.* Child Labor being regarded by the manufacturers as absolutely essential to the speedy piling up of fortunes, the morality of which no one questioned, it was universally employed in the cotton mills and factories which suddenly sprang up in the land. Manchester, specially the seat of the cotton trade from its earliest days, was the greatest employer of Child Labor, and became wealthy and populous. In ten years—from 1780-1790—the population almost doubled, owing to the inrush from the country of people, who were tempted by high family earnings to barter their infinitely healthier existence on the land for life in crowded slum cities. A positive majority of the workers in the cotton mills were young children.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century spinning and weaving had been done in cottage homes with the simple hand looms which had altered but little from primitive times. But with the introduction of elaborate and costly machinery into factories the work changed its character. New methods, new buildings, new modes of life superseded those of the rural life of the English peasantry. The latter at first refused to allow their children to work in the factories and mills which had been built by their streams and rivers from which was derived the water-power which worked the machinery. The parents at first considered it derogatory and degrading work for young people. But to procure the cheapest form of labor was considered not only justifiable but almost a mandate from heaven. The wealth that poured into the country, notably into the pockets of the manufacturers, was regarded as a reward from God for industry and self-help. Unfortunately in the workhouses of London and other large towns manufacturers easily found the cheap material they required. Shoals of unwanted children of all ages, even as young as five and six, were transported from workhouses and sent as parish apprentices to remote districts wherever their labor was wanted. The parish authorities, whose callousness was equalled by the manufacturers, were only too anxious to be rid of the burden of rate-supported children, and they actually stipulated—so little did humanity and pity rule their hearts—that a due proportion of feeble-minded children must be taken as part of the contract. As far as is known no further interest by the overseers was shown in the fate of these hordes of victims of ungoverned industrialism.

* *The Industrial Revolution*, by Arnold Toynbee; *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, by W. Cunningham; *Capital*, by Karl Marx.

No one can tell how many thousands died unknown and untended over a long series of years. No records were kept. It was no one's business to see after such children. Employers for the most part regarded their apprentices as of less value than their machines, which at any rate were kept clean and carefully preserved. The masters themselves were frequently men of low type, with little or no education, who had often come from the ranks of manual labor themselves, and who were intoxicated with their own sudden wealth. They had little sympathy for the class from which they had sprung. Children worked side by side with adults and for the same length of time. They worked all day and sometimes all night; they were cruelly beaten if fatigue overcame them at their work; they worked in bad air without ventilation or sanitation, and with no regard to cleanliness or decency (the two sexes being herded together at night in huts); they received no personal care morally or physically, no education, no love. Many were living skeletons, some almost gibbering idiots. They died off like flies from various diseases, especially pneumonia, fostered by the sudden changes of temperature from damp heat in the mills to cold outside. Malignant fevers decimated them from time to time, and of those who survived many were in poor health, ignorant of the commonest things, and destitute of all education, secular, religious or moral.*

The work in the mills was, perhaps, not in itself hard. It consisted of piecing together the broken threads of cotton, of removing obstructions from the machinery, and of cleaning its parts. But accidents were not infrequent. And the children of all ages stood at their work the whole day through (often from twelve to fifteen hours at a stretch, with one and a half hours' interval for meal times), under pitiless taskmasters.

The conscience of society gradually became aroused to the evils of the system when the sins committed upon the hapless children reacted upon itself. When infectious fevers, originating in the dens where the little apprentices festered, were caught by children and adults outside, it was brought home to people that some foul wrong existed somewhere.

In 1784 the Manchester magistrates requested a committee of medical men, led by Drs. Percival and Ferriar, to investigate an outbreak of fever in the Radcliffe cotton factories. Dr. Percival, F.R.S., President of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, had had his attention specially called as a medical man to the evils and ravages of disease among the Poor Law apprentices in the town.

The first report, from which all subsequent factory legislation sprang, was that presented in 1796 to the Manchester Board of Health by Dr. Percival on the abuses and cruel conditions of life under which all the operatives, and especially the children, lived and died. It was resolved by the Board to invoke the aid of Parliament to establish laws "for the wise, humane, and equal government of all such works."

* *Life of Robert Owen*, by F. Podmore; *History of Factory Legislation*, by B. L. Hutchins and A. Harrison.

Robert Owen.

On the Board sat Robert Owen, cotton spinner, embryo philanthropist, and pioneer of factory legislation. He and his two partners subsequently purchased the cotton mills of New Lanark belonging to David Dale (whose daughter Owen married), and who was one of the few instances of a humane and enlightened master of that period. Owen carried on the work at New Lanark in the same humane spirit as his predecessor, and instituted a series of reforms in Child Labor. He raised the minimum age of the workers to ten, and refused to take any more Poor Law apprentices, preferring to gather in as employes children who lived at home with their parents. He established infant schools where children from one year old were kept in a very superior crèche and kindergarten combined. In his schools for older children he established co-education, and had dancing, military drill, natural science, botany, arithmetic, geography, history, singing and music taught. He allowed no punishments of any kind. The whole atmosphere of his schools was one of love. He, more than any educationist before or since, recognized that children are like plants, in that they want more than care and attention; they want love.

The First Factory Act.

In 1802, Sir Robert Peel the elder, himself an owner of cotton factories, inspired by what he knew of his own mills at Radcliffe and the report of the Manchester Board of Health, introduced and got passed the first Factory Act known as "The Health and Morals of Apprentices Act." By this Act the hours of labor were limited to twelve a day, and the children were forbidden to work at night. They were to go to church once a month, and were to be taught reading, writing and arithmetic. Girls and boys were not to sleep in the same apartment. The factories were to be ventilated and periodically whitewashed. All this seems little enough to the modern sense, but it called the attention of right-minded people to the subject, and raised a standard of humanity which has never been lowered, and from it came, slowly it must be confessed and after fierce struggle, all subsequent factory legislation.

Employment of "Home" Children.

One result of this Act, which dealt solely with Poor Law apprentices, was the substitution for them of children who lived at home, on whose behalf the law had not interfered. The evils of excessive work were now transferred to the "home" children, and continued to be borne by them for many long and weary years. Steam power, after 1802, having replaced water power, factories were built in towns, and, as the children lived with their parents, many of the ghastly and horrible outrages on health and decency disappeared. But the hours of work were just as terrible. Seven was the age at which children began to work in the mill, but cases of even six and five were not uncommon, and they worked twelve hours a day—thirteen hours at a stretch with an interval for dinner

only, breakfast and tea being snatched while at work. No seats were provided, and the children stood the whole day through. Many had to clean the machinery on Sundays.

The Cotton Mills Act of 1819.

In 1819, through Robert Owen's influence and ceaseless endeavor, Sir Robert Peel the elder got passed the Act known as the "Cotton Mills Act" of 1819. Although shorn of all the chief provisions dear to Owen's heart, for which Sir Robert Peel himself had striven, "The Act of 1819," as Mr. Podmore says in his life of Robert Owen, "marks the first and the most important step in the long procession of Factory Acts. Under it for the first time the State assumed the rights of parent and guardian to the children of the free, and took upon itself to prescribe the hours of work and the general condition of their labor."* This Act referred solely to cotton mills. The minimum age of employment was fixed at nine. The hours of labor were to be twelve per day. No provision was made for education, although this had been most strenuously urged by Owen.

The Acts of 1833-44.

It was not until 1833 that provision was made by the Act of that year for the appointment of paid Government inspectors. The hours of children's work were restricted to nine per day. But this Act failed to work satisfactorily, and the Act of 1844 was passed, enacting (1) that children from eight to sixteen must not work without a medical certificate; (2) that factories were to be inspected and registered; (3) that children under thirteen might only work half time. Extensions and amendments of this Act were made in 1867, 1874, 1878, 1883, 1891 and 1895.

The Coal Mines Regulation Act.

In 1887 the "Coal Mines Regulation Act," amending the statute of 1872 (which had replaced that of 1842), forbade girls and women and boys under twelve to work in any mine below ground and forbade it for boys from twelve to sixteen for more than ten hours a day or fifty-four hours a week.

The Factory and Workshops Act of 1901.

But the twentieth century has seen the most vital changes of all, the most important respecting Child Labor since Robert Owen pleaded nearly a century ago, viz., the consolidation and amendment of all the previous Acts into "The Factory and Workshops Act of 1901."

Child Labor To-day.

It comes as a surprise to the majority of present day people to learn that Child Labor still exists all over Great Britain, and for the most part to a highly injurious extent. This is more flagrantly the case in Yorkshire and Lancashire, where the "half time system" is

* *Life of Robert Owen*, by F. Podmore, p. 208.

in full play. According to the Report of the Board of Education for the year 1906-7 there were no fewer than 82,328 of these half timers or "partial exemption scholars"—to give them their official name. In 1904-5 the number was 80,368, and in 1903-4 it was 78,876. So the numbers are increasing.*

The three areas in which the largest number of "partial exemption scholars" are found are the Administrative County of Lancashire, with over 11,900, and the West Riding of Yorkshire and the County Borough of Bradford, each with over 8,000. All three areas show an increase in the number of these scholars in 1905-6 as compared with 1904-5. The County Boroughs of Oldham, Sheffield and Burnley also show noticeable additions to the number of "partial exemption scholars."

These half timers are children over twelve years of age who have obtained a labor certificate, and who are then allowed by the law to be sent to work half a day in mills or factories, provided that they are sent to school the other half of the day. Employment in the mill has to be either in morning or afternoon shifts, or on the alternate day system. One set of children begin work at 6 a.m. or 6.30 a.m. and go to school in the afternoon; the afternoon set go to work in the mill at 1 p.m. and end at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m., and attend school in the morning. A child may not be employed in the same shift either morning or afternoon for two consecutive weeks. No child may be employed on two successive Saturdays, nor on any Saturday if he has worked for five and a half hours on any day in the previous week. The maximum time for work for half timers is twenty-seven and a half hours a week.

Many of the children on the first shift rise at 5 a.m. (Mr. J. C. Clynes, M.P., states that he rose about 4.30 a.m. as a half timer); and sometimes they have to walk a mile to the mill in all weathers and be there by six o'clock. They have half an hour for such breakfast as they can afford. At mid-day they walk home to their dinners. At 2 p.m. they are in school.

Is it any wonder these children are worn out and that they fall asleep over their desks; or that the merciful teacher lets them sleep? The education that they receive is of very little use, whilst the injury done to their health by their double work is often irreparable.

Miss Clementina Black, President of the Women's Industrial Council, states: "I shall never forget the impression made on my mind by the peculiar mixture of pallor and eagerness on the faces of the little half timers the first time that I ever went over a weaving mill. The place was light and airy and the work was not hard, and the management considerate; but as to the children, any London doctor or any woman accustomed to the care of children, would have thought their appearance unhealthy and their expression of face abnormal."† Miss Black adds: "Labor in childhood inevitably

* See also the *Report on the Employment of Children in the United Kingdom*, by Constance Smith (British Association for Labor Legislation).

† *Sweated Industry*, by Miss Clementina Black, p. 122.

means, in nine cases out of ten, decadence in early manhood or womanhood; and the prevalence of it among ourselves is perhaps the most serious of national dangers. It is an example of that most cruel form of improvidence described by the French proverb as 'eating our wheat as grass.'"

Bradford, a pioneer town as regards its admirable arrangements for the scientific feeding of the necessitous children at school, is one of the principal offenders in the sin of the half time system.

Miss Adler, a member of the Education Committee of the L.C.C. and Hon. Sec. of the Committee on Wage-earning Children, recently made personal enquiries at two manufacturing centres in the north of England, one having over 5,000 half timers, the other 800. She said the appearance of the children was sickly and pallid owing to the fact that the processes of cotton and wool spinning have to be carried on in a humid and warm temperature. All authorities whom Miss Adler interviewed stated that the children lost 50 per cent. of their education; and she added that "teachers consider their whole moral tone is lowered, and that there is a visible deterioration which is most heart-breaking."*

Is there any plea that can be urged for the continuation of such a system? Yes, there is. This is what the Right Hon. H. O. Arnold-Foster (late Secretary of State for War), writes by way of opposing Socialist reform: "The great cotton industry of Lancashire, the wool and worsted industry of Yorkshire, and many other industries in a less degree, *are at the present time dependent on Child Labor*"; and he gives, as a plea for its justification and absolute necessity—exactly as Nassau Senior did three-quarters of a century ago: "The minute margins of profit and loss" owing to competition; adding: "The fierce competition of the world, especially in those countries in which Child Labor and long hours are prevalent, has to be met."† No statement could be more condemnatory of our present social system based on competition.

Inspectors, managers, teachers, members of education committees are agreed as to the evils resulting from children working during the years that they attend school. Nor do the parents' necessities compel such child-slavery. All who have studied this question testify that, as a rule, it is the children of men earning good wages who are sent to the mills as early as the law allows, in order to gain a mere pittance of 2s. 6d. for twenty-six or twenty-seven hours work a week. One penny an hour is the usual rate of wages for a half time child working at the textile trade in Yorkshire. It is not the very poorest parents who are the greatest exploiters of their children. It is to be noted that all these children and their work come under the jurisdiction of the Factory and Workshops Act; and that, accordingly, their lives for the most part are deliberately regulated and controlled by the State.

* *Child Workers and Wage Earners*, by Miss Adler.

† *English Socialism of To-day*, by the Right Hon. H. O. Arnold-Foster, pp. 99, 100.

Children not under the Factory and Workshops Act.

As regards children whose work does not come under the jurisdiction of the Factory and Workshops Act, and therefore escapes Government inspection, they may be classed as those employed (1) in shops, or by shopkeepers as errand boys and girls, and carriers; (2) in domestic work; (3) in street trading; (4) in agriculture; and (5) in various miscellaneous industrial employments at home or abroad.

The Parliamentary Committee of 1903 came to the conclusion that there were in England alone (apart from the half timers) 200,000 children thus employed as wage earners. It can easily be seen how such uninspected Child Labor may be exploited, and how extremely difficult, and, in many cases, how impossible it is to super-vize and prevent its abuse.*

In London the half time system has been abolished, but there is very little else upon which the Metropolis can be congratulated as regards Child Labor.

Child Labor in Domestic Work.

The abuse of Child Labor in ordinary domestic work is the most difficult of all to control. Miss Bannatyne, a school manager and Acting Warden of the Women's Settlement at Southwark, stated before the Inter-Departmental Committee of 1903 that children are often absent from school one or two days a week on account of domestic employment. The casual labor is bad for the boys' character, and the long hours unfit them for school work. The girls suffer from drudgery in their own homes, which she saw no way of preventing. But if the half days could be prevented and the attendance at school more regularly enforced, she believed that whilst much Child Labor would be prevented it would not affect the family income to any appreciable extent. Thus, a stricter attendance must be enforced at school.

"Ay! There's the rub." If regular attendance at school were really enforced, the parents, knowing the law could not be evaded, would accept the situation. It would be an enormous gain all round; first, to the children, who are now overworked, and whose education is spoilt by irregular attendance; secondly, to the managers and teachers, many of whom are unceasingly worried over this question; and thirdly, it would be a great saving of expense, as a large staff of attendance officers has to be kept under our present system to compel the parents to send their children regularly to school.

Even in the special schools for mentally defective children in Bermondsey, the writer has found cases of girl children who are such pitiful little drudges at home that the officer of the N.S.P.C.C. has had to be sent to "warn" the parents, with the result that the children are worked less hard, but only, it is feared, when closely super-

* The Government has appointed an Inter-Departmental Committee to enquire into the working and result of the half time system. The Trades Union Congress at Nottingham in September, 1908, passed a resolution urging its abolition.

vized by the officer. Another little girl in a special school gets 1d. a week and her tea for going after school to help a neighbor in domestic work and nurse the baby. (This penny she deposits regularly every week with the teacher for her own boot fund).

Of play, so absolutely essential to the proper physical and mental development of childhood, many of these children have next to none. They are old before their time and incapable of joy, and are weighed down by the responsibility of life.

Child Wage-Earners in London and the Provinces.

Miss Adler gave evidence before the Inter-Departmental Committee on Employment of School Children in March, 1901.* In the summary of evidence it is stated that: "For the purposes of the present enquiry Miss Adler had caused about 4,000 London cases and 3,000 cases in the provinces to be investigated. Those employed are about 10 per cent. of the total number of children. Miss Adler put in very voluminous tables, from which it appeared that out of 107 London schools containing 42,097 children, 3,897 were employed—633 in domestic work, 136 as barbers, 723 errand boys or girls, 1,227 in shops, 341 milk carriers, 386 street hawkers, 451 in other miscellaneous employments. Out of 3,527 cases in which the hours were clearly specified, 2,652 worked less than thirty hours a week, fifty-three worked over fifty hours in addition to school. The figures show that it is not the most needy parents who employ the children excessively. Some cases are very extreme; as, for instance, a girl employed sixty hours a week at trouser-making. Saturday work is often excessive. In the provinces returns were collected from some schools in twelve towns, showing out of 67,865 children that 3,049 were employed. The nature of employment and hours worked were much the same as in London, and many cases of excessive hours were to be found. In London the street traders were about one-tenth of those employed. In the provincial towns they amounted to nearly one-fourth of the total employed. Of the employments, domestic work, that is, going in to clean knives and boots, is the least harmful. Street selling is always bad."

Wage-Earning Children in Hoxton and Bermondsey.

In March (1908) the writer accompanied Miss Adler in her inspection of wage-earning children at a boys' school in Hoxton and at a girls' school in Bermondsey. They found 15 per cent. of the boys in the Hoxton school were wage earners. They were employed as errand boys to take out bottles, parcels and papers; at a tea shop, at a coal shop, at an upholsterer's, at a barber's. As street sellers they sold laces, salt, pot-herbs, vegetables, blacking. One "picked over green stuff" for a greengrocer; one ran errands for a maker of doll's arms; one looked after a crippled boy; one helped at a whelk and mussel stall; one made capsules, one cardboard boxes, one sticks; whilst one covered steels.

* Minutes of Evidence taken before the Inter-Departmental Committee on Employment of School Children in 1901, pp. viii. and 70-73.

At the girls' school in Bermondsey some ran errands, some minded neighbor's babies, some sold vegetables in the streets, or helped at coster stalls, some played with neighbors' children, some sold alone in the streets, which is illegal. The boys' occupations are the most varied and interesting. Those of the girls' are often very heavy, tiring and dreary. "Bright girls," Miss Clementina Black truly says, "are put to work far too soon, and they become apathetic, listless women at thirty-five who might be fifty."

Mrs. Hogg's Report.

Nine years have passed since the evils of Child Labor were brought officially to the notice of our rulers, and that by a woman. Mrs. F. G. Hogg (Secretary of the Education Committee of the Women's Industrial Council), made a special study of the subject and organized a deputation to Sir John Gorst, then Vice-President of Committee on Education, respecting it. A Parliamentary enquiry was instituted, and the facts brought to light were so terrible and unexpected that Sir John Gorst in the House of Commons called it "a perfectly sickening document which threw a lurid light upon the social conditions of a large part of the population." One manager stated: "Without exaggeration I can truthfully assert that there are to-day in our National and Board schools thousands of little white slaves."

