

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Parliament Reassembles.

The Session has re-started under a heavy cloud which when it breaks on Thursday of this week may or may not sweep away the Government and plunge the country into a General Election. The first day's debate did not relieve the gloom, with its revelations of an inadequate housing programme and—worse—a self-satisfied Ministry of Health. If the Government wanted to make a good beginning, they could not have chosen a minister more unsuited to give it than Mr. Greenwood, and Miss Susan Lawrence, whether from conviction or from loyalty to her chief, did nothing to lessen the impression of unjustified optimism. They might reasonably have transferred part of the blame from their own shoulders to those of the more sluggish local authorities, but they did not do so. Miss Lawrence's defence was so long prolonged that the House did not have the opportunity of hearing Sir John Simon on the subject of Mui Tsai in Hong-Kong. We hope this opportunity will have occurred and been taken before our next issue.

A Peaceful Revolution.

Those of us who are old enough to remember the birth of King Alfonso—literally the birth of a King—can best appreciate the pathos of his present position, a pathos which is scarcely affected by the question of whether or how far he is to blame. At least he has shown what is probably the best form of courage in the circumstances—the courage to cut the rope which binds his personal fortunes to those of his country instead of dragging it with him on the rocks. Whether the change from a Monarchy to a Constitutional Republic will end in bringing Spain into line with other progressive countries remains to be seen. There is after all a Monarchy in Spain—a Spiritual Monarchy—and the shadow of the Vatican may prove in the end a greater reactionary force than the substance of King Alfonso's throne.

The Colonial Office to the Rescue.

Some weeks ago we retailed the sad story of the Bermuda Government's response, or rather lack of response, to a local women's suffrage movement which is rapidly approaching militant exasperation point. It has in fact reached the point of illegal tax resistance, and as a last constitutional resort has laid its case—in the form of an argued petition—before the

British Colonial Secretary. This last action has evoked a satisfactory response. In a dispatch to the Officer Administering the Government of Bermuda, dated 18th March, Lord Passfield remarks that the narrow restriction of the franchise in Bermuda has "attracted considerable attention from members of the House." He adds: "It has been brought to our notice that the proportion of registered electors to the total population of Bermuda is less than 6 per cent, which must be regarded as an abnormally low figure. I wish also to take this opportunity to point out that the franchise has by now been very generally granted to women in the British Empire at ages varying from 21 to 30 years, and that in this respect also the position in Bermuda would appear to call for review. I should be gratified if the Bermuda Legislature could see its way clear in the near future to consider the advisability of such an extension of the local franchise as would bring it into closer conformity with contemporary British institutions elsewhere."

Unemployed Teachers.

An unhappy by-product of the defeat of Sir Charles Trevelyan's Education Bill, already foreshadowed in many quarters, came up for discussion last week at the annual conference of the National Union of Teachers. The unemployment of young teachers was, according to many delegates, likely to be a serious result of the increased entry into training colleges which has been encouraged by the Board of Education since 1921 and fostered by the general expectation of the raising of the school age. According to Mr. W. Merrick, who moved a resolution on the subject on behalf of the Executive, the annual output of the colleges was 7,700 trained teachers, the corresponding annual wastage to be repaired 6,000, leaving a normal surplus of 1,700. This surplus had in recent years been absorbed by the annual development of our educational system and by the replacement of uncertificated by certificated teachers. Meanwhile, in addition to this surplus, there would be this year an additional surplus of 1,250, and the immediate problem was to find room for it. This, said Mr. Merrick, should not be difficult in view of the urgent necessity for reducing the size of classes. We commend this solution of the problem with special emphasis to those opponents or critics of the late lamented Education Bill, who based their opposition to an extension of the school age upon the argument that the improvement of existing school accommodation was the more urgent consideration.

Different Motives—the Same Demand.

For many years feminist organizations have placed equal pay for equal work in the forefront of their programmes. Now it appears that the trade union movement is following their example with a newly awakened vigour. In Manchester the local Trades and Labour Council is co-operating vigorously in a national campaign instigated by the Trade Union Congress and directed to the organization into existing trade unions of unorganized women workers. The immediate cause of this renewed push on the part of organized labour is the increasing substitution of women for men in industry at lower rates of wages. Thus, the demand for equal pay for equal work which accompanies it is in effect a condition which will, it is hoped, stem the industrial invasion of women. It is an attitude with which we sympathize. We have never regarded undercutting of standard rates and conditions as a tolerable accompaniment of the extension of women's industrial opportunities, which we have always advocated. Nevertheless, we would venture to remind those sections of organized male labour which are demanding *no favour* for women in the matter of differential rates that they must at the same time be ready to concede a *fair field*, in the absence of sex restrictions at the expense of women who are prepared to work under standard conditions.

Women in the Church of Scotland.

It was entirely in keeping with the character of Lady Frances Balfour that within a week or two of her death she appended her signature to an influential petition to the General Assembly which meets next month signed by women members of the Church of Scotland, pleading that "the barriers which prevent women from ordination to the ministry, the eldership, and the diaconate, be removed so that the principle of spiritual equality for which the Church stands be embodied in its constitution." About the same time a last letter from her wittily caustic pen on the same subject appeared in the columns of *The Scotsman*. It is interesting to note that about the same time this distinguished daughter of Scotland gave what proved to be a last broadcast talk on the future of her country, so that it is not too much to assume that the two subjects were interrelated in her mind. Other signatories to the petition include Lady Aberdeen and Lady Balfour of Burleigh, and many prominent Scottish women are giving it strong support. Dr. Frances Melville, who is herself a Bachelor of Divinity, states that she is convinced that the result of the present policy of refusal is dangerous. Speaking from wide experience of women students, she is convinced that it means that the services of able women with university education who would gladly serve the Church of their fathers are forced to offer their services elsewhere. Great interest on both sides of the Border will be taken in the reply of the Assembly—a wholly masculine gathering—to this appeal for wider opportunities and recognition.

Breach of Promise.

The *Manchester Guardian* of Monday, 13th April, comments on the fact that at the Earlier Law sittings in London there were only five actions for breach of promise of marriage. It states that lawyers attribute this to the modern tendency to short engagements. Though, of course, there is no question of sex equality about claims for breach of promise as men can claim as well as women, as a matter of fact claimants are almost invariably women, and the reduction indicates a changed attitude on the part of women towards marriage. The modern woman, though she may not know it product of the feminist movement, wants to stand on her own feet. Only the weaker or more mercenary are willing to go through the unpleasant business of claiming damages for wounded feelings or altered plans. The days are long gone by since marriage was regarded as an alternative form of livelihood. The greater economic independence of the spinster may easily bring about a shortage of wives, unless it is accompanied by greater economic independence on the part of wives.

Family Allowances.

The question of Family Allowances came up for discussion last week at the annual conference of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers. It took the form of a lively dual between Mr. Rhys Davies, M.P., and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., as a result of which a resolution in favour of Family Allowances was carried by 64 to 52 on a show of hands, but rejected by 44,232 to 38,440 on a card vote. In the course of the debate Mr. Rhys Davies condemned Family Allowances as a proposal emanating from the "petty bourgeoisie and the so-called intelligentsia." It is, in our opinion, a sure sign of argumentative bankruptcy when the opposer of a measure is reduced to the last resort of a personal attack upon its originators. It is a bankruptcy which is described in legal circles as "abusing the plaintiff's attorney," a device to be employed when there appears to be no useful point of attack upon the plaintiff's case.

Women Police in Bradford.

In Bradford the local women's organizations—twenty strong—are actively demanding a force of women police in their city. It is proposed to prepare the way for a joint deputation by organizing a conference for the preparation of a definite scheme. A similar deputation to the Watch Committee some years ago resulted in the appointment of a single woman police official for duty at headquarters. A new Chief Constable, however, raises new ambitions on the part of those who favour a more adequate scheme.

The Stock Exchange Ban on Women.

A Bradford woman, Miss E. Midgeley, who has had nineteen years' experience in a stockbroker's office, has made several unsuccessful attempts to be admitted to the Bradford Stock

Exchange. Miss Midgeley, who is now in business on her own account, is convinced that she is refused membership because of her sex. Bradford quotes the rules of the London Stock Exchange in its refusal, so Miss Midgeley is now in London in connection with her claim and is supported in her efforts to break down this sex barrier by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Bradford, Alderman Kathleen Chambers. The Dublin Stock Exchange has one woman member.

Industrial Assurance.

Social workers will welcome the appointment by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of a Committee to examine and report on the law and practice of industrial assurance, including the common custom of assurance on the lives of young children. Sir Benjamin Cohen, K.C., one of the referees appointed under the Widows' Pensions Act of 1929, is Chairman, and the Secretary (Mr. B. R. White) is Assistant Registrar of Friendly Societies. Miss Dorothy Evans, Secretary of the Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries, is the only woman member. We hope this Committee will hear evidence not only from assurance experts, but from those familiar with the incidence of industrial assurance on working class incomes. The poorer the worker the heavier it falls.

Women's Peace Conference in Belgrade.

The preliminary programme of the Peace Conference of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, which is to take place in Belgrade from 17th to 19th May, is printed in the April issue of the *International Woman's News*. The Conference will open with a civic welcome which will be presided over by Miss Ruth Morgan, of the United States, and speeches by experts will deal with Security, Sanctions, and Disarmament, the economic situation and European co-operation—a subject which is full of interest at the present moment. It is hoped that Great Britain will send a representative delegation to this very important gathering in a country about which we know far too little.

The Franchise for Japanese Women.