This Parliamentary report stated that 144,000 boys and 34,000 girls worked regularly for money out of school hours, but nothing was said of casual or seasonal work. Of the children regularly at work, 131 were under six years of age, 1,120 between six and seven, 4,211 between seven and eight, 11,027 between eight and nine, and 22,131 between nine and ten. One little boy peeled onions twenty hours a week for 8d. a week. A milk boy received 2s. a week for twenty-eight hours labor a week—less than 1d. an hour. One boy received 6d. for twenty hours work a week. A little boy engaged in pea-picking received 3d. a week. A little girl under six carried milk for thirty-five hours a week for her parents, and earned no wages. Another under six was a nurse girl who worked for twenty-nine hours a week for 2d. and her food. A boy of ten worked seventy-two hours a week for a farmer for 3s. A newspaper boy worked 100 hours a week, including Sundays (over fourteen hours a day), and received 3s. 6d. a week and his meals. One girl of twelve was employed before, between and after school for six and a half hours a day for 3d. a week. Another girl of twelve got 9d. a week and her food for carrying out parcels for six and a half hours daily during the intervals when she was not at school. A greengrocer's boy of twelve started for the London market every day at 2.30 a.m. He returned at 9.30 a.m. and then went to school!

One would have thought that after such revelations as these were officially made known to Parliament it would have bestirred itself to remedy the evil. But the usual delays occurred.

The Inter-Departmental Committee on the Employment of School Children, formed in 1901, represented three of the great

Departments of State—the Home Office, the Board of Education, and the Board of Trade. As a result of this, in 1902, a Bill to deal with Child Employment was introduced, but, as Sir John Gorst says,* “was not proceeded with, the time of Parliaments being occupied with subjects more interesting to the governing classes. It was introduced again in 1903, and, by great good luck, became law on January 1st, 1904; but in 1906, in most places, in spite of the Act of January 1st, 1904, the deliverance of over-worked children is still a long way off. The local authorities belong, to a very great extent, to the governing class, and are not much under the influence of working-class opinion.”

The Need for a Socialist Party.

Sir John Gorst winds up his chapter on “Overworked Children” thus: “The story of this attempt at reform illustrates the impotence which threatens our social system, and the incapacity of the governing classes to carry out the simplest measure of social reform, even one which does not affect their interests, and on the necessity for which they themselves are agreed. It seems to justify the people in revolting against the parties into which the governing classes have divided themselves, in forming independent labor parties and in endeavouring to take the regulation of Society into their own hands. The present holders of power, according to the view of the rising party of the people, have had their opportunity; they have failed to avail themselves of it, and the carrying out of necessary reforms must now pass into other hands.” Moreover, as Sir John Gorst adds: “Had the counsels of women been more sought after and attended to, many of the lamentable blunders that men have made in the treatment of children would have been avoided.”

Bye-Laws to be Framed by Local Bodies under Act of 1903.

After all these delays, the Employment of Children Act of 1903 conferred powers on the London County Council and the councils of other counties and boroughs to frame bye-laws to regulate Child Labor. Mrs. Alden, M.D., states:† “The Act contains regulations which, if they were enforced, would have great value. The failure to enforce the regulations is due largely to the laxity of local authorities, who have neglected to frame bye-laws, and who have failed in some cases to put into operation even the statutory provision of the Act.”

Bye-laws were framed by the London County Council in 1905, but only now, in 1908, are they at length to be enforced. The employment of children under eleven is forbidden. If attending school, children are only to be employed in industrial work at home between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., or on other days between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, and between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., or on Sundays. Three and a half hours are to be the maximum of work if attending school, and eight hours a day when the school is not open. If attending

* *The Children of the Nation*, by Sir John Gorst.

† *Child Life and Labor*, by Mrs. Alden, M.D., p. 110.

school they are not to be employed outside the home between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., or before 6 a.m. or after 8.30 p.m. Street trading is regulated for all children under sixteen. Girls under that age are to trade only when accompanied by a parent or guardian. Boys under sixteen are to wear on the right arm a badge provided by the Council. On Sundays children are not to be employed for more than three hours and between the hours of 7 a.m. and 1 p.m.

But the enforcement needs more officers than are at present employed. A school attendance officer recently told the writer that in addition to his ordinary visiting (he has 3,200 children to look after), owing to these bye-laws, he has to be out in the streets until midnight on Saturdays in order to prevent children being employed beyond the legal hour—8 p.m. in the winter and 9 p.m. in the summer months.

In a return to the House of Commons dated June 25th, 1907, it is stated only sixty-six local authorities in England and Wales (out of more than 300), twenty-six in Scotland and five in Ireland had framed bye-laws.

The Prevention of Cruelty Acts.

The Act of 1894, among other useful provisions for the protection of children, made their employment in theatres or other places of entertainment conditional on the obtaining of a magistrate's licence, to be granted only when the magistrate is satisfied that the child is physically fit for the work and that proper provision has been made for its health and kind treatment. This Act has been amended and extended in the Act of 1904 and the Children's Act, 1908. The dangerous training of acrobats is subject to regulation.

The Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906-7.

This Act authorizes the levying of a halfpenny rate, if necessary, for the feeding of necessitous children, by any county, borough, or urban district council in England and Wales which is an education authority under the Education Acts of 1902-3. The Act, being permissive, has, in London, lamentably missed fire so far. Although members of the London County Council were moved to tears in the autumn of 1907 by Mr. Crooks' eloquent speech on behalf of the feeding of poor children, a majority of them voted against the levying of the halfpenny rate to buy food, for fear of placing additional burdens on the ratepayers. The London County Council, so far as concerns the feeding of necessitous children, contents itself with co-operating with private agencies and charitable societies, which are, in many cases, far from satisfactory. In Bermondsey the children have often to be given a penny by the head teacher and sent to the cook shops, as no provision can be made for them at the schools. The food provided by the caterers is often most unsuitable for children, especially for those who have delicate stomachs. Even if parents are able to provide food for their children in the slum districts, it is often of the most unwholesome kind, such as fried fish (bought cold), eels, meat pies, coarse parts of meat (especially pork), bloaters, cheap jam

and bread, vinegar and pickles, whilst tea is a universal drink. (The tea being more of the nature of a "stew" can hardly be called tea at all.) Milk porridge, bread and milk, and milk puddings are almost unheard of, whilst macaroni is unknown. The children's taste is vitiated by the strong flavored viands which they are given; and at first it is often difficult to get them to eat food suitable for their age and delicacy. Children fed at home are not infrequently sick over their desks in school. It is, of course, far easier for many parents to buy cooked food than to cook in their own poor rooms, with an impossible firegrate, no oven, no water supply, no sink, and no dustbin for vegetable refuse. To cater properly for the children, a system such as that prevailing in Bradford must be organized. In the matter of feeding the children England expects every city to do its duty at least as well as Bradford.

In the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration in 1904, Dr. Eichholz, one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, estimated the number of underfed children in London at 122,000, or 16 per cent. of the whole.

Up and down the United Kingdom there are at least as many children at school hungry as in London. Dr. W. L. Mackenzie, Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, said that in the slums of Edinburgh a large proportion of children were half starved. Dr. Kelly, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ross, stated in 1904 that in the South of Ireland it was commonly the case that children came to school underfed.

Medical Inspection under Section 13 of Act of 1906-7.

This Act provides for the medical inspection of all school children. But though medical inspection is of the utmost importance, it is of little use without medical treatment and proper feeding. It is believed that half the children in the mentally defective schools are thus defective, or backward, owing to improper feeding or semi-starvation. Their brains are anæmic, their eyes are often sore, their ears deaf, their teeth ache, their heads and bodies are verminous. Such children, when grown up, swell the ranks of the unemployed and unfit, and will continue to do so until the scientific feeding of school children is undertaken.

There is no more instructive reading respecting the physique of children than the *Report by Dr. W. Leslie Mackenzie and Captain A. Foster on a Collection of Statistics as to Physical Condition of Children attending the Public Schools of the School Board of Glasgow*, which was issued by the Scotch Education Department.

This Report gives the results of the most extensive investigation ever undertaken in Great Britain as regards the physique of the children. The heights and weights of children in seventy-three schools in Glasgow were dealt with. Returns were obtained for 72,857 children in seventy-three schools, which were divided into four social groups, representing, among other things, the distribution of one, two and three or more roomed homes.

At each age from five to eighteen the weight of the children was found to be uniformly below the standard of the average of the

population as ascertained by the Anthropometrical Committee of the British Association. Up to the age of fourteen the children were distinctly below the standard.

Boys and girls in Group A, the poorest districts, fell very much below the anthropometric standard. At the age of ten the boys' average weight was 10·8 pounds below the standard, and the average height 2·9 inches below. At thirteen the average weight was 11·1 pounds below the standard, the average height 3·1 inches below. The facts were practically parallel with regard to the girls.

As surely as boys or girls came from Group A, the one-roomed group, the children were always on an average distinctly smaller and lighter than the children from the two-roomed group; and those from the two-roomed group were smaller and lighter than children from the three-roomed group; and those from the three-roomed group than the children from the four-roomed group. The Report says: "The numbers examined are so large, and the results are so uniform, that only one conclusion is possible, viz., that the poorest child suffers most in nutrition and growth. It cannot be an accident that boys from two-roomed houses should be 11·7 pounds lighter on an average than boys from four-roomed houses and 4·7 inches smaller. Neither is it an accident that girls from one-roomed houses are, on an average, 14 pounds lighter and 5·3 inches shorter than the girls from four-roomed houses."

Now, many of these undersized children are employed as wage-earning children. It is fair to assume that if as comprehensive a report were made of children in London as in Glasgow, the results would be equally startling.

Pernicious Effects of Street Trading.

As regards street trading, all the witnesses before the Inter-Departmental Committee and all inspectors, managers, members of education committees, and clergymen, are agreed that its influence on children is entirely pernicious. Mr. Chilton Thomas, who was for ten years Hon. Manager of Father Berry's Roman Catholic Homes at Liverpool, stated: "The more we have to do with street trading, the more baneful we find it. Would that it could be abolished. I do think the street trader is such a social leper that he ought to be kept quite apart from the errand boy who has some sort of trade for his after life." In 1892, Mr. Chilton Thomas said they had a home for these street trading boys. He had 3,000 of them pass through his hands; but they had to shut up the home, as they found it did not do the boys a bit of good without regulations by the City Council (now in force in a measure), and without the care of parents or guardians. He also said the hours of labor on Saturday were terrible.

As regards street trading for girls, Miss Florence Melly, formerly a member of the Liverpool School Board, stated: "Our day industrial evidence would go to this, that no girl remains good after fourteen years of age who has had street trading. 'Chip girls' and 'step girls' should be included, as they go from house to house and come in contact with anyone who opens the door."

Mr. Alderman Watts, Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Watch Committee of Liverpool, said: "To have a pleasant looking child in the streets is flying in the face of the greatest possible danger. I have a strong opinion that if girls are kept out of the way of temptation during the earlier period of their lives, they will grow up respectable women; but if the temptation is thrown in their way, as it must be in the street, the danger is very great indeed. Liverpool a few years ago was, perhaps, one of the worst cities in this respect—as bad as London, in fact—but you will not find it here now. The death rate," Alderman Watts continued, "amongst children is abnormal and awful. Children cannot be exposed in the streets or elsewhere without very serious danger to their lives. Nine out of ten of little girls are of delicate frame."

Mr. Alderman Rawson, Chairman of the Watch Committee of Manchester City Council, said: "We are quite certain that the trading by girls in the streets leads to loose life. We have illustrations to that effect of a very painful character. The selling of newspapers and matches by girls in the streets is often a mere cloak for solicitation. There are girls that come from homes so bad, from parents so dissolute, that we believe the selling is simply a pretence, and that parents send them out knowing it is a pretence."

So much for the efficacy of parental control, guidance, and care under certain conditions of life. All the Councils of Liverpool, Nottingham, Birmingham, and Manchester were in favor of the total prohibition of street trading for girls.

But why only for girls? Sir Lambert Ormsby, President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, bore witness before the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration in 1904 to the miserable physique of the little street traders in Dublin and the frequent cases of pneumonia among them in the children's hospital, the death rate being quite abnormal.* And there is a concensus of opinion that it is from street trading boys that spring most of the unemployed, the casuals, the loafers, the gamblers, and many others who form the most difficult problems of modern society.

As a matter of fact, it is found that child labor and unskilled labor go hand in hand. For, in the first place, child labor is itself unskilled labor, and unskilled labor of a kind very attractive to certain employers. It is cheap; fresh supplies are always ready to hand; and, most important of all, it is intelligent unskilled labor, at any rate until the training of the school has lost its effect. Secondly, it leads to a supply of unintelligent unskilled labor. The child who is working cannot be learning, and the child whose mental development is checked is the child who becomes in later years the laborer too stupid to employ except at the lowest wages. Finally, even if he could escape from this dreary fate, he has no desire to do so. The bent has been given to his tastes; he has been taught to regard earnings, and not prospects, as his sole goal in life, and to sacrifice the last for the sake of the first. †

* *Juvenile Wage Earners and their Work*, by Miss Adler, p. 4.

† See *The Town Child*, by Reginald Bray, L.C.C.

As regards the general employment of children, the Head Master of the Anglesea Place Board School of Bristol declared that the evils of employment have shown themselves over and over again in the following ways:—

1. The boys are often late for school, some habitually so.
2. They come to school utterly worn out.
3. There is a grave moral deterioration.
4. Their mental power is diminished. It is very rarely a wage-earning boy does his school work well. The injury done to children is very great.*

In the Michael Faraday School in Walworth, Mr. Marshall Jackman said that, out of 227 wage-earning boys in his school, only 61 were in really good health. Dr. Thomas, the Medical Officer of the L.C.C., examined 2,000 children in schools, and he found that, out of 384 wage-earning boys, 233 showed signs of fatigue, 140 were anæmic, 131 had nerve signs, 63 per cent. showed nerve strain, 64 were suffering from deformities from the carrying of heavy weights, 51 had severe heart signs, 27 had severe heart affection, and 72 per cent. of barbers' boys were anæmic. †

Mrs. Pankhurst, at one time a member of the Manchester School Board and member of the Board of Guardians, stated that wage-earning by children was "demoralizing," and that "it would be distinctly an advantage to the parents in the long run that the children should be withdrawn from these employments. The more intelligent artisan does not believe in sending out his children to work for wages. . . . It competes with adult labor."

Child Labor in Agriculture.

In the agricultural districts the attendance at school is constantly evaded. It frequently happens that the local magistrates and county councillors are landlords or farmers, who must have cheap labor, even at the expense of the children's well-being. The children are employed in milking and tending cattle, in picking up stones off the land, in weeding, in picking strawberries (often at 3 a.m. in the season in all weathers), in hop picking, and in minding and leading horses. The work is extremely fatiguing. There is still in this twentieth century a wearing struggle between the educationist and the child exploiters, although it is not as bad as it used to be. In certain country districts 75 per cent. of attendances—instead of 95 per cent.—is still considered high.

The Childrens' Act of 1908.

But there are signs everywhere now of the awakening of the public conscience to the infamy of Child Labor. Although this Act does not deal directly with the labor question, there are, under it, to be established Juvenile Courts, in which all charges concerning the welfare of children will be heard, including applications for committal to industrial schools and reformatories.

* Report of Inter-Departmental Committee, Appendix No. 32.

† Barbers' shops in London are now, by bye-law, barred to boy workers.

The Immediate Reforms to Work for.

☒ The evils disclosed are grave. Leaving aside for the moment all schemes of social reconstruction, what immediately practicable reforms will bring prompt, if only partial, remedies? There is a vast amount to be done by mere administration of the existing law. It may safely be said that no local authority yet makes anything like full use of its powers under the Education Acts, the Shop Hours Acts, the Children's Act, etc. An enormous amount of good would result if members of education committees and of town or county councils could be induced merely to put the existing laws fully in operation. But amendments of the law are urgently required. In agreement with practically all those who have studied the question, we recommend:—

1. That for children under five for whom adequate home care is not available, there should be a sufficient provision of small day nurseries, under the administration of the local health authority, where these infants can remain all day, either gratuitously or at fees representing only the cost of the food supplied.
2. That attendance at school of all children between five and fourteen be rigorously enforced (the poorest parents being adequately assisted to enable them to let their children attend), an adequate supply of suitable efficient schools being everywhere provided under due public control, including special schools for sub-normal children of various kinds, "open-air" schools and vacation schools.
3. That children in attendance at school be not permitted to be employed for hire under any pretence whatever.
4. That in order to ensure the welfare of the coming generation of citizens the responsibility for the care and maintenance of children of school age, being destitute, be transferred from the Poor Law to the local education authorities.
5. That it be made obligatory upon the local education authorities to organize throughout the whole year a system of providing, at the expense of the rates and under direct public control, suitable meals of a simple kind for all children found at school in an underfed condition; such meals to be provided under skilled and salaried supervision with the amenities of civilization.
6. That it should be made obligatory for every public elementary school to have attached to it a "Children's Care Committee" of members whose duty it should be to take cognizance of every child attending school in a neglected or necessitous condition; to visit its home and discover what is amiss; to afford such friendly help as may be required; and to bring to light any cases of ill-treatment which call for criminal prosecution.

7. That in all cases in which a child is provided for by what is now Poor Law relief, reports should be obtained upon its adequacy and the character of the home; and that where it is not considered expedient to grant to the parent enough for the full maintenance of the child, or where the child is found, in fact, to be suffering from lack of nourishment or lack of care, the child be sent to a day industrial school, where it will receive meals and care during the whole day.
8. That where it is found that the parents are of such vicious life and character as to be wholly unfit to have the care of children, the guilty parents should be criminally prosecuted for their neglect, and the children sent to residential schools, so as to secure their proper upbringing.
9. That the minimum age at which children may leave school to be employed in industry at all be raised at once to fourteen, and as soon as possible to fifteen (as in Switzerland).
10. That in view of the need of securing effective technical and domestic training for all boys and girls, the "half time" provisions of the Factory and Workshops Acts be extended for all industries up to the age of eighteen, no boy or girl under eighteen being allowed to be employed in industry for more than thirty hours per week.
11. That provision be made for the compulsory attendance of boys and girls between fourteen and eighteen at technical institutes for a combined course of physical training, technical education and continuation classes, absorbing the thirty hours per week which they will no longer give to their employers.

LIST OF BOOKS, Etc., RECOMMENDED.

- ADLER, Miss NETTIE.—Child Workers and Wage Earners. *Journal of the Society of Arts*, June 12, 1908. Bell. 6d.
- ALDEN, MARGARET, M.D.—Child Life and Labor. Headley Bros.; 1908. 1s. n.
- BRAY, REGINALD.—The Town Child. Unwin; 1907. 7s. 6d. n.
- GORST, Sir J. E.—The Children of the Nation: how their health and vigor should be promoted by the State. Methuen; 1906. 7s. 6d. n.
- SMITH, Miss CONSTANCE.—The Employment of Children in the United Kingdom. Twentieth Century Press; 1908. 6d.
- Report of the Proceedings of the International Congress for the Welfare and Protection of Children, held in London, July 1902. King. 2s. 6d. n.
- Employment of School Children. Report of Interdep. Committee. Cd. 849, 1902. 3d.
- Street Trading. Report of Interdepartmental Committee. Cd. 1144, 1902. 1s. 8d.
- Royal Commission on Physical Training, Scotland. Vol. I. Cd. 1507, 1903. 1s. 1d.
- Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. I., Report. Cd. 2175, 1904. 1s. 2d.

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HOME WORK and SWEATING

The Causes and the Remedies.

By Miss B. L. HUTCHINS.

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HOME WORK AND SWEATING.

BETWEEN 1886 and 1889 the public became very much excited over the horrors of the "Sweating System." The revelations of hideous suffering, overwork and want brought home for a brief space to the minds of the middle and upper classes "how the poor live." Gradually the excitement died away: new topics absorbed the interest of the public; and of Sweating and the Sweating System we heard little. In 1906, however, the *Daily News*, following the example of a philanthropic society at Berlin, arranged an exhibition of sweated industries. Workers were shewn, in a London hall, actually manufacturing match-boxes, blouses, etc., or carding hooks and eyes, and so forth; and though for obvious reasons neither the long hours of work nor the insanitary conditions which too generally characterize similar employments, could be permitted or represented in an exhibition, full explanatory details of rates of pay, cost of materials, etc., were given to visitors, and each day there was a lecture by some person qualified to describe and illustrate not only the seen but the unseen side of sweating. The show attracted a vast deal of attention. Pity and sympathy were freely expressed; but along with the pity was mingled a note of sheer bewilderment, and almost daily, when question-time followed the lecture, came the cry, "What can be done? what can we ourselves do, to stop it?" The present Tract is an attempt, not to revive the useless public excitement, but to set plainly before the workers themselves—and especially before the organized Trade Unionists, who can do most to bring about a reform—the actual facts as to Sweating, and the way in which it can be abolished.

What is meant by the Sweating System.

The phrase, the Sweating *System* is misleading. All experts agree that there is no one industrial system co-extensive with, or invariably present in, the Sweated Trades. Mr. Booth expresses this by saying that it is not with one but many sweating systems we have to deal: Mr. Schloss says that no sweating *system* whatever is discoverable; and the House of Lords Committee, whilst reporting that the evils complained of could "scarcely be exaggerated," said that they had been unable to find any precise meaning attached to the phrase. An enquiry into sweating resolves itself, therefore, into an enquiry into the conditions under which the "sweated industries" are worked. Here at least a painful and striking uniformity is met with, and accepting it as a starting point, the Lords Committee defined Sweating as:—

- 1.—Unduly low rates of wages.
- 2.—Excessive hours of labor.
- 3.—Insanitary state of the workplaces.

Mr. Schloss has added the important point, taxing of working-power to an unreasonable extent, or getting sixpenny-worth of work out of fourpenny-worth of pay ("driving"). The broadest definition we can find for the term sweating, is, "grinding the faces of the poor." Professor Ashley* has given us a new and vivid phrase, "cheap and docile labor," which helps to explain the special characteristic of sweated industry. Sweated workers are sweated because either by reason of sex, age, infirmity or want of organization and support, they have to let their work go cheap. They are compelled by need to sell their labor to the first purchaser who will take it, and cannot make conditions. They must work at the rates of pay the employer thinks good enough for them, and the smallness of the pay automatically extends the hours of work.

Sweating is no new thing. It occurs usually as a symptom of one of two kinds of industrial change: either as the decay of a handicraft or as an extension or offshoot of the factory system. Handloom weaving is an instance of the former kind that will occur to us at once. Long before machinery was introduced we find the scattered weavers suffering from their lack of organization, subject to continual oppression by the factors who disposed of the stuff. Elizabeth's ministers were so impressed with the gravity of the evil that they drafted a bill to "avoid deceits done by Spinners of Woollen yarn and Weavers of Woollen cloth, and to increase their wages." (S. P. Dom. Eliz. Vol. 244.) In more recent times the handloom weavers vainly petitioned Parliament to revise the assessment of wages in their trade. In 1815 it was argued before Peel's Committee on the Employment of Children in Cotton Mills that it was unjust to limit the hours of children working in the mills while the handloom weavers, being grievously underpaid, often had to keep their children working far into the night to make up a living. In Germany and Austria and elsewhere the decaying handicraft, or Hausindustrie, is well known and widely spread. It is not only the competition of hand work with machinery that cuts down the rates of pay. The chain making at Cradley Heath shews that a handicraft can be grossly underpaid and sweated, although as yet no machine has been invented to do the work. But in England the sweated industry now more often takes the form of an auxiliary to the factory. Tailoring, clothing, shirts, blouses, ties, shoes, slippers and various trifles such as toys, crackers, match-boxes, instead of being made in the factory, are given out to be made or partly made in the workers' homes. This at first sight seems mysterious, for the economy and efficiency of factory industry (production on a large scale) has been demonstrated over and over again, in theory and in practice. How is it that blouses or match-boxes continue to be made in homes if they could be better and more cheaply made in a factory?

The Reason why Sweating Pays the Sweater.

Although, broadly speaking, the factory is the more economical method, yet the employment of home-workers offers an advantage,

* *The Tariff Pro sm*, 1903, p. 110.

in that very little capital is needed for starting or extending a business, and also because the sweating employer or contractor is able to shift some of the cost on to other people's shoulders. The manufacturer has to pay rent and rates for his factory; the sweater leaves the workers to pay rent for themselves. The manufacturer has to observe Factory Act requirements as to the cleaning, ventilation and sanitation of his factory; the sweater does not trouble about the condition of the workrooms to which he gives out work, as long as he gets the work done. The manufacturer may only employ women, children and young persons, for a certain period and within certain hours; the sweater's hands may work all night if they and he see fit. But there is another circumstance which gives the sweater an advantage, or apparent advantage, and that is in the complete lack of organization among these out-workers. It is true, no doubt, that factory women also are generally unorganized, but the mere fact of working and being paid together helps to maintain some sort of a standard, though often low enough. Out-workers are mostly very poor people, scattered about in their little homes, knowing nothing of one another; sometimes very shy and shrinking; they are often women who sorely need a few shillings to supplement the more or less irregular earnings of the head of the house, but are not entirely dependent on their own industry. If they ask for better pay or attempt to protest against a reduction of rates, there is one answer for them; others will be thankful to get the work. Some of these women get a little charity; many have poor relief; some have husbands who earn 16s. or 17s. a week when they are lucky enough to be in work at all. Some depend entirely on their wretched trade, and their case must be little better than prolonged starvation. All of them constitute however a force of "cheap and docile labor" which can be made profitable after a fashion, though it can obviously be applied to some industries only. Work that depends on delicate or costly machinery, or on skilled supervision and organization, is safe from any competition from the home. But the needlework trades and certain small objects that can be made with little skill, boxes, toys, crackers, etc., offer a field to the enterprise of the sweating employer, because the work can so easily be transferred from the factory or shop to the home. And the peculiarly unfortunate feature of this competition between the two industrial modes is that every improvement in the Factory Law or in its administration tends to drive work out of the factory into the home. If a local authority resolves to adopt a higher standard of requirements in regard to "suitable and sufficient" sanitary accommodation, the occupier of a workshop may decide to send away women and give them work to do at home; on the other hand, stricter inspection of out-workers will help to disgust their employer, who will think he would rather take on more indoor hands than be worried over the infectious diseases of people he knows very little about. The exact effect of the law in force in deciding the choice between outdoor and indoor employment is a point on which fuller information is much needed. But one thing is plain; the legal regulation of home work must be amended and extended in order to

do away with the unfair advantage obtained by the employer; otherwise the benefit of the Factory Act to the worker will in certain industries involve the giving more work out to homes.

Wages.

The unfair advantage enjoyed by the sweater is of two kinds: first, the evasion of factory legislation, already mentioned; second, the extreme lowness of the wages paid. Of the low wages so much has been heard lately that it is hardly necessary to labor the point further. We may take a few instances at random from the *Daily News Exhibition Handbook*.

- A. Trouser maker, widow with 4 children, works 10 or 12 hours a day, her best earnings (exceptional) are 10s. 6d. a week; more often 3s. or 4s.; receives parochial relief.
- B. Match-box maker, works 12 hours a day, earns on an average less than 5s. a week. Highest earnings 8s. 2d. for a full week including Sunday.
- C. Button carder. Two old people work together, earn 3s. 6d. per week.

Such instances could be multiplied *ad nauseam*. The Cradley Heath chain makers, after deducting cost of fuel, earn only 5s. to 6s. weekly for hard work, of a kind really skilled in its way, and not yet replaceable by machinery. The present writer has personally visited home workers in London, Birmingham and Cradley Heath, and has met with one, a skilled waistcoat maker, who was paid a living wage. The next most favourable instance was that of a remarkably quick, capable girl, making girls' frocks, lined throughout and trimmed, at 8d. each, deducting cost of cotton. She said she could make five or even six a day on occasion; but "you have to move yourself to do it"; and one could well believe it. This was an exceptionally quick worker; what would have been the earnings of an average or slow worker? In match-box making and similar wretched trades, about 1d. per hour seems to be what the piece rates yield. The lowest depths of all perhaps are reached by workers who sew hooks and eyes, buttons, etc., on cards. Carding hooks and eyes I have found paid at 14d. per gross cards in Birmingham. The employer was threatening to reduce the price to 10½d. for there were middlewomen who could farm the work out to "very poor people," and thus cut the recognized price of 14d. per gross. The average earnings of women in this work are only about 3s. 3d. weekly, even when they work long hours.* In all these small home industries the wages appear to tend steadily downwards, although in factory work women's wages have been rising for a considerable period.† The explanation is not far to seek; whereas the factory industry, aided not only by machinery which can be seen, but by improvements in organization and supervision which are not seen (or not so easily), becomes more efficient and produces at a less cost, in home work there is no scope

* *Daily News Handbook*, p. 39.

† See G. H. Wood, F.S.S., in the *Journal of the Statistical Society*, June, 1902.

for these improvements, and employment is given to "cheap and docile labor" only. In so far as these women consent to take lower and lower rates, they can get work.

Sweating is not "cheap" to the community.

The sweater, as we have seen, may squeeze a profit out of such "cheap and docile labor," in so far as he can shift the cost of subsistence on to other people, or compel his employees to do with wages insufficient to keep them in health. How far is such labor really "cheap"? The cost to the community in physical deterioration and poor relief is impossible to estimate in £ s. d., but obviously it must be considerable. In many cases the children are pressed into the service, and set to sew buttons or hooks on cards as soon as they come in from school. A home worker will tell you she can make so-and-so per week "with the children helping." If the children are too young to work, the result of the mother's home work is that they are neglected. A young married woman, perhaps with a recent baby and two or three little ones beside, tries to supplement her husband's irregular or scanty earnings by taking some work; finishing babies' boots, for instance. The boots thus made are usually hard, stiff, wretched little things, of a kind no baby should ever wear; meantime the worker, tired, dejected, underpaid and underfed, uses all her small strength to make a few pence over this wretched employment, and has little energy left to clean her room or care for her own children, who stray about unwashed, half-clothed, and neglected. It is impossible to imagine a more deplorable misdirection of energy. Let illness come, and the possible results are such as no one can contemplate without a shudder. A "notifiable" infectious disease may perhaps be discovered in good time, if the inspector is watchful, and stops the work before it is too late; but we are coming more and more to realize that most diseases are infectious, and that tuberculous disease is especially so. The germs of disease or vermin may and doubtless often are, carried from one poor little child to another in the shoes, clothing or toys made under these conditions. The deterioration of physique that must result in children brought up in these miserable surroundings and on insufficient food is so evident that it needs no emphasis.

What Has Been Done.

Successive enquiries and reports have brought these conditions before the public. The Commission on Children's Employment, 1863-7, advised the extension of the Factory Act to homes in which certain industries were carried on. But no government has had the courage to take such a step, each in turn having been daunted, partly no doubt by a vague dread of infringing "the sanctity of the home," but still more, probably, by the practical difficulties of administering such an Act. The law in regard to home work consists of a few very mild provisions. Lists of out-workers' names and addresses must be kept by employers or contractors in certain specified trades, and must be forwarded to the district or town council (in London

the Metropolitan Borough Council) and the names and addresses of out-workers residing outside the borough or district must be forwarded on by the authority to the authority of the district or borough in which the out-worker resides. Giving out work to be done in unwholesome premises, or to a house in which any person is suffering from an infectious disease, is punishable by fine, unless the contractor can plead ignorance, which of course in many cases he can. These regulations are not strong enough to fix the responsibility for the conditions under which the work is done on the shoulders of the employer, and there is good reason to suppose that even as they stand, the regulations are not well observed.*

In domestic workshops, viz., those workshops in which only the members of a family are employed, the hours of work are unregulated as regards women, and are regulated for children and young persons on an elastic system, by which the number of hours the child or young person may work is restricted, but the period of employment and meal-times need not be stated, save only that work must cease at night, viz., between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. Now all experience tends to show that a regulation of hours which does not include a statement of the period of employment is very nearly illusory. In these cases the inspector cannot do much more than check the employment of children and young persons at night. No regulation as to hours applies to out-workers, unless the out-worker is himself an employer of a child, young person, or woman, as sometimes happens, in which case the work place is a "workshop" and as such is under the Factory Act. But the solitary home-worker, and the worker whose employment is "irregular and does not furnish the whole or principal means of living of the family," may work any hours that seem to them good.

The hours of work of out-workers are, however, closely bound up with the question of wages. The employer does not directly compel them to work long hours, but he exercises compulsion indirectly through the miserable rates of pay. Out-workers would not work so many hours if they could get a decent remuneration without so doing. It is often urged by religious and benevolent persons who are shocked when these facts come to light, that the purchasers of wares so unjustly made are guilty, and ought to satisfy themselves that goods are not made by sweated labor. Can pressure be brought to bear by customers to ensure better wages?

Consumers' Leagues and Trade Union Labels.

Private consumers cannot exercise much influence. It is doubtful whether consumers' leagues, by issuing "white lists," can do much to favor the good employer, for the reason that trade is so complicated that it is practically impossible to trace the production

* The statistics contained in the Return presented to Parliament, No. 211 of 1906, shew that in a considerable number of districts little use has been made by the local authorities of their powers under the home work provisions of the Factory Act. In October, 1906, the Home Office issued a Memorandum to the Clerks of Town and Borough Councils urging the importance of thorough administration.

of any article through its stages. We may please ourselves with the notion that Messrs. Barkley or Whiterod, or whoever it is we prefer, is "all right," and provides seats or afternoon tea for his young people, which no doubt is all to the good as far as it goes. But who can trace the clothing, the jam, or the toys sold by Barkley and Whiterod, back to the dealer, and thence to the actual makers of the goods, who may be scattered all over England, or, indeed, the world? Consumers' leagues might however exercise a very good educational influence by agitation, by disseminating instruction among their members and the public, and even by raising the standard of public opinion on the two points of (a) paying bills regularly, (b) treating tradespeople with more consideration in the matter of giving orders for clothing, etc., with a reasonable time allowed for carrying them out. In both these ways the well-to-do classes, sometimes from hard callousness, but much more often from sheer ignorant thoughtlessness, help to tighten the pressure of competition on the tradesman, and through him on the workers, and here there is a real field for the educating influence of the consumers' league. Again, the committees of philanthropic societies and religious bodies should before all others see that their own hands are clean. It is not a pleasant thought that bibles are frequently stitched and folded at starvation rates of pay; and illegal overtime on church embroidery before festivals has been so frequent as to be specially mentioned by the Chief Lady Inspector. The committees also of working-men's clubs, co-operative societies, friendly societies and trade unions might scrupulously pass the "rat-shop" printer by, however cheaply he may offer to do the work. Some good, perhaps, might be done by the requirement of a label on goods for sale, stating that the goods were tenement made, in unhealthy conditions, or the reverse. This plan has been tried in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, it is said, with some success; but the extreme ease with which a label can be forged or destroyed makes the provision of doubtful value. It is better to face the fact that the customer is for the most part powerless to ascertain where or how his purchases have been produced; and though the "education of demand" may do a little to check sweating, much cannot be hoped from it. Much sweating, moreover, is carried on not for the supply of public authorities or even for the English customer, but for export. It becomes evident, then, that only the collective authority of the community acting through its organized representatives can take effective action.

Protection of Home Industries.

Protection of home industries is sometimes urged as a possible remedy for sweating. The evidence collected for the Berlin exhibition of sweated industries shewed however that sweating is quite as rampant in protected Germany as in free-trade England; and there are colonies of home-workers in Chicago and New York where even the very high tariff maintained in America does not make wages or conditions any better than in the worst parts of London. Regulation of sweating would do far more for trade than any import duty on

manufactured goods, as it would deprive the sweater of the unfair advantage he now gets by employing "cheap and docile labor" in unregulated workrooms, and more custom and a larger share of the export trade would then go to the traders who are carrying on business honestly under fair conditions.

Alien Immigration.

Restraint of immigration is often urged as a remedy for sweating, but the Aliens Act of 1905 achieved little or nothing, and it is unlikely that even a much more drastic Act would really check the evil. It must be remembered that the alien population is comparatively small, though, no doubt, in one or two districts it forms a high percentage. Sweating is quite equally rampant where the alien is a negligible quantity. There are practically no foreigners in the cutlery or nail and chain-making industries, yet there the sweater flourishes. Even in the tailoring trades, the competition of destitute foreigners is as nothing compared with the great mass of unskilled and unorganized female labor which crowds the market. The removal of all Jews from the sweated trades would be but a partial and temporary relief. The evil effect of the Jew's competition lies in the characteristics which render him a fit subject for the pestilential conditions of home work: he overcrowds whole districts; his standard of comfort is low; and his ingenuity has created or organized new industries to suit the circumstances. In the factory, English skilled labor has the preference: abolish the conditions that now specially favor the demoralizing competition of the Jew, and the difficulty will be got over without an impracticable policy of exclusion. The latest factory inspector's report from New Zealand (June, 1906) says that though there has been a considerable influx of labor into the colony of late years, no displacement or unemployment of their own people has ensued. Why? Because *the system of employment in the colony permits no undercutting in wages*, and "thus gives to those possessing knowledge of local conditions and requirements advantage over the visitor, unless the latter shows decidedly superior attainments."

How Wages have been Raised.

If we want to decide how to raise the wages of sweated workers we are fortunately not compelled to rely on theory alone, for in the colonies of Australasia two distinct methods of regulating wages have been in operation for ten or eleven years, and the results can be studied on the spot, or in reports issued on the subject. The two methods were initiated respectively by New Zealand in 1894 and by Victoria, Australia, in 1896. In New Zealand the machinery designed for the prevention and settlement of labor disputes is made use of to abolish sweating. "The colony was divided into districts, in each of which a local board of conciliation might, if petitioned for, be set up, composed of equal numbers of masters and men, with an impartial chairman. At the request of any party to an industrial dispute, the district board was to call the other parties before it, and

hear, examine and award. As soon as a dispute stood referred to a board, anything in the nature of striking or locking-out was forbidden. . . . A board's award, however, was not to be enforceable by law, but was only to be a friendly recommendation to the disputants. In case these, or any of them, refused to accept it, any party might appeal to the court of arbitration, or the conciliators themselves, if hopeless of effecting a settlement, might themselves send a case thither."* The court is presided over by a Judge of the Supreme Court, and it rests with the court to say whether the award is to have the force of law or to be merely in the nature of good advice. If it is to have legal force, it must be filed in the Supreme Court and then it has the weight of an ordinary submission to an award, and any party to it can, by leave of the judge, get an order exacting a penalty for breach of it. Decisions of the court are binding not only on the parties to the dispute, but on all employers and trade unions registered in the trade, and since 1900 decisions are equally binding on anyone entering the industry regulated by them.

For present purposes we are concerned with this New Zealand measure, not as a means of settling disputes, but for the regulation of sweating. The basis of the institution is trade unionism, and it might therefore seem as if it could effect little for unorganized workers, especially women. But in practice it has done much. If sweated workers want to have a revision of the conditions of their work, they have but to file a statement of claim in the office of the nearest conciliation board, and they are at once in the position of a union. Working women have invoked the aid of the law to good purpose. For instance, in Auckland, as lately as 1892, it had been found impossible to establish a tailoresses' union or a fair factory log, but under the Arbitration Act they gained an increase of wages estimated at fifteen per cent. The latest factory inspector's reports from New Zealand state that the Arbitration Act is working most satisfactorily. The wages of workers have been increased, and employment has become more regular.

Inspectors of awards have been recently appointed, and these inspectors are often able to settle disputes without having recourse to the courts at all, and in cases where employees have been sweated or unfairly paid, the payment of arrears can be claimed. The report for 1904-5 says that 295 informations of breach of contract were laid, of which 232 were won by the workpeople. Three hundred and twelve cases were settled without having recourse to the courts, and £1,463 of back wages secured for the workers, besides what was obtained at arbitration. In 1905-6, £788 of arrears were obtained for the workers by the inspector, plus £1,153 obtained under award of the court.

It will be seen that a great deal is done by agreement and adjustment. A noteworthy feature of the arbitration law is a provision for filing in the Supreme Courts contracts embodying working conditions agreed upon by employers and unions. These documents, called industrial agreements, are, when filed, binding for the period men-

* Reeves, *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, Vol. ii., p. 102.

tioned in them, which must not exceed three years. Numbers of these agreements are voluntarily entered into, and the arbitration court sometimes orders the parties to a dispute to execute an industrial agreement.

In Victoria wages have been regulated by the plan of having special boards for each trade, consisting of equal numbers of members elected as representatives of employers and employed, with a chairman elected by the board. A board may be appointed to fix wages and piece rates for persons employed either inside or outside factories. It must also fix the hours for which the rate of wage is fixed, and the rate of pay for overtime; and in fixing wages must take into consideration the nature, kind and class of work, the age and sex of the workers, and any matter which may be prescribed by regulation.

This Act was passed in 1896 in order to stamp out the sweating which had been shewn to exist in Melbourne and elsewhere in Victoria. It has met on the whole with great success, and the inspector's reports state that sweating has been practically stamped out. South Australia followed Victoria, and passed a Wages Board Act in 1900. The main difference between the two methods is that in the case of New Zealand, the unit of administration is the district; in the case of Victoria it is the trade. In the former case the authority is *judicial*; in the second it is *elective*.

Suggestions.

I.—SANITARY REGULATION.

Short of regulating wages, we do not believe that any real or adequate control of the sweater can be maintained. But undoubtedly efficient sanitary inspection of homes used as workrooms may do some good indirectly, in that it protects the consumer from the very real danger of dirt and infection, and also in that it checks the giving out of work in some degree, and is likely to ensure more work being done in factories and workshops, "to which the employer has the right of access and control." Two competing suggestions are now before the public; these are known respectively as the Tennant Bill and the Women's Industrial Council's Bill, the latter usually introduced jointly by some friends or members of the Women's Industrial Council and of the Scottish Council for Women's Trades. Mr. Tennant's Bill aims at placing the responsibility for the conditions under which work is done in home workrooms on the giver-out of work; and would place the administration in the hands of the local sanitary authority, who already receives the out-workers' lists. The Women's Industrial Council Bill involves more of an innovation; it would place inspection of out-workers under the factory inspectors, and all out-workers would have to produce a certificate shewing that their workrooms had been inspected and found suitable for the work to be carried on, having regard to the health of the persons to be employed therein. This measure would involve a considerable increase in the inspecting staff, but as that is for other reasons highly necessary and desirable, it does not in itself constitute

an objection. In New Zealand and some other colonies any work-room where two or more persons are employed, the employer counting as one, constitutes a factory within the meaning of the Act. The employment of children by their parents does not constitute an exception. Those who have studied the history of factory legislation can see that this is by far the best method, and the only one that can check sweating in home work and prevent unfair competition with well-conducted industry. It would however be very difficult to pass such a measure all at once, in an old country like ours. The Women's Industrial Council's Bill or Mr. Tennant's Bill would form an intermediate stage, and help the transition to the more logical and comprehensive measure adopted in New Zealand.

II.—TRUCK AND PARTICULARS.

A recent legal decision has held out-workers to be outside the operation of the Truck Acts, and thus, Miss Squire says,* placed thousands of workpeople outside the protection they had hitherto successfully claimed. This anomaly will it is to be hoped be righted before long by legislation. A provision recommended by the International Conference for Labor Regulation, Geneva, 1906, was that "particulars" of work and wages (now required under our law to be given to the worker) should also be exposed in the employer's pay office. This might be very useful and perhaps would help towards the difficult work of organizing the trades in question.

III.—WAGE REGULATION.

While measures for better inspection of home work and for improved sanitary conditions should have all the support that can be given them, and the restricted hours of work in domestic workshops should be enforced as far as possible, and made binding on home workers wherever children are employed, yet these measures by themselves will almost certainly prove inadequate. The utmost cleanliness and the strictest enforcement of an Eight Hours Day will not provide food for the sweated worker's child or make six shillings a week into a decent wage for a woman.

The Wages Boards are supported by the high authority of Sir Charles Dilke, who has several times introduced a Bill on the lines of the Victorian measure. The advantage of the New Zealand plan however is that instead of confiding the regulation of wages to the representatives of sectional interests, an impartial and unbiassed authority of high legal knowledge and position is set up, who after hearing and weighing the evidence of those immediately concerned, can fix minimum rates binding on an industry within a given district, and the same authority also has power to decide disputes as to hours and conditions of employment (so far as these are not already regulated by the Factories Act), while the wages board is really an *ad hoc* body dealing with wages and nothing else. Without attempting to discuss every detail of the machinery that would have to be set in motion in England, we suggest that the Conciliation Act, 1896, might

* Factory Inspector's Report for 1905, p. 323.

be amended and extended so as to deal with sweated trades.* The Board of Trade might be empowered to appoint a commissioner to enquire into the conditions of home work in some special district, and if much sweating were discovered, the commissioner should form a board, consisting of himself and two persons thoroughly conversant with the trade, as representatives of employers and employed. Home-workers might then register as unions under the board, every care being taken to make the process as simple as possible. The board would then proceed to take evidence as to the rates of pay, in order to discover what piece rates yield a living wage per hour. Having drawn up a scale, which should be published in the district and made known as far as possible, every effort should be used to induce the employers to adopt the scale voluntarily as a minimum. The factory inspector might be charged with the duty of discovering how far the minimum rate was adopted, and of calling the attention of employers to the decision. If difficulties were made, and the standard rate was not adopted, recourse should be had to a Court of Arbitration, whose decisions should have the force of law, and be binding for the trade within the district concerned. The experience of New Zealand shews that the inspector can do a great deal to bring about amicable arrangements and fair agreements as to wages, without recourse to the Court, when it is known that he has that measure in reserve. A very difficult question would be the decision of the amount of the standard minimum wage, for which the assistance and advice of experts would have to be called in. It would have to be remembered that many sweated workers are working as supplementary earners only; therefore the most effectual method would be, not to require a living *weekly* wage, which would certainly be evaded wholesale, but a scale of piece rates which would yield a fair remuneration *per hour*. Supposing it was decided that 15s. should be the standard minimum weekly wage for women, the piece rates should be calculated so as to yield about 3½d. per hour, which would mean a very substantial increase to most home workers. Inspectors of awards, as in New Zealand, should be appointed to enforce the law. It would probably be wise not to attempt to fix a really living wage at once, but to try and effect a moderate rise first, and revise the rates after two or three years. If a system of this kind was tried first in one or two districts notorious for sweating, it might then gradually be extended and develop into a national minimum.

We believe that the New Zealand Arbitration Court offers great advantages in the superior judgment and detachment of mind that could be brought to bear by a skilled expert, who would have the opportunity of hearing evidence from different trades, as compared with the method of leaving the solution to the decision of those themselves concerned in any particular industry, and we also believe

* It may be noticed that the measures for regulating wages here suggested are not entirely identical with those advocated in Fabian Tract No. 128. The discrepancy is one of detail merely. The writer of the present Tract is entirely in sympathy with the principles laid down in "The Case for a Legal Minimum Wage," but doubts the advisability of employing the local authorities in the manner there suggested.

that the encouragement given to women's organizations by making it cheap and easy for any little group of workers to register as a union, might have most valuable results. Experience shews that efficiency in the administration of the Factory Act regulations approaches perfection most nearly where the workers are best organized, and themselves take an intelligent interest in the measures enacted for their good. Women have hitherto proved apathetic and weak-kneed as trade unionists, but they are improving year by year. It is noticeable that a commission appointed in Victoria to enquire into the working of the various labor laws of the Australasian colonies strongly commended the New Zealand regulations. It reported as follows:— "The New Zealand Conciliation and Arbitration Acts remain to-day the fairest, most complete, and most useful labor law on the statute books of the Australian States . . . protecting on the one hand the fair-minded employer from the dishonest competition of the sweater, who keeps down cost of production by paying miserably low wages, and on the other, the toiling thousands to whom a rise in wages of a few shillings a week when an industry can fairly bear it, often means the difference between griping poverty and comparative comfort. Its main provisions have stood the test of time; and while employers and workers alike keenly criticize each other's actions in connection with its operations in certain industrial centres, *in no part of the colony which we visited did we hear any general desire expressed for its repeal.*"

Special consideration would also have to be given to those industries which are decaying handicrafts rather than auxiliaries to the factory. These, as already said, are relatively inconsiderable in England, but nevertheless occupy quite a large proportion of the population in certain districts. In some Highland villages the poor people have two or three sheep of their own, shear the wool, spin it into yarn, and knit it into stockings, for which they receive about 1s. a pair from the dealer. No wage regulation could touch this form of sweating, and it is likely enough that in the chain-making, the specially sweated industry at Cradley, the employers would soon be sharp enough to arrange to sell the iron and buy the chain, instead of paying wages, so that they would avoid the minimum wage altogether. In cases like these it would be desirable for the Government to take measures to instruct the people as to co-operative association for buying their own material, and to organize them for self-help and mutual protection, by lending capital, and so forth. Measures of this kind have been adopted in Austria for the assistance of the ancient crafts and rural industries, with very good effect. It would of course be better still to take over the whole industry and carry it on in Government shops with fair wages and good conditions.

IV.—DIRECT EMPLOYMENT.

To those who follow the argument here supported,* that sweating, though apparently an inexpensive method of production, is ruinous

* It is developed with much more fulness in *Industrial Democracy*, by S. and B. Webb (Longmans, 1902, 12s.).

to the community through the physical and moral deterioration induced in the sweated and their workers, it will be at once evident that the abolition of sweating is an important incidental advantage of direct public employment. The establishment of the Army Clothing Factory has saved thousands of workers from sweating dens without any increase in the cost of production.* The enlargement of that factory so as to produce in it not only some but all the clothing required for the army, militia and volunteers, would rescue thousands more from their present fate. The workshops at Woolwich could be expanded so as to render unnecessary that contracting for saddlery work, chains and hardware, which now promotes sweating. A navy clothing factory might supersede all sweating of the garments of sailors, coastguards, and marines. The Government factories should produce also all the uniforms of the customs, police, prisons, post office, and other official staffs, as well as all the boots, shoes, saddlery, and accoutrements required.

And if local authorities followed suit—if the London County Council were given power to set up its own clothing factory, and to supply other local governing bodies—if it became the practice to manufacture all asylum, hospital, police, and fire brigade uniforms required by any Town or County Council or other public body, either in its own factory or in that of some other public body—if a similar course were pursued with regard to boots and shoes, saddlery, and general leather work, chains, furniture, and other commonly sweated wares, part, at least, of the evil would disappear. For it would be easy to ensure that the factories of the Government or the Town Council would be well-built, well-ventilated and well-equipped; that the hours of work would be regular and short; that the employment would be steady, and the wages at any rate as high as those paid in the best shops elsewhere.

V.—ANTI-SWEATING CLAUSES IN ALL PUBLIC CONTRACTS.

But however rapidly we press on the establishment of public factories for the supply of public wants, many public bodies will, for a long time to come, have to buy goods which are at present usually the product of sweating. The Government contracts all contain some clause which is intended to secure a fair wage for the workers, and to restrain the practice of sub-contracting. For instance, the form of tender for clothing to be delivered by the contractor to the War Office includes among the required conditions that no portion of the contract be transferred without the written permission of the Secretary of State; that all garments shall be cut out and made up in the contractor's own factory, and no work shall be done in the

* Even if there were some increase in cost of production, it would still be good policy for the country to pay a living wage. The private sweater can send his worn-out workers to the workhouse when he has done with them: the country has to maintain its bye-products of pauperism. (See *Common Sense of Municipal Trading*, by Bernard Shaw. Constable, 1904, 2s. 6d.) It is a fact less well-known than it should be, that municipal contractors have been found giving out workhouse clothing to be made up by women who were compelled to ask for out-relief from their own union to supplement their wretched earnings. One way or another—the country pays.

homes of the workpeople; that the wages paid shall be those current in each trade for competent workmen in the district in which the work is carried out, and that the wages shall be paid to the workers direct, and not through any foreman or intermediary. So far back as 1891 the House of Commons passed a resolution that the Government's duty was to make every effort to secure the payment of fair or current wages for work done by workmen under Government contracts. But these provisions where out-workers are concerned are at present often neglected.

Though sub-letting and home work are expressly prohibited, there are hundreds of home-workers openly employed in Government work, and except in work where the workers are organized in trade unions there is no provision for ensuring a standard of wages. In 1906, the Minister for War, Mr. Haldane, had his attention drawn to the matter by some representatives of the Women's Industrial Council, and assured them that he would introduce some system of effective inspection. He also kindly assisted the committee of the Sweated Home Industries Exhibition by lending materials on which to employ the Government workers, who shewed the low prices at which they had to work for Government contractors. Municipal and other public authorities have the same difficulty, and probably will continue to have it if they employ middlemen. A case has been discovered where a contractor gave a worker a job to do for a municipal contract, and paid her the fair price insisted on by the municipality, but on condition that she should do other work for him at a rate lower than usual, so that her average wage is not protected by the fair wage clause. "The only satisfactory solution to prevent such evasions is the extension of direct employment without the medium of a private contractor by the Government and other public authorities."* The extension of employment under fair conditions will benefit the sweated workers not only directly, in so far as they themselves obtain employment under those conditions, but indirectly, as the payment of fair wages to the men employed would lessen the competition for work by married women. Nothing comes home more forcibly to the investigator of home work than this fact, that many of the women would not take work out at all if their husbands could obtain a decent remuneration. A great deal of sweated work by women is simply an indirect result of the under-payment or irregular employment of men.†

Conclusion.

There are those who will say that the measures of reform here sketched out will have the effect of throwing out of work those poor people who are not worth employing at the wages and under the

* Interim Report on Home Work, by Mrs. J. R. MacDonald; Women's Industrial Council, 1906; p. 35.

† An ex-out-worker told the present writer she had given up taking work—her "old man said it wasn't worth it." Many "old men" would say the same if they could earn their own wages. See on this point Cadbury's *Women's Work and Wages*, which shews that men's wages for the less skilled kinds of work in Birmingham are often not more than 17s. or 18s.

conditions that would be required under an amended Factory Act, with a minimum wage and strictly sanitary conditions required for out-workers as well as indoor hands. M. Aftalion, in a recent interesting study,* declares that to regulate home work is to destroy it, and cites the example of Victoria, where the establishment of a minimum wage has driven almost all the work into factories. We believe, judging from the analogous case of factory regulation, that the unemployment which would result from a well thought out scheme of home work regulation would be much less than these critics expect. Some workers would go to the factory; some, as already pointed out, would no longer need to take work out, if the head of the family were assured a living wage. Some workers, now underpaid, underfed, underwarmed, and badly clothed, would quickly respond to improved conditions and pay, and would in a short time become really more efficient. Moreover, we must remember that the payment of larger wages to a class of workers previously underpaid would in itself be a beneficial stimulus to trade, and lead to an increased demand for employment in the production of the food and clothing required. But let us admit that most probably there would be some workers unable to earn the minimum wage, and consequently thrown out of employment. These, we must remember, would be the workers either so unhealthy, so old, or so exhausted with a life of underpaid toil, that they would not be worth employing under the changed conditions and improved standard set. Here, surely, if ever, is the case for liberal poor relief. It would be far cheaper to the community in the end to pension off these victims of unregulated competition than to allow them to compete in the labor market, lower the rate of wages, and through their cheapness thrust the more capable out of work. For it must be remembered we are not here discussing those who are "unemployable" because of drink, extravagance or excess. The pathetic part of the sweated industries is that it is often the very virtues of these people that are their ruin. Miss Clementina Black, in her introduction to the cases investigated and tabulated by the Women's Industrial Council,† says "many of them are of the highest respectability and maintain a standard of conduct and cleanliness quite heroic. . . . The majority of these 44 women are industrious, even painfully industrious; most are thoroughly respectable; scarcely one is paid a living wage." They will sit up all night, and work for what is given them, and submit. Theirs is indeed "cheap and docile labor." They represent an out-of-date tradition and a superseded method, and only the wise and careful intervention of the State can save them and their children from a slow process of deterioration through want. "There is no person in this kingdom—or in any of the states that are called civilized—who does not partake of the proceeds of underpaid labor; and the conditions of such labor are not growing better; they are, if anything, growing worse, and underpayment is rather spreading than decreasing." ‡

* *Le Développement de la Fabrique, et le Travail à Domicile.* Paris: Larose; 1906.

† Interim Report on Home Industries of Women, p. 44.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

NOTE.—A few sentences of Fabian Tract No. 50 are incorporated above, by permission.

POSTSCRIPT.—The Wages Board Bill (see p. 13) was re-introduced by Mr. Henderson, and read a second time in the House of Commons, February 21st, 1908.

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THE CASE FOR SCHOOL NURSERIES.

School Attendance of Children under Five.

TILL quite recently it has been the practice in England and Wales for children between three and five to attend school if their parents so desired and for school authorities to make regular provision for such children. "During the fifteen years previous to 1907 at least a third of all such children were on the registers of public elementary schools."* Soon after the passing of the Education Act, 1902, however, the question as to whether school attendance for very young children was desirable began to be much discussed. It was pointed out that the compulsory age limit was lower in England than in any other country, and that the methods employed in most of our infant schools were unsuited to the needs of such very young children. Enquiries were set on foot by some of the new education authorities and by the Board of Education, with the result that in the Code for 1905 the following clause was inserted:—

"Where the Local Education Authority have so determined in the case of any school maintained by them, children who are under five years of age may be refused admission to that school."

Accordingly no obligation rests at present on local education authorities to provide for children under five. There are in England and Wales three hundred and twenty-seven such authorities, and of these thirty-two wholly exclude children under five from their schools, one hundred and fifty-four retain all children between three and five who are sent to school, while the remaining one hundred and thirty-six take a middle course, retaining some and excluding others.†

Reasons for Excluding Children under Five from Elementary Schools.

The reasons given for this exclusion are of two kinds; some have reference only to the ordinary infant school as it exists at present in England, others to any kind of public provision whatever. Among the former may be mentioned:—

1. THE VENTILATION DIFFICULTY.

It has been urged that under existing conditions of air space proper ventilation is almost impossible, and that the air has been actually found to be more impure in schools than in the dwellings of the poor.‡ It is argued that in the case of older children the risks

* Report of the Consultative Committee upon the School Attendance of Children below the age of Five (Board of Education, July 2nd, 1908), p. 12.

† Ibid. Appendix I. and V.

‡ Ibid. Appendix III.

from bad air are less while the advantages of education are greater, that it is a heavy and needless risk to herd very young children together in bad air. Such objectors take for granted that the present unsatisfactory conditions as to ventilation are to be looked on as inevitable, but, "it certainly seems anomalous, to say the least, that elementary schools should be allowed to remain as the classical example of bad ventilation, and that children should thus be taught by practical example to tolerate foul air."† It must be remembered, too, that the bad smell and intolerable stuffiness of the ordinary schoolroom, which are the outward and sensible sign of injurious air conditions, are due rather to dirt than to actual deficiency of air. "Far more could be done by cleanliness than by ventilation. The floors and walls should be capable of being properly cleansed, and the children themselves and their clothes kept clean and tidy."* Now in the nursery school cleanliness would always be specially insisted on, would indeed take the very first place among subjects of instruction, so that it may be hoped that the air would in them be less laden with impurities than in the ordinary elementary school. It must be noticed, too, that the children in such schools ought to spend a large part of their school time out of doors, and that no day nursery or nursery school is complete without ample playgrounds, both roofed and open, with facilities for resting out of doors in good weather.

2. THE DANGER OF INFECTION.

"In proportion to the number of children, the spread of infectious diseases caused by school attendance is greater before five than after; but it must be remembered that if more escape *before* five, the greater will be the incidence of the disease *after* five."* It is also noteworthy that "with the better training of teachers on the hygienic side and the appointment of school medical officers, a state of things will arise, and, in fact, is arising, in which attendance at school will become a means of decreasing the diseases (more especially diphtheria and scarlet fever)."†

3. THE DANGER OF PREMATURE MENTAL STRAIN.

"The question of overpressure has been rather exaggerated. Practically it does not exist in infants' schools, except in the case of children with defects to start with, children highly nervous or badly nourished, for whom the work is too much. At the same time, much of the instruction now given is without doubt unsuitable. . . . Play is the best way of educating young children; let them follow their natural instincts as in the nursery. . . . Above all, avoid any idea of enforcing discipline. Fine muscular movements (as of the eye or fingers in reading, writing, or sewing, etc.) should be post-

* Ibid. Appendix III. Memorandum by Dr. Haldane on the air in schools.

† Ibid. Evidence of Dr. James Niven, Medical Officer of Health, Manchester, pp. 80 and 81. Dr. Niven has since furnished statistics showing that over a period of five years in Manchester the case mortality was substantially the same amongst children attending and those not attending school.

poned until the child has obtained a fuller control over its muscles. . . . Drill is very important, and should consist of 'coarse' movements as contrasted with the 'fine' movements mentioned above. Organized games can be made into a very severe lesson; their value is much exaggerated.* This danger of overstrain through unsuitable treatment is of the utmost importance; and it is the special claim of the nursery school to avoid it by providing just that atmosphere of freedom and kindly encouragement which a sensible mother gives to her child, avoiding alike over stimulation and needless restraint.

But, in addition to these special and more or less avoidable dangers, general objections are raised against making any public provision for little children which would facilitate their removal from home. There is, for instance:—

4. THE DANGER THAT PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY MAY BE WEAKENED.

Experience has shown over and over again that the parental burden is too heavy. All observers agree that children attending school are better looked after by their parents, kept cleaner and tidier, than they would be if they stayed at home. A marked difference may be noticed in almost any poor district in the appearance of the children on Saturdays and during the holidays. It would be much nearer the truth to say that any arrangement which involves the child's being periodically submitted to outside inspection would raise the standard of parental responsibility, and that this influence would be greatly increased by teaching and illustrating what the needs of young children really are. The hollowness of this objection is apparent when one considers that the wealthy ladies who think it so dangerous to relieve the hardworked mother of any of her duties to her little ones find it necessary to depute all such duties in their own case to a nurse. This fact furnishes an answer also to another objection which is often urged, viz., that little children require such constant individual and loving attention that they are better looked after by their mothers than by anyone else. Let us look at the facts. How does the rich mother who has free choice in the matter act? Does she keep her three year old child constantly with her when she is reading, writing, talking to her friends, or eating her meals? No; she devotes, perhaps, a few hours in the day to it when she can give it a fair share of attention, and for the rest of the time she places it with a skilled attendant either out of doors or in an airy, sunny apartment, where it can play about freely under due supervision. What does the poor mother do? If she is able to remain at home, she will allow her three year old to crawl about the kitchen floor or play in the street, or, perhaps, if he be a venturesome child, will tie him to the leg of the table, so that he may not tumble into the fire, while she is busy with the dinner, the housework, or the family washing. If, on the

* Ibid. Evidence of Dr. Kerr and Dr. Hogarth, Medical Officers of the Education Department of the London County Council, pp. 63 and 64.

other hand, she has to go out to work, she will leave him with a "minder," usually some old or feeble person who is not able to do more active work, or, if she can manage to hoodwink the attendance officer, with an elder brother or sister kept at home for the purpose. Can it be seriously alleged that it would be a disadvantage to the child to be removed from the minder, or even from the home kitchen and the tail of his mother's eye, to a nursery resembling that which the rich mother provides for her own child, but shared with a number of little neighbors of its own age? It is just because little children require constant and watchful attention that collectivist nurseries are so much needed. One capable, motherly, experienced woman, with a suitable number of trained assistants, can superintend the tending and training of a large number of infants; while one woman with a house to clean, a family to feed and clothe, and the washing to do, cannot properly care for one.

5. THE DANGER OF ENCOURAGING BOTTLE FEEDING.

But though this dread of lightening the responsibilities of motherhood may for the most part be dismissed as sentimental, yet there is one aspect of it, affecting our dealing with infants of only a few months old, the importance of which cannot possibly be exaggerated. The right place for a suckled infant is with its mother, and in a well ordered State no woman would be allowed to undertake work away from home until her child was nine months old; but any legal prohibition of this kind seems, unfortunately, a long way off, since it would necessarily imply State maintenance for nursing mothers. Meanwhile, as long as husbands are liable to be underpaid or unemployed, mothers who should be nursing their babies will accept laundry work or charring; and when this happens the unfortunate baby will fare better in a crèche, where it will receive pure milk, suitably diluted, out of a clean bottle, than with the casual minder. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the crèche baby should be hand fed. After the first few months, when the feeding has become less frequent, it is quite possible for nursing mothers to visit the crèches at suitable intervals. In French and Belgian crèches a room is usually set apart for this purpose.

The Need for Public Provision for Children under School Age.

It seems clear, notwithstanding all difficulties and objections, that public provision must be made for some children under school age. Even if we decide with the Consultative Committee* that the proper place for such children is at home with their mothers, yet we are bound to admit, as they do, that the home surroundings of large numbers of children are not satisfactory, and that children from these homes should be sent during the daytime to places specially intended for their training.* No responsible person in London, for instance, is prepared to recommend that the children under five now at school should be turned into the streets.

* Ibid. P. 57.

Kind of Provision Required.

We have already said that of actual teaching, in the ordinary sense of the word, children under five ought to receive very little. Information should be given very sparingly and only in response to awakened curiosity. Restraint, compulsion, and punishment should be almost unknown; but there is one kind of education which must take place in these early years if at all, and on which health and efficiency in after life largely depend, I mean the formation of physical habits.* People are apt to forget that breathing, walking, eating, speaking and sleeping have to be learnt, and that there are right and wrong ways of doing each. They are all difficult arts to the baby learner, and he may be much helped in acquiring them by an expert and watchful guardian. As soon as a child is born one may begin to teach him regularity and periodicity in sleeping, eating and the evacuations of the body, and by the time he is a year old he is ready for one or two new lessons. Every year a little more may be done in the way of checking injurious habits and encouraging useful ones; and it must be remembered that these nursery lessons are not less but far more important than the reading, writing, and counting that are taught in the ordinary infant schools. If we consider what are the differences that distinguish a well-bred person from an ill-bred one, we shall find that they depend for the most part on habits acquired in babyhood, modesty, refinement, consideration for others shown in such everyday matters as eating, drinking, and moving about, accurate and distinct utterance, and little points of personal cleanliness. Training of this kind should find a place in the crèche and the nursery school, while it is almost impossible that it should be given by the overworked mother in a workman's home.

Children must be Taught:

HOW TO WASH.

Cleanliness is, perhaps, the most important aspect of the question. The wish to be clean is not born with us. It has to be taught and trained. If a child can be induced to feel uncomfortable when he is dirty, a great step has been taken towards civilizing him and towards the establishment of a higher standard in living for the next generation. This is a point that needs emphasizing, for there is no doubt that we rank lower in regard to cleanliness of clothes and person than other European countries. One's nose testifies to this fact if, after travelling in crowded workmen's trains in England, one does the same thing in France or Germany.

* "Habits, whether they be born in us or are subsequently acquired, constitute man's whole nature, and they are the results of experience or education. Our education does not begin when we commence to learn to read or write, nor does it commence when we learn to breathe or suck. It has been steadily going on ever since our first foundations were laid in the immeasurable past. The education of the infant consists in teaching it how to acquire good and useful habits which are not born in it, and which will enable it to live a complete life, and take full advantage of the opportunities of its surroundings or environment."—"Infant Education," by E. Pritchard, M.A., M.D. (Oxon.), M.R.C.P. (London).

In England the crusade for cleanliness in the schools is only just beginning. The first step was taken when nurses were appointed to examine the children's heads. Some teachers insist on clean hands and faces, but investigations have seldom proceeded further. Now that medical inspection is at length instituted, terrible disclosures are being made of verminous bodies and diseases engendered by dirt. Now cleanliness is a lesson that can be taught. Few lessons are easier to teach, provided that necessary appliances are at hand, and none bring to the pupil a more immediate and obvious blessing. None certainly are more important if the first aim of our schools is to extend to the children of the poor the opportunity of leading a decent life. But this important lesson is not one that can wait for the school age. The evil results of dirt affect the health of a young child even more than of an older one. A child of two or three years old preyed on by parasites is an object so deplorable that nothing could be more absurd than to permit children to remain in this condition till they are five years old and then expend large sums on teaching them the three R's, often without any cleansing process at all.

In any public nurseries which may be established in England the bathing apparatus would have to play a very important part, and clothing would have to be rigorously inspected and, when necessary, replaced. A time may come some day when English mothers, like French ones, may be required to provide clean underlinen twice a week for their children and a clean pocket handkerchief every day; but to anyone familiar with our schools in poor districts such a time seems remote.

HOW TO SLEEP.

The children of the poor suffer almost as much from want of sleep as from want of food.* The regular midday rest, which is such an important feature in the régime of the nursery, is a luxury of the rich, and in a two roomed household it is almost impossible to put the little ones to bed early enough at night. Undisturbed sleep at regular intervals is in itself invaluable, especially as the means of forming a periodic physical habit which will last a lifetime. Any schools for children under six should be provided with suitable and sufficient sleeping accommodation. "The babies must be allowed to sleep when they want to, and should all be trained to sleep during the day."*

HOW TO EAT.

Another very important nursery lesson is the right way to eat. Recent experience in organizing school feeding has amply proved the need for it. That we teach children to read and write before they know how to eat is an example of our topsy turvey methods. If we instructed them early in the use of their teeth, and were careful to provide suitable materials for that instruction, we should need to spend less later on in dentistry. The dinner table, too, with its code of manners, founded on consideration for others, pro-

* Report of the Consultative Committee upon the School Attendance of Children below the age of Five, pp. 90-96.

vides an admirable field for moral instruction and for laying the foundations of civilized life.

HOW TO TALK.

Second only to the importance of learning to wash, to sleep, and to eat, is that of learning to talk. Speech, the widest and most distinctively human of the arts, must begin in the nursery; and much depends on whether it begins there well or ill. Nothing is more noticeable and more distressing to the visitor in our schools than the inarticulateness of the children. One has to delve deep to reach a response. To receive an answer prompt, fearless, and distinct is so rare as to be absolutely startling. There are many reasons for this, but the most obvious is an actual difficulty in utterance. The children have never been taught to speak, and most of them make very clumsy attempts at it. Of course, they soon acquire a code of half articulate sounds, which serve to express their more urgent needs and emotions; but their ears are not trained to recognize nice distinctions of sound, and as they grow older the possibility of such discrimination is lost. The vocal organs, too, having no demands made on them, lose their flexibility and become unmanageable. Bad habits of breathing, too, pass unnoticed, which are difficult to cure and have very bad results.

To impart some familiarity with spoken language, the child should be taught to pronounce very simple words correctly and delicately; and his vocabulary should be extended gradually as his field of observation widens. This should be the chief educational aim of the nursery school. No child can think to much purpose till he can speak, or make any real use of information till he can frame his thoughts into sentences. The power of expression is absurdly neglected throughout our schools. We proceed to teach children to read while they are still, to all intents and purposes, dumb, which is like forcing food on a sick man who can't digest.

But though speech is the most important of the nursery arts, it is not the only one. Much can be done to assist that long, unwearyed, ingenious campaign which any healthy child will devise and carry on for himself, and which has for its unconscious aim the control of his own nerves and muscles.

Limit of the Nursery Period.

It is impossible to make hard and fast rules as to the dividing points in a child's life. One child will be more developed at four than another at six, and it is difficult to decide at what age the sort of training sketched above should give place to ordinary school methods. There is much to be said, however, for fixing the break at six or seven rather than at five; and in this we may, perhaps, be guided by the practice in well-to-do households, where children migrate from nursery to schoolroom at about that age. For it is well to bear in mind that what we are pleading for is, after all, a peculiarly English institution. Those very advantages, unfortunately, on which the English middle class specially pride them-

selves, they are the least eager to share with their poorer neighbors. We boast of the playing fields of Eton, and of the admirable training in self-control and esprit de corps to be gained in them, and leave our elementary schools with a wretched square of asphalt, where nothing can occur but a disorderly scramble. We are proud of our English cleanliness and our cult of the daily morning bath, and yet we are content to allow our school children to remain the most filthy and ragged in Europe. So though England is the home of the nursery (the word being untranslatable), and the wealthy mother in Russia or Italy makes a point of securing an English nurse for her children, yet a nursery for the children of labor is a notion of foreign growth, and we must turn to France, to Belgium, and to Hungary to see anything like an adequate realization of it.

In all these countries the school age is six, and provision is made for children below it in two separate institutions, the crèche and the école maternelle or école gardienne, as it is called in Belgium.

The following account of these institutions is compiled from reports published by the Board of Education:—

The Crèche in England and France.*

In Paris the first crèche was opened in 1844 by private enterprise and supported by charity. Mothers paid twopence a day per child, emphasis being laid on the intention of helping those who were obliged to earn their living, rather than merely of feeding and sheltering the children of the indigent. In 1847 the Society of Crèches was inaugurated at the Hotel de Ville, and in 1869 it was recognized as an institution of public utility. In 1904 Paris, with a population of two and three-quarter millions, had sixty-six crèches accommodating two thousand four hundred and ninety-one children under three years old. It is instructive to compare these figures with those for London, where, with a population of four and a half millions in 1904, there were fifty-five crèches, accommodating one thousand six hundred and ninety-three children under three. "In other words, London had crèche accommodation for one child in every two thousand five hundred, Paris had crèche accommodation for one child in every thousand. The crèches in London are private, with no aid from State or municipality, while those in Paris have received both since 1862. London has no registration or system of State inspection. Paris has both, the crèches being inspected daily by doctors. Lastly, the London crèches are distributed quite irregularly, some of the poorest boroughs having none at all, while Paris crèches are evenly distributed among twenty arrondissements. Even more startling are the differences outside the capitals. France, not including Paris or the Department of the Seine, has three hundred and twenty-two crèches. England, not including London, or greater London, has nineteen." †

* Report of Miss M. B. Synge, published by the Board of Education in July, 1908, together with the Report of the Consultative Committee previously quoted.

† The French statistics are taken from the Report of the Chief Officer of Public Control.

English crèches, or day nurseries, are, for the most part, organized by committees of ladies. They are mostly parochial and supported entirely by voluntary contributions. Few of them are in houses built for the purpose: most are in adapted premises.* Any private person may open a crèche in England without leave from any public body; crèches are unregistered and under no inspection.

The crèche in France, though not State supported, is generously subsidized. In the year 1904 Paris crèches received from the Minister of the Interior £1,468, from the Ville de Paris £67,045, and from the Conseil General des Départments £1,376.

No crèche may be opened in Paris without leave from the prefect of the department. In order to receive a grant it must be subject to inspection, conform to certain rules, and be administered by a council presided over by the mayor of the locality.

At the head of every crèche is a directress. Under her there is a berceuse to every six children and a gardienne to every twelve children under the age of one and a half years. In a large crèche there are also a cook and a laundry maid.

Each crèche has twenty or thirty "dames patronesses" or managers under a lady president. They are appointed by the mayor. Each lady has certain days or weeks in the year allotted to her and is definitely responsible for certain duties of management.

Children are admitted at the age of fifteen days and kept till the age of three. The mother is requested to bring the child clean. While she is feeding it herself she must come regularly to the crèche at least twice a day. She must pay her contribution, twopence for one child, threepence for two, every morning, and she must show that she is obliged to go to work or is incapable of attending to the child at home.

Illegitimate children are admitted after due investigation.

The cost per day per child at the Paris crèches averages about one shilling, so that the mother's payment covers only one-sixth of it.

The children are supplied with clothes. These are changed when they arrive and again at night.

There are usually seven or eight doctors attached to a crèche, one of whom visits it every day. In many cases these doctors, who give their services entirely free, form a committee to decide all questions connected with hygiene.

To some crèches is attached a "School for Mothers," to which infants not in the crèche are brought for weekly inspection, and tables are kept of the weight and progress of each child.†

The forty-five crèches in Paris receiving municipal grants are subject to inspection. In addition to the ordinary inspectors, a lady inspector of crèches has recently been appointed.

* A movement towards a better condition of things has been recently made by the National Society of Day Nurseries, founded in 1906 with the object of assisting local committees and affiliating existing nurseries.

† For further details consult "The Nursling" (see Bibliography, page 19), Lecture X., and translator's preface.

All the Paris crèches can be visited by anyone who is interested in them without introduction.

The Crèche in other Countries.

The chief characteristic of the Belgian crèche is that it is nearly always run in connection with an école gardienne or nursery school, which admits children up to the age of six.

The crèche system is not by any means so widely developed in Belgium as in France (outside the capital the only town at all adequately provided being Liège, which has six crèches), but in the poorer suburbs of Brussels there are one or two crèches admirably installed and managed which far surpass anything of the kind in England.

Crèches or Krippen exist in most German and Swiss towns,* and are usually separate from the kindergartens or nursery schools. The krippe admits children from six weeks to three years, and is intended only for the children of mothers who are out at work. It is open from 5.30 or 6 a.m. till the factories close in the evening, or sometimes till 8 p.m. The charge is usually about twopence a day; sometimes, to nursing mothers only, one penny a day. Illegitimate children are not excluded. Krippen are, as a rule, in the charge of Sisters (Catholic or Protestant), with voluntary helpers, who have nearly always been trained in the management of infants. The krippen are not municipally organized or supervised, but they receive in many towns municipal grants varying a good deal in amount. The cost varies from sixpence to tenpence a head.

Nursery Schools.

Between the crèche and the elementary school there is obvious need for a half-way house. This is already supplied, after a fashion, in some parts of the country by the baby class in the infant school, but nowhere in England is it sufficiently recognized that what is needed is not a school at all in the ordinary sense. Children under five (or, as I should prefer to say, under six or seven) should receive little or no definite instruction. They need plenty of freedom for spontaneous activity among wholesome surroundings under the guidance and supervision of attendants who have been trained in matters relating to health, to conduct, and to the growth of intelligence. Large rooms, well lighted, well aired, well warmed, and a pleasant open air playground where, if possible, plants and animals can be watched and tended, not too much interference, but the constant care of kind and watchful nurses; these are the requisites for a nursery school. In England, although a kindergarten here and there comes near to this ideal, no attempt has been made to supply the need for them all over the country. For anything of the kind on a national scale we must turn to France, Belgium, or Hungary.

* See Report by Miss May published with that of Consultative Committee.

THE ECOLE MATERNELLE (FRANCE).

Yet it is consoling to our national vanity when we look up the history of the French écoles maternelles, from which we have now so much to learn, to find that in their origin they owe a good deal to an Englishman and a Socialist.

For their first germ, indeed, we must go to Switzerland and to the year 1771, when Pastor Oberlin started his first école à tricoter in the Vosges. Mme. Pastoret transplanted the idea to Paris in 1801 when she opened a salle d'hospitalité, where the children of working mothers could be taken in and cared for; but it was not till 1826 that anything approaching the modern maternal school was opened, and by that time Mme. Pastoret had learned all she could about the infant schools which had been started by the English cotton manufacturer, Robert Owen, in 1812.

It was in the blackest hour of English child slavery that these schools appeared like a dawn of hope, an illusory dawn unfortunately. Robert Owen, roused by the pitiable condition of the poor children collected together from public charities and poor houses in order to work in the cotton mills, put a stop in his own mills to the practice of employing them from the age of six, and persuaded the parents to send them to school at two and keep them there till ten. Of these eight years the earlier were, in his opinion, even more important than the later. His reasons for thinking so are to be gathered from the very interesting evidence which he gave in 1816 before the Select Committee of the House of Commons to Enquire into the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis. In describing the treatment of the infants, he says:—

They were perpetually superintended, to prevent their acquiring bad habits, to give them good ones, and to form their dispositions to mutual kindness and a sincere desire to contribute all in their power to benefit each other. . . . In fine weather the children are much out of doors that they may have the benefit of sufficient exercise in the open air. . . . The children were not to be annoyed with books, but were to be taught the uses and nature or qualities of the common things around them by familiar conversation, when the children's curiosity was excited so as to induce them to ask questions. . . . All rewards and punishments whatever, except such as nature herself has provided . . . are sedulously excluded. . . . A child who acts improperly is considered an object not of blame, but of pity. . . . No unnecessary restraint is imposed on the children. . . . The dress worn by both boys and girls is composed of strong white cotton cloth of the best quality that can be procured. It is formed in the shape of the Roman tunic, and reaches in the boys' dresses to the knees and in the girls' to the ankle. These dresses are changed three times a week that they may be kept perfectly clean and neat. The parents of the older children pay threepence a month. Nothing is paid for the infant classes. . . . The infants, besides being instructed by sensible signs—the things themselves or models or paintings—and by familiar conversation, were from two years and upwards daily taught dancing and singing.*

Owen had some difficulty in finding teachers who would adopt his views and could carry them out.

I had therefore [he says] to seek among the population for two persons who had a great love for, and unlimited patience with, infants and who were thoroughly tractable and willing unreservedly to follow my instructions. The best to my mind in

* "An Outline of the System of Education in New Lanark," published, 1824, by Robert Dale Owen (Robert Owen's son); see "Life of Robert Owen," by F. Podmore (London: 1906).

these respects that I could find in the population of the village was a poor simple hearted weaver, named James Buchanan, who had been previously trained by his wife to perfect submission to her will, and who could gain but a scanty living by his now oppressed trade of weaving common plain cotton goods by hand. But he *loved* children strongly by nature, and his patience with them was inexhaustible.

This man was afterwards sent to London to superintend the first English infant school, which was opened in Westminster under the patronage of James Mill and other distinguished men. Owen gives an amusing account of his disappointment on the occasion of a surprise visit to this school:—

On entering the school, the first object that I saw was Mrs. Buchanan, whom I had never seen in the New Lanark school, brandishing a whip and terrifying the children with it. Buchanan I saw in another part of the room without authority or influence, and as much subject to his wife as the children.

Owen was full of ideas, and none of them were more original and valuable than those as to the education of infants; but, as one may judge from the above extract, he does not seem to have had the knack of gathering round him the people who could satisfactorily carry out those ideas and render permanent the institutions which sprang from his warm heart and fertile brain. But England was deep in the trough of laissez faire, and one need not wonder that here Owen's preaching fell on deaf ears and produced no permanent results.

France, quickened by a stirring of revolt and intellectual awakening, offered more hopeful soil; and there, as we have seen, the seed germinated when the first salle d'asile (or salle d'essai, as it was at first called) was opened in the Rue du Bac in 1826. Seven years later the salles d'asiles received their first recognition by the State, and in 1837 a commission was appointed to draw up rules for their conduct. These rules were revised from time to time, and a special training school for infant teachers was opened; and at last, in 1881, the old name of salles d'asiles was changed to écoles maternelles, and the rules as to admission and the program were settled and codified.

At the head of every école maternelle is a directress, a certificated teacher, whose salary, paid in part by the State, in part by the commune, begins at one hundred and sixty-eight pounds a year, and rises gradually to a maximum of two hundred and eight pounds, with a right to a pension at the end of twenty-five years. She is helped by a number of assistants (one for every forty children), whose salaries begin at eighty-eight pounds, and rise to one hundred and twenty-eight pounds. There are, in addition, a number of nurses or servants chosen by the directrice and paid by the commune, whose wages vary from forty pounds to fifty pounds.

The directress has various registers to keep, which must be at the disposal of the inspectors.

On the arrival of the children in the morning, she must ascertain by personal inspection that each one is in good health and clean. She also inspects their baskets, and sees that each child has brought a pocket handkerchief. She receives the pence and keeps a list of those who are fed free of charge, and she supervizes the school canteen.

The assistants must be over seventeen and certificated. Each has a separate class, and a great deal depends on the ingenuity and child love of the teacher. They help with the midday meal if required. The school hours being very long, they take it in turns to stay overtime.

The nurses, or *femmes de service*, are a most important addition to the staff. There is one, at least, in every school; two, if the numbers justify it. Their duties are very various. They sweep out the school every day, and open it at eight in winter and seven in summer for any children whose mothers go early to work, taking charge of the children till the directress and assistants arrive at nine o'clock. The *femme de service* superintends the children at the water closets every morning and again at one o'clock. This, from a hygienic point of view, is most important and is much neglected in English infant schools. She also washes the children's hands and faces twice a day and, in some schools, gives them a weekly bath and helps to wait on them at the school dinner. As in the case of the *crèche*, the general superintendence of the school is in the hands of a committee of ladies presided over by the mayor. Members of this committee visit the homes of the children.

The *école maternelle* is optional and free. Children between the ages of two and six are admitted on producing a note of admission from the mayor of the commune. Mothers are specially asked to bring the children clean and to pack in their school bucket a spoon, a dinner napkin, some bread and wholesome drink.

The schools are entirely paid for out of public funds, the cost being divided between the State, the department, and the commune.

The "Caisses des Ecoles" is a benevolent society subsidized and controlled by the State. It originated in 1849 and has grown into an organization of great importance. It covers much the same ground as our newly established Care Committees, its object being to provide clothing, boots, and food to necessitous children. It also provides for country holidays and vacation schools.

About a third of the children in the *écoles maternelles* pay for their food and the rest have it free. The list of the latter is kept by the mayor. The food consists chiefly of milk, vegetable purées and other soups, macaroni, semolina, and tapioca, with very little or no meat.

Many of the large towns in France are spending great sums in feeding the children in the *écoles maternelles*. Marseilles has made all the feeding in them free. St. Etienne charges three halfpence, for which wine is given.

The *écoles maternelles*, like the other French schools, are inspected at least twice a month by the medical inspector; but besides these there is a large staff of special lady inspectors.

With regard to medical inspection of Paris schools, it must be remembered that in every district there is, under the *caisse des écoles*, a free dispensary for children subsidized by the municipality. Here children from the schools can have baths, hair cut and washed,

medical advice with regard to teeth, eyes, ears, etc.; while a free distribution of cod liver oil is made to necessitous children in the winter.

It is difficult to give any idea of the school program in a few words. It includes games, manual work, such as building with bricks or cards and making artificial flowers, the first principles of moral education, knowledge of everyday things, drawing, and lessons on language. Reading is taught to children over five, but not much insisted on. The little talks on familiar subjects are, perhaps, what strike one most. Take this, for instance: "The house, the kitchen. Let the child describe it. What can we see? Kitchen fire, table, etc. The use of each object. What does mother do? Each child? Cat? Children should help their parents without complaining." Or this: "The pocket handkerchief. What is it? What is its use? Blowing your nose, spitting. Each must have a handkerchief. How to use it. Unfold, refold."

Simple, familiar topics, such as these, afford the best opportunities for inducing children to talk; and nothing is more important in dealing with the little ones from neglected homes.

The Ecole Maternelle in Other Countries.

France does not stand alone with regard to nursery schools. In Belgium an *école gardienne*, as it is called, is attached to every *crèche*, and is managed on much the same lines as the *écoles maternelles*.

Germany, Switzerland, Portugal and Hungary all have their maternal schools or kindergartens.

In Hungary* they are excellent. Early in the nineteenth century, a Countess of Brunswick, having been much impressed by the infant schools of Owen's follower, Wilderspin, in England, came back to Hungary, and urged the claims of infant education just at the moment when reform was rife there.

A normal school for training infant teachers was founded so early as 1837, and in 1875 kindergartens were recognized by the State as a definite form of public instruction.

By an Act of Parliament, passed in 1891, attendance at a kindergarten is compulsory for all children between the third and sixth years. These schools were dominated at first by the German idea, but by 1899, when Miss Catherine Dodd visited the country, the language, songs, and games used in them were markedly national in character, showing the influence of Hungarian life and history. One game, for instance, represented the shepherds taking care of their herds on the plains, and guarding them from the wolves which came down from the mountains; while another showed traces of the Hungarian struggles with the Turks. Weary soldiers march to fight the Turks. The village rouses into activity; the baker, the winepresser, the housewife, the tailor, and the shoemaker, all set to work to feed, clothe, and house the soldiers.

* Report on Hungarian Education, Special Reports, Vol. 8, p. 498.

"I visited a village kindergarten this year [she writes]. The village lay among vineyards in a celebrated wine district on the Danube. In front of the building was a large canvas tent covering a great patch of sand, and here, sheltered from the sun, were fifty bare legged mites playing. They played games which were characteristic of the district. There was a wind game, and the children imitated the wind which blew the boats along the Danube. There was a game of making wine casks. Groups of children formed the cask, and the other children walked round, hammering in imaginary nails; while other children cut down imaginary trees to make the casks. There were one hundred and fifty children in this kindergarten. They were all in charge of one qualified teacher and her little maid servant. Everybody admitted that the staff was small, but they urged that it was a poor district. The town kindergartens are well staffed and fitted up with all necessary apparatus.

"I found a class of five year old children, sitting on benches out of doors under the acacia trees, building with Gift III. They smiled at us and cried out, 'Tzten hozta' ('God has brought you'); and they showed the bridges to cross the Danube, the wells to get water on the plains, the mills to grind corn, which they had built.

"All kindergarten teachers play the violin. In the games and songs the teacher is leader. She marches first, playing her violin, and the children follow, singing. . . . I spent a day in a kindergarten training school during the examinations. In the garden we found some twenty girls, with their violins, practising the national songs of Hungary. They marched round the garden, singing and playing in chorus, until they were called in to meet the examiner.

"All kindergartens in Hungary must have open playing places shaded with trees. Children under three may be admitted, but, as the regulation quaintly states, not in swaddling clothes."

Though Hungary is the only country where the attendance of children under five is compulsory, yet we have seen that in all, except England there is some recognition of State responsibility with regard to children below school age; and it is clear that something must be done in this direction before long. It is, therefore, most important that the question should be thoroughly ventilated.

The proposal made in the Minority Poor Law Report that the entire supervision of maternity and infancy, and the administration of whatever public provision is made for these services should be in the hands of the local health authority has, of course, a very important bearing on it. This proposal would, if fully carried out, remove entirely from the domain of the education authority any public day nurseries or nursery schools which may be decided on. The common sense view seems to be that throughout the life of the child its interests should be guarded both by the education authority and the health authority; but that the province of the latter, which would at first cover the whole field, would become gradually more restricted. At the stage when health considerations are predominant, the local health authority must undertake the administration, making use of the teachers of the education authority as required; at the stage when educational considerations are predominant, the administration must be in the hands of the education authority, making use of the doctors of the health authority as required. In the crèche there should be, as in France, daily medical inspection, and the management should be chiefly in the hands of doctors; but even here questions for the educational expert will arise with reference to the qualification of the staff and the training of the older infants. In the nursery school, the medical inspection required will be almost as frequent, but the educational point of view will need to be rather more adequately represented in the committee of management.

How this joint action of the local health authority and the local education authority can best be attained, at all stages of the child's life, is a question of administration with which we need not meddle here,* but it seems desirable that there should be no sudden break at any age. The establishment of public crèches, under the direct control of the local health authority, would be an invaluable supplement to the system of combining the work of health visitors, either paid or unpaid, with that of the medical officer of health and his staff. This system, already successfully established in many parts of London, aims at keeping under observation every infant from the time of its birth by means of friendly visits of advice. As things are at present, a health visitor is often harrowed by the hopeless conditions into which a baby is born, and feels that her advice is little better than a mockery. Mothers are often quite unable, either from poor health or from the dire necessity of bread winning, to nurse their babies or attend to their constant needs; but there are worse cases still where, from sheer lack of any alternative, a new born infant must be left to the tender mercies of a drunken or dissolute mother, whose one precaution is to insure its life.

In cases of this kind, a public crèche, to which the medical officer of health had power to order the removal of any neglected infant, would be a great resource. Such enforced removal would never happen, of course, in the case of any decent home or of any mother who was nursing her child; but as an alternative for the casual minder, the feeble grandmother, or the ten year old sister, it would be invaluable.

The question of payment would have to be settled as in the case of school feeding, after inquiry into the family resources, and need not in any way interfere with the decision of the medical officer. The cases that would come before him may be classified as:—

1. Temporary.

Homes even of the best type are liable to be disorganized from time to time by the disablement of the mother or father, or by some other unavoidable misfortune; and the temporary removal of young children to a safe refuge affords invaluable help towards tiding over such a period, while it saves them from the evil consequences of neglect.

2. Wage Earning Mothers.

During the first three or four months of an infant's life, the mother might well be restrained by law from going out to work, home aliment being provided in necessitous cases; but as the child grows older, some mothers will certainly desire to return to their work, and provided that they are not in receipt of public assistance for the children, conditional on their devoting themselves to the care of the children, there seems no adequate reason why they should not do so.

* Cf. Minority Poor Law Report (Official Edition), Note on p. 1224.

3. Homes that have been or ought to be Broken Up.

The widower or deserted husband has no choice at present but to pay a neighbor to look after his children, a service often most unsatisfactorily performed; but there are cases even more piteous. Bad health, bad habits, or merely unemployment on the part of the father, slatternly incompetence, or something worse, on the part of the mother, bring about a gradual and hopeless deterioration of the household which renders it unfit for little children to live in. Under such circumstances, it is essential that the medical authority should have power to order their removal to a public nursery, where they will be entirely under the parental control of the State.*

Reforms to Work for.

1. That the age for compulsory school attendance be raised to six, with a corresponding addition at the other end, making the compulsory period from six to at least fifteen or even older.

2. That the medical officer have power to enforce the attendance at a suitable nursery school of any child under six who is not suitably cared for at home.

3. That every local authority be required to provide adequately for children from three to six in free nursery schools, with sleeping accommodation and ample open air and covered playgrounds, and no teaching of the three R's.

4. That at such schools suitable meals be provided at the expense of the rates, table manners being an integral part of the curriculum.

5. That every local authority be also required to provide boarding schools in the country to serve as convalescent and holiday homes for the children attending nursery schools who are found by the medical officer to need country air, and also for the reception of children removed from their parents by the order of the medical authority.

6. That sufficient accommodation be provided in every district for infants under three in small day nurseries under the control of the local authority, such nurseries to be entirely free.

7. That the feeding of the children at these day nurseries be under direct medical supervision, mothers being encouraged to attend regularly for the purpose of suckling their infants.

8. That in connection with every such nursery there shall be a "school for mothers," or "consultation for nurslings," where babies may be brought by their mothers for free medical inspection and advice, and where pure and suitable milk will be provided free or at cost price.

* Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law, p. 825, par. 2.

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Women's Suffrage

AND

The Social Evil.

BY

The Rev. R. J. CAMPBELL.

Speech delivered on December 17th, 1907, at the Queen's Hall, London, under the auspices of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage. - - - 38, Museum Street, W.C.

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Votes for Women.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

(Formerly W.S.P.U.).

Hon. Secretary :
Mrs. E. HOW MARTYN, B.Sc.

Hon. Treasurer :
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Hon. Organising Secretary :
Mrs. BILLINGTON-GREIG.

OBJECTS.

To secure for Women the Parliamentary Vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

METHODS.

The Objects of the League shall be promoted by:—

1. Action entirely independent of all political parties.
2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the Franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
5. The organising of women all over the country, to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
6. Education of public opinion by all the usual methods, such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence, and deputations to public representatives.

MEMBERSHIP.

Women of all shades of political opinion who approve the objects and methods of the League, and who are prepared to act independently of party, are eligible for Membership.

Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil.

Of all the objections that have been offered to the demand for the enfranchisement of women, there is not one which appeals to any higher motive than selfishness. In all previous movements of a similar kind, there has been a considerable amount of honest and well-founded distrust of the probable effects of any sweeping measure of reform. Broad-minded statesmen might, and did, dread the advent to political power of a large and comparatively uneducated working class. As Robert Lowe said, after the establishment of household suffrage, they had now to set to work to educate their masters. But in regard to the enfranchisement of women the case is entirely different. No one pretends, or could pretend, that the granting of their just demands would mean the inrush of unreasoning animalism into affairs of state; so, with a frankness unrivalled in the history of political movements, opponents of Women's Suffrage fall back on appeals to sheer brute selfishness which, as often as not, they hardly take the trouble to disguise. This is the meaning of all the talk about the unsexing of women by political activities, and the constant insistence that their proper sphere is the home. What is really at the bottom of the opposition is the fear that if the vote be granted it will mean a long step in the direction of bringing to an end the present economic and social dependence of women upon men. Man likes female subservience and dreads female competition. Leaving aside blind ignorant prejudice, there is no other reason than this for resisting the just demands of the women of this country to be admitted to full citizenship, and the more fully we can expose this reason in all its elementary ugliness the better. Therefore we may as well say frankly to those who are standing in the way of this great and urgent reform: You are not actuated by any real desire to safeguard the interests of women, or by any patriotic solicitude for the future of your country; you are actuated simply and solely by determination to maintain the privileged supremacy of the male sex.

But this is just the very point at issue in the present campaign, and it is the clear perception of this which turns the suffragist agitation into a moral movement claiming the sanctions of civic righteousness and justice on its side. We British people have an almost unlimited capacity for shutting our eyes to facts until a situation becomes too intolerable to permit of self-deception. We have been assuring ourselves for generations that the women of this country were the respected equals and companions of their male protectors in whose chivalrous devotion lay their true security. Unfortunately the facts do not bear out this poetic way of looking at the question of the relations of the sexes. I like to think, and I believe it is true, that the average Englishman has a real respect for womanhood, but that respect need not be imperilled by any change in the direction of making his women folk independent of his good will.

Selfish
Objections

Suffragist
Agitation
a Moral
Movement

And it has to be admitted, whether we like it or not, that the enjoyment of privilege tends to blind its possessors to the disadvantages it entails upon others.

Prostitution

Let me mention only one aspect of the problem in which the disparity in the relative economic position of the sexes operates disastrously without our apparently being aware of it. You will forgive me, I am sure, for doing a little plain speaking on this point; I refer to the nauseous problem of prostitution. Opponents of Women's Suffrage profess to be terribly anxious to safeguard the integrity of family life, but modern civilisation is having to pay a terrible price for this desirable thing. In every great city of the western world there exists a class of women who live by hiring themselves to men with whom their only bond is that of lust and lucre. In London alone it is estimated that the number of these women amounts to scores of thousands. Everybody knows this, and, in polite society, pretends not to know it. Where has this class come from, and why does it exist? The answer is that for untold centuries the women have been not only the dependent, but more or less the private property of the man. Broadly speaking, the man owns all there is to own; he used to own the woman out and out; now he only owns her indirectly as it were. Man is woman's capitalist. Women have little or no access to the sources of productive employment, and therefore they have to remain in a position of dependence. At the best this position of dependence makes the woman to some extent the inferior of the man; at the worst she becomes his victim. This is where prostitution comes from; it has an economic root. Women sell themselves to men because men have control of the sources of wealth. The stronger sex has a practical monopoly in the field of politics and industry. The truth is, though it may not be pleasant to face it, that most of our notions about women and the family have their origin in male selfishness, although with the lapse of time they have become sacro-sanct. Why are we so hard on female offenders against sexual morality, and so lenient with their betrayers? Why is the man allowed a certain licence in this respect which is unthinkable in his wife and sisters? The real reason is that the ordinary man of primitive times wanted to make sure that he would only be called upon to support his own children, and the same motive holds almost equally good now, only we have managed to disguise it with a number of sentimental considerations about female virtue which have grown up around it. But the operation of this motive, coupled with the desire to leave the man untrammelled, has, under existing economic conditions, led to the creation of two classes of women—the class from which man draws his friends and companions, and the class which ministers to his passions without involving him in social obligations of an exacting kind. Prostitution is thus the direct outcome of man's determination to do as he likes, coupled with an equally firm determination to see that woman does not imitate him in this respect. The device is quite ingenious, although we have not consciously and of set purpose adopted it. But for the economic dependence of one sex upon the other it could not exist for an hour.

In stating this one hard moral and economic fact I have deliberately chosen one of the more prominent evils for the remedying of which a radical change is called for in the political status of women. If this terrible evil, with all its vicious accompaniments, is to be abolished, it is the women themselves who will have to do it. And it will not be done by moral appeals, for while these appeals are being made the conditions are continuing unchecked which produce fresh victims. All honour to those who are devoting time and energy to rescuing a few from the crowded ranks of ill-fame; but we all know well enough that the impression made on the appalling total is but small. We shall have to go one better than Social Purity organisations.

What is wanted is such a representation of women in the Legislature as shall secure to them a living wage on the same terms as to men. There are far-reaching economic problems here upon which I hardly dare touch at present, but we may as well recognise plainly that to give women political power is the best way to secure to them in the long run such an economic status as will lift them clear out of their present position of reputable and disreputable dependence upon men. It may seem an utterly unpractical thing to say that the house-wife deserves her wage just as much as the husband, and that it ought to be secured to her independently of his favour or caprice, but this change will surely come. Women know too well the hardship of the present state of things not to be able to recognise the remedy when once it is put into their hands. Moreover, to educate women and then deny them a living is damnable. To give them a mere pittance, and expect them to eke it out with the wages of shame is equally so—and it is notorious that this is a thing which is often done in the case of young shop girls. To tax women for public purposes without giving them any voice in the expenditure of the money they pay is the violation of a principle of political justice for which seas of blood have been shed in ages past. It is intolerable that a large and increasing portion of the wage-earners of this country should have the conditions under which they labour regulated by politicians belonging to another sex; if women cannot be trusted to legislate for men—and I do not believe they could in every respect—neither can men always be trusted to legislate for women. It is well known that every economic interest in this country makes itself felt in proportion to the effectiveness of its voice in the Legislature; with the best intentions in the world men are not likely to look too sharply after the interests of women if the women are not able to voice their own cause effectively, and that means the possession of the vote. Governments never lead in the direction of administrative reform; they are always driven. Give women the vote and the pace will be accelerated in the direction of those great social changes which are already on the horizon, and which mean ultimately the abolition of pauperism, unemployment, and prodigal waste of life and energy among the lower classes. No one knows where poverty pinches better than the working man's wife; it is she who has the making of the family budget; she can tell you best what the difference will be if the loaf becomes a farthing dearer. Every year

Political
Lever
Needed.

we are interfering more and more with the venerated maxim that an Englishman's house is his castle. Whether we will or no we are being driven to care more thoroughly for the welfare of child life, not only in schooling, but in feeding, clothing and housing. Is there any sensible reason why the mothers of England, to whose hands is committed the principal care of the children in their early days, should not have a direct share in legislation which is having increasingly to do with the making and maintenance of the home?

Woman
Demands
a Career.

And, apart even from marriage and the family, we are having to face one new and portentous fact—the emergence of the woman who is being fully equipped to take her place in professional or commercial life alongside of the man. Woman is demanding a career, not merely an existence. She is the proved equal of the man in any field of service where physical strength is not a *sine qua non*. This problem is not going to decrease; it is going to become larger. You can no more prevent the intrusion of women into fields of activity hitherto reserved for men, than labour was able to prevent the invention of machinery. What are you going to do about it? Barring them out is no good, although it has been tried, with every species of intolerance, from the Universities downward. You will have to face a new economic situation. You will have to reconcile yourself to the replacement of male by female labour wherever it happens to be cheaper, and then you will have to ask whether it is good for the body politic, or even possible, to prohibit such labour; if it cannot be prohibited, it will have to be represented in Parliament like all other labour.

There is no need for sex competition. Enlightened self-interest ought to bid us welcome every improvement in the status of women. If they have shown themselves capable of taking their place in our industrial and public life, we ought to see to it that the principle of comradeship is extended still further. If the new industrialism means—and it does mean—the employment of a vastly increased number of highly trained and intelligent women, it will be to the interest of the whole nation to see that these women are fully represented in the councils of State. Let there be no barriers of sex privilege. If we are comrades in the home, comrades in the school, comrades in the office and the workshop, let us be comrades at the hustings too. We need the woman's point of view in all questions affecting the national well-being. Let the men of England request it as a measure of wise patriotism; do not let us concede it in any grudging or half-hearted manner. Honour, prudence, and fair play unite to bid us take this enlightened course. The hour is not far distant when we and our descendants will wonder that such a battle ever needed to be fought, and we shall vie with each other in respect and admiration for the brave women who are fighting the battle of their sex against such heavy odds of bigotry and prejudice to-day.

Votes for Women.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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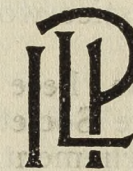
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The Need of
the Hour. —

By

E. C. Wolstenholme Elmy.

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*Woman's Franchise: The Need of the Hour.**

SOME of us who have been working hard for more than forty years to secure for women the restitution of their ancient political rights, extended and adapted to meet modern conditions and uses, share to the full the indignation of those brave younger spirits who are resolved that this great act of human, national, and social justice shall no longer be delayed in the interests of political parties, or to suit the personal convenience of party leaders.

We demand our immediate enfranchisement on the same terms as men:

(1) Because we have, by long and painful experience, prove the absolute impossibility of securing any further redress of the many legal wrongs from which we still suffer, and because we fully realise the great danger of further careless, mischievous, and unjust legislation, greatly imperilling the well-being of women.

(2) Because the equal citizenship of women is essential to the growth and development in men of the sense of social and political justice.

(3) Because the enfranchisement of the women of Great Britain and Ireland will hasten the enfranchisement of the women of all civilised nations, and will thus lead to the development of a higher social and political morality all the world over.

It may be convenient to give here a brief* summary of the salient facts of the woman movement in this country up to date, including therewith the restitution and extension of the local electoral rights of women, and their right to sit on local administrative bodies, and the efforts—some successful and many fruitless—to change some others of the exclusively man-made laws from whose injustice women have suffered and still suffer.

It should, however, be here stated that the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies strictly limits its action to the acquisition of the Parliamentary franchise, and does not affiliate local societies having any further object. Many of the most ardent and vigorous supporters of Women's Suffrage are consequently in no way associated with the National Union,

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but are to be found in many independent bodies working also for other issues, such as the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Women's Liberal Federation, and more particularly in the Women's Social and Political Union, an active offshoot of the Independent Labour Party. It is to the activity of this body and to that of the Lancashire and Cheshire Women Textile Workers Committee and of the Women's Co-operative Guild, more than to any or all others, that the present living force of this question is especially due.

In explanation of the phrase "restitution of their ancient political rights," it should be remembered that in the earlier periods of English life women had unquestionably possessed and exercised electoral rights as "suitors" in the County Courts, and as "burgesses" in various boroughs. The advancement of boroughs to the *status* of Parliamentary boroughs was in those early days largely a matter of royal caprice or interest, but wherever this *status* has been achieved the women burgesses had the same Parliamentary electoral rights as the men. In those days, however, these rights were frequently regarded as burdens, because the constituents were bound to pay the Parliamentary wages of the representatives, and in the case of county constituencies, the giving of the vote usually involved long and troublesome journeys on the part of the "suitors," men and women, who were the electors. In this *limited* sense, the plea of Lord Salvesen, in the case of the Scottish Women Graduates, was correct, the exemption of women from voting duties, which were not then valued as "rights," began as a sex privilege. The note at the end of this article gives some interesting facts as to the very ancient voting rights of women in Scottish burghs. The cases there referred to were of infinite service to women in England and Wales during the brief, sharp, and happily successful struggle in 1869 for the restitution of the municipal vote.

For the story of the first statutory exclusion of women from voting rights by the Reform Act of 1832, up to which time there had been no statutory discrimination of sex against women, I would refer every reader to Mr. Keir Hardie's admirable pamphlet *The Citizenship of Women*,* to which this is little more than a supplement. This statutory exclusion of women from Parliamentary voting rights was followed by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, which resulted in the exclusion of women from the exercise of the municipal franchise in England and Wales. Both these measures enlarged the voting rights of men, whilst they extinguished for the time those of women, for whom freedom has not "broadened down from precedent to precedent," but far otherwise. Happily the exertions of but a few persons, of whom the present writer had

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the privilege of being one, were successful in 1869 in securing the restitution of the municipal vote to women, who moreover during this period of exclusion from the municipal vote, were still voting as ratepayers, equally with men (and this whether married or single) in districts not subject to the Municipal Corporations Act, and in matters not within the jurisdiction of the Town Council, such as the election of churchwardens, waywardens, Poor Law guardians, and for the appointment of overseers and sale of parish property.

The case of *Regina v. Harrald*, heard in the Court of Queen's Bench in January, 1871, decided that a married woman, though qualified by occupancy and by payment of rates, and put on the burgess list, cannot vote at the election of town councillors; and further, that a woman, who is rightly on the burgess list, but married before the election, is also disqualified from voting. In favour of the married woman it was argued by Mr. Charles Crompton that women are capable of voting, and do vote, that no exceptions were made by statute with regard to married women; and that "coverture" being no longer a bar to the holding of property, should, therefore, be no bar to the enjoyment of the incidents of property, such as voting. On the other hand it was argued by Mr. (Lord) Herchell that a married woman is not a person in the eyes of the law. She is not *sui juris*. Curiously enough the words of the Lord Chief Justice (Sir A. Cockburn), in giving judgment, show plainly that it is possible, in the discharge of the highest judicial functions, to determine questions affecting the civil rights of women, and yet to be painfully ignorant of all matters relevant to the point to be decided upon. The Lord Chief Justice was obviously quite unconscious that women had possessed voting rights from time immemorial, and spoke of the Act of 1869 as though it were the first concession of them, instead of being merely the restitution of such of them as had been taken away thirty-four years before. It scarcely seems fitting that questions so gravely affecting the interests of women—present and future—should be thus lightly determined upon by persons ignorant of so many of the relevant facts.

This decision was given *after* the passing of the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, which enabled a wife to own and hold her own earnings, and thus to enjoy some at least of the benefits of property. Since then the Married Women's Property Act of 1882 has given to all married women fuller rights of property and contract, and with regard to women married since then has virtually abolished "coverture" with regard to property. Nevertheless, the ruling of *Regina v. Harrald* is still followed, and married women, however qualified as ratepayers, are in England and Wales still (Nov., 1907) treated as not being persons in the eyes of the law for the purpose of voting at county or municipal elections.

The Local Government (England and Wales) Act of 1894 only enables married women to vote as parochial electors, for guardians and urban or rural district councillors or for parish councillors, and this in spite of the pledge given by Sir Henry Fowler, who was in charge of the Bill, that he would secure their full enfranchisement for all local government purposes. Moreover, this Act and the subsequent Acts for Ireland and Scotland, provided that husband and wife shall not be electors in respect of the same property, a limitation which is not introduced in regard to any other relationship, and which is a survival of the legal doctrine that a married woman is not a "person" in the eyes of the law. With this exception the subsequent Local Government Acts for Scotland and Ireland secured to Scottish and Irish wives the full right of voting on precisely the same qualification as men, including the owner, lodger and service franchises, which seem moreover to be far more liberally interpreted and understood than in England,—whilst in England and Wales (outside the County of London) wives are still in the farcical hybrid position of being "persons" for the purposes of the minor elections, but not for borough or county council election purposes. Throughout the County of London they approach more nearly to the dignity of Irish and Scottish wives, thanks to the Act to assimilate the county and borough council franchises in London, passed in 1900.

The net result of all this tinkering legislation is that, for all *local administrative purposes*, women in Ireland and Scotland, whether married or unmarried, vote on precisely the same terms as men, but throughout England and Wales women do not possess the owner, lodger, or service franchises, whilst married women may not vote for borough or county councils, unless they are fortunate enough to live within the county of London, where they are empowered to vote for the county council and the borough councils.

With regard to the eligibility of women to public offices and to membership of local administrative bodies, it would appear to the plainest common-sense that in a country which since the Norman Conquest has been ruled by five Queens Regnant, the exclusion of a woman from public office on the sole ground of her sex, no matter how great her fitness for its duties, is an absurd barbarism. When the Education Act of 1870 became law, so little did those responsible for it share this modern view of women's disability, that both Mr. Gladstone and Mr. W. E. Forster, *assuming that women were eligible*, personally advocated the election of women as members of the "School Boards" created by it, although not one word appears in the Act defining the qualifications of candidates for office under it. At the first elections women were returned, not only in London, but in various parts of England, and in

some instances headed the poll. One result of the return of women to the School Boards was that women were thereby encouraged to offer themselves for election as poor law guardians, no sex qualification or disqualification being embodied in the legislation which created Boards of Guardians. The first woman guardian was returned in 1875, and the first married woman guardian in 1881.

In 1888 came the Act establishing county councils for England and Wales, and as that Act neither expressed nor implied any sex disability for the office of councillor, at the first election under the Act Miss Cobden and Lady Sandhurst were returned as councillors to the London County Council, while Miss Cons was elected alderman by the council itself. Hereupon Mr. Beresford-Hope, whom Lady Sandhurst had defeated at the poll, brought the question before the Law Courts, and the Court of Appeal decided that women were not eligible as county councillors. On this occasion it was that the late Lord Esher, then Master of the Rolls, gave utterance to the astounding dictum, "I take it that neither by the Common Law nor by the Constitution of this country, from the beginning of the Common Law until now, can a woman be entitled to exercise any public function." Yet at the very time Lord Esher spoke, women were acting as overseers, waywardens, churchwardens, poor law guardians, and members of school boards, which can scarcely be considered private functions, to say nothing of the fact that he himself exercised his judicial office by virtue of the authority of a female sovereign! Moreover, both then and on more recent occasions, it seems to have been quite forgotten that 13 Vict. cap. 21, sec. 4 expressly enacts "That in all Acts words importing the masculine gender shall be deemed and taken to include females, unless the contrary is expressly provided." Yet in all recent legislation on this subject, Parliament has not merely disregarded this provision, but also the old and sound constitutional view (practically illustrated by the numerous offices held by women through centuries, and more recently by their membership of school boards and boards of guardians), that disability is not to be presumed, but only admitted when declared and expressed. The Appeal Judges substituted for this the notion, historically indefensible, that "No woman is entitled to exercise any public function unless it is expressly in set terms granted," and thus enormously enlarged the scope of sex disability. The final judgment of the Court of Appeal, given on April 16, 1889, declared women incompetent to sit on county councils. Four days later the House of Lords rejected the Bill qualifying women to sit as county councillors by 108 votes to 23. Five weeks afterwards, in the early days of July, the Scottish Local Government Bill, creating county councils for Scotland, passed through committee. Section 9

of the Bill (now Act) opens by declaring that "No woman shall be eligible for election as a county councillor," a direct consequence of this legal decision. It is by means of this clause in the Scottish Act that women were shut out from being county councillors in Ireland. The fourth schedule of the Irish Act provides that the section (of which this is one provision) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1889 shall apply to Ireland.

As a further result of this changed view of constitutional law, it was held necessary, when the Local Government (England and Wales) Act of 1894 was before Parliament, to safeguard the eligibility of women as parish councillors, urban and rural district councillors, Poor Law guardians, and as members of the London Vestries, by enacting, in *each separate case specified*, that "No person shall be disqualified by sex or marriage for being a parish councillor," &c., a strange and lumbering mode of removing specific alleged disabilities, whilst strengthening the false assumption on which alone the alleged disability rested.

One special new disability was imposed upon women by this Act, in spite of the protests of Sir John Gorst and other friends of justice, when, on New Year's Day, 1894, Clause 22 of the Bill was under consideration. The Bill provided that the Chairman of a District Council "unless personally disqualified by any Act, shall be, by virtue of his office, a justice of the peace for the county in which the district is situate." On this occasion Sir Henry Fowler proposed to introduce the limiting words, "unless a woman," thus taking the opportunity of an enfranchising measure to impose a fresh legal disability upon women. It should be remembered that up to this time no legal decision had been given, and no statute had been passed restraining women from the exercise of judicial functions. It is on record that in the reign of Mary Tudor two women were appointed justices of the peace, and there would seem no reason to question the legal powers of the Lord Chancellor, or of the Chancellor of the Duchy at the present time (save for the presumption suggested by the restrictive provision of the Local Government Act), to appoint suitable women to act as justices of the peace. That women magistrates, as well as women jurors, are urgently needed to secure effective justice in many cases, especially in cases affecting the relations of the sexes, is becoming daily more and more manifest.

A similar disqualification was introduced into the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, and the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and also into the* Qualification of Women Act of 1907.

*NOTE.—"Admission of a Woman as a Burgess.—On Tuesday, May 18, 1869, at the Edinburgh Town Council, an application of a woman to have her husband admitted a burgess was reported upon by the Lord

The London Government Act of 1899, which transformed the old London Vestries into Metropolitan Borough Councils, withdrew from women the power to continue on the new councils the admirable work which some of them had been doing on the vestries since 1894. Whilst the Bill was before the House of Commons repeated divisions were taken on the question of the eligibility of women as councillors, aldermen, and mayors, with the final result that they were disqualified as mayors, but made eligible as councillors and aldermen in the Bill as it left the House of Commons. The House of Lords, however, on June 26, 1899, struck out the provision securing the eligibility of women as councillors and aldermen by a vote of 182 to 68. The majority against women was mainly composed of Peers who had come to the House, to whose business they scarcely pay any attention, for the express purpose of striking a blow at justice to women. How absolutely this was the case may be seen from the fact that, an hour after this division, a further division was taken, on another point of the Bill in which only eighty Peers were present to take part. On July 6 the House of Commons, in obedience to the Government Whip, accepted the Lords' amendment, and rejected altogether the claims of women to any place on the proposed new

Provost's Committee, who expressed the opinion that the husband had no claim to be admitted a burgher, but that in respect the applicant complied with all the old conditions of burgher-ship, *i.e.*, 'held stob and staik' in the burgh, and 'walked, warded, paid extents and skatts therein conform to their substance,' she should be admitted a burgher in her own right. On this subject Mr. Marwick communicated some curious information as to the old custom of the Scotch burghs to admit women burghesses and women sisters of guild. On March 17, 1406, Alison de Driscuoll, was made sister of the Edinburgh guild as heir of the late Robert Driscuoll, her brother. The oldest Peebles burgh record contains some entries showing it to have been the practice in that burgh to have women burghesses thus:— 'On November 15, 1456, was mayed burgher Ely Scott, and sal pay for hir freedom, x s.' On October 29, 1459, 'That ilk day was mayd burgher Meg Woodhal, and sal mak for hir fredom a ruid of caussa.' On April 23, 1464, 'item, that ilk day was gewn the freedom to Peronale, and sche sall pay thairfor xxx s. but favour. In Edinburgh again, an ordinance dated March 14, 1507, specifying the entry money to be charged on the admission of various descriptions of burghesses, contains the following sentence: 'And siclike the burges dochteris, lauchfullie gottin, to have the priurege of the second son 2 for the burghessy, xiiij s. iiij d., and for the gildry, xx s.' These extracts showed that in the old Scottish burghs women were admitted to the privileges of burgher-ship and guild sister-ship; and that what was now proposed was no innovation upon the old constitutional principle, under which women's rights were secured at a very early period of our history. The magistrates and council unanimously resolved that in special cases women might still be admitted to the rights of burgher-ship, when they comply with the ancient conditions." *Manchester Examiner and Times*, May 22, 1869.

This woman was admitted a burgher of the city of Edinburgh in the following month, June, 1869, her qualification being that she carried on a separate business from her husband, a qualification also recognised for many centuries past, and at this very day in the City of London.

councils. The vote on Mr. Courtney's amendment, which re-affirmed the eligibility of women as councillors was—for, 177; against, 246; majority, 69. The second vote, formally accepting the Lords' amendment, was—for, 243; against, 174; a majority against women again of 69. The much-vaunted Government measure of last session, the Qualification of Women Act, 1907, still leaves *married* women incapable of sitting on any county or borough council in England and Wales outside the County of London, because outside London married women, being still not competent as electors for town and county council purposes, cannot be elected, since, under the Municipal Act of 1882, only electors are eligible. Under the Act of last session, twelve women were candidates at the recent Municipal elections; of whom six were returned and six defeated. It would seem that, under existing circumstances, it is only in small boroughs or under very special circumstances, that women have any chance of being returned, since, under the ward system of voting, the women being always a minority of the electors, cannot possibly alone return a woman, whilst in the larger boroughs, masculine pride of place resents and resists the return of a woman, although much borough and county council work would undoubtedly be better done by women than by men.

The proceedings in connection with the Education Acts for England and Wales and for London are too fresh in the memory of all to need recapitulation here. Only by the strenuous efforts of the few friends of justice to the mother-half of the race was any place reserved for women in the work which, as popularly elected members of the School Boards which those Acts extinguished, they had done so well; and that place only the inferior one of *co-opted* membership of the subordinate "Education Committee," no woman at present being eligible to either municipal or county councils, which are the "Education Authorities" and co-opting bodies. A woman, however, as a member of an urban district council whose area includes a population of over 20,000, may be even now a member of an "Education Authority." As there are over 60 such urban districts in England and Wales with populations of over 20,000, it would be wise for women practised in educational work to seek election to these councils.

Urban districts of that population, however, are apt for many reasons to seek transformation into municipal boroughs, to the councils of which women are not yet eligible.

The manner in which the "Education Authorities" have used their power of co-opting women as members of "Education Committees" is sufficient proof, if any were needed, that masculine sex-bias, free and uncontrolled, does not intend to permit to the mother-half of the race any real share of influence in the education of their own children. In the over-

whelming proportion of instances, two women only have been co-opted to education committees, including from twenty to sixty or even seventy men.

The Women's Suffrage agitation in this country practically began with the return of Mr. John Stuart Mill to Parliament in 1865. It is, I believe, true that a petition from women of Yorkshire, asking for the enfranchisement of their sex, was presented to the House of Commons whilst the Reform Act of 1832 was under consideration. Mrs. Mill's most admirable article, "Enfranchisement of Women," appeared in the WESTMINSTER REVIEW of July 1851, while Justitia's* powerful pamphlet, *Women and the Electoral Franchise*, was published in 1855. But no sustained agitation was then begun. When the return of Mr. Mill as M.P. for Westminster assured women of an absolutely trustworthy advocate of their claims in the House of Commons, the active agitation began with the preparation of a Women's Suffrage petition, which, signed by 1,499 women, was presented by Mr. Mill in May, 1866. In 1867 the Representation of the People Bill was before Parliament, to which Mr. Mill put down an amendment that instead of the word "man" the word "person" should be used with regard to the suffrage under the Act. This amendment was defeated, 81 voting for and 202 against it. But a further amendment substituting the words "male persons" was also rejected. The Suffrage Societies, which had come into being as a result of Mr. Mill's return to Parliament, resolved to claim the suffrage under the new Act. Women occupiers in Manchester to the number of 5,347, and in Salford about 1,500, sent in their claims, as well as large numbers in other places, and many women freeholders in the counties. Most of the revising barristers threw the names out. The Manchester women consolidated their claims, and appealed against the decision, in the case *Chorlton v. Lings*, which was heard in the Court of Common Pleas, November 7 and 10, 1867, before Lord Chief Justice Bovill and Justices Willes, Keating and Byles. Lord Chief Justice Bovill conceded:—

"It is quite true that a few instances have been brought before us where in ancient times, in the reigns of Henry IV., Henry V., and Edward VI., women appear to have been parties to the return of members of Parliament, and possibly other instances may be found in early times, not only of women having voted, but also of their having assisted in the deliberations of legislature. Indeed, it is mentioned by Selden in his *England's Epinomis*, c. 2, sec. 19, that they did so."

He then proceeded to argue that the non-user of the right for so long a period raised a strong presumption against its having legally existed, that the legislature in '67 used the word "man" in order to designate expressly the male sex, as distinct from women,—and that therefore Lord Brougham's Act

*Justitia is still living and hoping for justice to women.

(13-14 Vic., c. 21, s. 4) did not apply. The other judges concurred. The second case, *Chorlton v. Kessler*, that of a woman householder at Rusholme with a county qualification, and two other cases, raising different points, the judges refused to hear, and treated them as decided by the first case.

In 1870 Mr. Jacob Bright brought in his "Women's Electoral Disabilities Removal Bill," in the following terms†:

"That in all Acts relating to the qualification and registration of voters or persons entitled to or claiming to be registered and to vote in the election of members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the male gender the same shall be held to include women for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters, and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding."

The Second Reading was carried on May 4 by a majority of 33. Had this Bill been permitted to become law, a long and weary struggle would have been saved, each successive enfranchisement of men would have carried women along with it, and that higher civilisation and human justice for which Mr. Mill hoped so much from the enfranchisement of women would have been appreciably nearer to-day. Unfortunately, Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, took a decided stand against the enfranchisement of women, which he opposed to the last, and in response to a Government "whip," the motion for going into Committee on May 12 was defeated by a majority of 126. During the 27 years between 1870 and 1897 twelve divisions were taken on the Women's Suffrage question with varying adverse fortunes, and on February 18, 1886, the Second Reading of a Women's Suffrage Bill was carried *without* a division. The dissolution of that year stopped its further progress. In 1892 the Second Reading of Sir Albert Rollit's Bill was *defeated* by a majority of 23, the last adverse majority.

On February 3, 1897, Mr. Faithful Begg's Bill was carried by a majority of 71, but seven years were suffered to pass without a debate and division, so that it came almost as a surprise when, on March 16, 1904, Sir Charles M'Laren's Women's Suffrage Resolution was carried by a majority of 114.

†It is well to note that the Bill introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright thirty-six years ago, is identical in terms with the measure introduced by Mr. Will Crooks on the last day of the Session of 1904. It was drafted by Dr. Pankhurst, in 1870, for the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage, and introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright at their request. Dr. Pankhurst was also counsel, along with Mr. (Lord) Coleridge, in the case *Chorlton v. Lings*, and was a member of the first Women's Suffrage Committee formed in Manchester, and an earnest supporter of the cause to the day of his death. It is fitting that his wife and children should be the leaders of the advanced section of Women Suffragists' who have made the enfranchisement of women a living question demanding immediate attention.

Whilst women have been working and "patiently" waiting for their enfranchisement, some ameliorative measures as to other wrongs which they suffered have been passed into law, notably the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882, applying to England, Wales, and Ireland, the cognate Acts of 1877 and 1881 applying to Scotland, and the Infants' Act of 1886, giving to the married mothers of the three kingdoms some slight share of claim to the custody and control of their own children. But here the reforming zeal of Parliament seems to have stopped, and for a very simple reason. The exclusively male electorate has, during the period of our working for Women's Suffrage, increased from seven hundred thousand to over seven millions. A male Parliament, elected by male electors only, is far too preoccupied with its own affairs, and the affairs of those to whom it is forced to admit some responsibility, to trouble itself about the well-being of those who are mere "Outlanders" in their native country. I write with deep feeling and no inconsiderable bitterness when I think of the hopelessly futile efforts I have myself made to secure the amendment of the iniquitous English Law of Divorce, the shameless law of intestacy, the miserable inadequacy of the law to secure to married women a just share of their husband's earnings for the support of the family, the outrageous English law of marriage, as expounded by thirteen judges in 1889, and many another legal iniquity, to explain which adequately would need an article far longer than the present one may be. I have come now to the conclusion that nothing more will be won for womanhood and justice in these islands until women are, equally with men, "makers of Parliament." The Parliamentary Franchise is our most sorely needed charter of liberty, our key of opportunity, and our weapon of defence against further reckless and unjust legislation. Should the present holders of office remain at the Home Office and the Local Government Board, we may expect the practical exclusion by law of married women from paid industry, whilst from other quarters we may expect a strenuous effort to secure the legal enactment of a "minimum wage," carefully differentiated so as to secure to a man, whether married or single, a wage adequate to the maintenance of himself, a wife, and three children, whilst a woman is only to receive such a wage as is adequate to the maintenance of a single independent adult. *Fabian Tract, No. 128, The Cause for a Legal Minimum Wage* affirms:

"Whilst the present competitive system of employment by competing private enterprises prevails, the industrial minimum wage must conform to three conditions: (a) *It must be lower for women than for men;* (b) all men must have the same minimum wage, and all women the same minimum wage; (c) the man's wage must be enough to support a family, and the woman's to support a single independent adult.

"This leaves the problem of the bachelor and the widow with children unsolved, just as they are left unsolved by our present system.

"The case of the bachelor may be disregarded for two reasons: (a) If the minimum wage secures enough to the married man, it is no evil, but only a *negligible inequity*, to let the bachelor have a little more than enough; (b) the practice of working-men at present shows that, as a matter of fact, they do not find that they can provide themselves with domestic service and companionship more cheaply as bachelors than by marriage."

The case of a widow with a family they propose to provide for by "sufficient assistance from public funds to enable her, with the aid of free public schools, and free meals in them, to make up her income to the standard for heads of families." They quite overlook, when they propose for every single man an enormous excess of wages over those of any woman, the universal effect of thus teaching him, in the most forcible way possible, that he is a far more valuable human being than a woman can possibly be—with the conceit and self-indulgence to which such preferential treatment is sure to lead—nor do they suggest any means whereby the privileged male shall, when married, be induced, or compelled to devote an adequate portion of his wages to the support of wife and family. They do not suggest that the woman's wage shall be such as to enable her to provide against sickness, old age, or lack of employment, nor do they take into account the fact that many unmarried women wage-earners have others to provide for, an aged father or mother, or younger sisters or brothers, &c. It is simply monstrous that it should be possible for male lawmakers and administrators to deal with questions such as these without the equal co-operation and control of women. The man alone all but invariably sees only the half-truth which suits his sedulously educated masculine belief in his own sex as the whole of humanity. It is this unhappy mental condition, the result of ages of masculine domination, which makes the full recognition of the equal citizenship of women essential to the development and growth in men of the sense of social and political justice. Democracy, in the sense of equal justice to each and all, has not failed, because it has not yet been tried, the dominance of a *sex aristocracy* still prevailing, with the honourable exception of a few small communities, even in those states and nations which boast most loudly of their democratic institutions. The enfranchisement of women would substitute realities for shams, and educate humanity up to the perception of the higher human justice. The woman's movement is now in the fullest sense an international one, and whatever is won for women in these islands would therefore speedily be achieved for the women of all civilised nations, and would of necessity lead to the speedy development all the world over of a higher social and political morality. And such a higher social and political morality is vital to the well-being of the race, and essential to its upward and onward progress.

The urgency of the case being so clear, what stands in

the way of the immediate enfranchisement of the women of Great Britain and Ireland? Simply the selfish hostility of some members of the present Cabinet, the temporary convenience, of others, and the faithless feebleness of the 283 Liberal members of the present House of Commons who are pledged to Women's Suffrage. Had these 283 M.P.'s been loyal to their pledges, it is absolutely impossible that no place should have been found in 1906 for the consideration of a Women's Suffrage Bill, and only a second place at an evening sitting for the discussion of a Women's Suffrage Resolution. The Prime Minister's words to the Women's Suffrage deputation simply proved that, whilst admitting frankly the absolute justice of our demand, it would be very convenient to him not to have the question raised as one to be immediately dealt with by his Administration. And in this matter Liberal M.P.'s, and the Liberal rank and file outside, have shown themselves, as they had previously repeatedly done, ready to sacrifice the woman's cause to the temporary convenience or wish of their party leaders. The National Liberal Federation in 1905, at the meeting of its General Committee, and again at the meeting of its General Council, passed a Women's Suffrage Resolution by a very large majority. In 1906, the Liberals being in power, neither Committee nor Council dealt with the matter. Did the resolutions of 1905 mean anything at all, or were they merely intended to assure the help of women at the General Election? At any rate, no action for the woman's cause has resulted from them, whilst in this year, 1907, the General Council of the Liberal Federation, sitting at Plymouth, by formal resolution, excluded women from membership of its Executive Committee, and this although over one hundred women delegates were present representing men's Liberal Associations. If women Liberals have any sense of personal dignity, or of loyalty to womanhood, no woman will serve in any such capacity in the coming year.

We were warned some months ago that the Reform Bill of the near future would be a "Manhood" Suffrage measure, and more recently hostile members of the Ministry, such as Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lewis Harcourt, have been more outspoken than heretofore, whilst, on the other hand, the Prime Minister urges us to go on "pestering" people, and assures us that, in his opinion, our victory is nearer than we suppose. We accept the double omen. The fight may be fierce, but it shall be short. We demand our enfranchisement as the crowning work of the coming Session. We demand from the 283 Liberal members of the House of Commons, who are publicly pledged to Women's Suffrage, the frank and honest fulfilment of their pledges. Should the enfranchisement of women fail to be promised in the King's Speech as one of the

measures of the Session, it is the serious and bounden duty of each Liberal M.P. who professes to be a believer in Women's Suffrage to ballot in the first ballot of the Session for a place for the Women's Suffrage Bill, first introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright in 1870,—to carry the second reading by an overwhelming majority, and then to ask Ministers fully and promptly to adopt the measure and carry it promptly through its remaining stages. In this work they will have the cordial help of many members of each of the other parties. For our own part, our course is clear and defined. We *will* that our sisters shall be politically free to work out their own economic and social salvation and that of the race. We demand the immediate removal of this shameful sex disqualification, and our enfranchisement on the same terms as men, and whatever is to be done must be done now.

When the fathers and founders of the American Republic realised the greatness of the task before them, and of all its issues, they took a solemn pledge of constancy; and we who realise the still greater issues of the task we have undertaken to our countrywomen, to the women of all lands, and to humanity, present and future, follow their noble example, and pledge to the accomplishment of our work "our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honour."

Even now we are not alone, and soon multitudes will follow and work with us, for

"Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever."

I would refer everyone who seeks information as to the earlier political rights of women in England to Mrs. C. C. Stopes's admirable booklet, "The Sphere of Man," price 6d., T. Fisher Unwin.

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