The House of Peers in Japan, true to the universal nature of such a body, has, we regret to hear, rejected the Equal Franchise Bill passed by the House of Representatives to which we alluded in a recent issue.

Married Women Teachers in Germany.

The German Women Teachers' Association has submitted a memorial to the Government in defence of married women teachers who, it appears from statistics quoted in the memorial, constitute a portion of the 1 per cent of married women among the women employed in the public services. From the fact of the memorial it would seem that in Germany married women are experiencing, or are about to experience, the type of domestic interference with which women Civil Servants and the employees of certain local authorities are familiar in our own country. It would be interesting to know whether this threat has actually materialized and, if so, what form it has taken. Perhaps a reader acquainted with German conditions may be tempted to furnish the information.

Foreign Affairs and "Time and Tide."

We congratulate our contemporary *Tide and Tide* on an interesting development. On and after the 1st of May, *Foreign Affairs*, the well-known monthly review of world politics now edited by Sir Norman Angell, formerly by Mrs. Swanwick, will be incorporated with *Time and Tide*, and the monthly digest by Sir Norman Angell will appear as a supplement in the first issue of each month.

The Tax Lady.

The *Woman's Journal* for April contains an interesting account of the only woman member of the Federal Board of Tax Appeals. Miss Annabel Mathews, formerly a school teacher in Georgia, received this appointment last year after five years' service as one of the attorneys in the office of the general counsel of the Internal Revenue Board. She has made a special study of the knotty problems of foreign tax with its duplications of domestic taxation and is said to have no equal in her own field. As a proof of this, it was to Miss Mathews that the President of a great European Bank was referred when on the eve of his sailing he found his United States tax problem unsolved, and in despair put his plight before the Commissioner.

LIMELIGHT ON DOMESTIC SERVICE.

There has, in all probability, been more serious discussion of domestic service in the last year than in any other period of recorded history. We say more *serious* discussion; for at all periods of history it has of course been discussed and, as contemporary literature will show, always with the same eternal chorus: what is domestic service coming to? But its real problems have never been constructively tackled either by employers or employed, and a cynical observer of social customs might have good ground for saying they never will be!

Yet there are signs and symptoms of a change. In the first place, the problem of unemployment among women and its relation to the alternative possibilities of domestic service have brought the conditions of that service within the circle of official cognizance—have, as it were, dragged the problem into the brightly lit arena of public discussion, where organized labour and officialdom play with the interests of women workers as with a football, to be kicked hither and thither in accordance with some large purpose other than the immediate interests of the workers in question. Thus, in the North of England domestic service has become a practical alternative to the continuance of transitional benefits under the National Unemployment Insurance Scheme, and the insurability of the domestic worker is surely one of the questions upon which the Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance will presently have to give a verdict. It is also, if the present determination of the Ministry of Labour holds out against the assaults of trade union criticism, likely to become a sphere of activity subject to invasion by a type of worker who has learned the habit of organization. The first reaction of a disgruntled unemployed weaver to the proposal that she should undertake a domestic job may be a distressful wail that it is beneath her dignity, or a servile acquiescence with the suggestion of her local Council of Christian Congregations that her health and morals will be unable to withstand the assaults of a world larger than her home circle. But her second reaction—unless we have gravely misjudged the real spirit of the textile worker—will be to do for domestic service what her own forebears did for work in the spinning mills and weaving sheds of Lancashire: to make of it, by trade union organization and legislative enactment, a worthy and tolerable job instead of a job into which unwilling people are protestingly pushed by hard employment exchanges and still harder circumstances.

Meanwhile—and here we come to our second symptom of the new preoccupation—the first steps towards conscious reform have already been taken, and in precisely the right quarter. Last year the National Conference of Labour Women called for a report on the subject of domestic service by the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organizations. This year, at the Conference to be held at Blackpool in June, the report will be forthcoming. It is, indeed, already forthcoming, and has been widely noted by the Press. Unfortunately, its framers have been somewhat hampered in their collection of

relevant data by a poor response to their preliminary questionnaire. Only 119 replies were received from domestic servants directly, and fifty-two from employers. Women's trade unions and co-operative guilds have, however, given valuable help, and the document will constitute a unique and extraordinarily valuable contribution to the whole discussion.

It would seem that lack of personal freedom and dislike of the existing status in regard to employers are the main reasons for a general dislike of domestic service. Long hours are also an important factor. Low wages seem to play a relatively small part—so does living in. Meanwhile, the report raises an interesting and unexpected doubt concerning the nature of the much advertised shortage of domestic workers. The supply of young women may be less than the demand, but there appear to be many older women who are finding difficulty in getting placed—and here, in the opinion of the framers of the report, is a "question into which the Ministry of Labour should make careful inquiry."

But it is easy enough to classify the defects of domestic service, yet more difficult to make concrete proposals for their redress. It is therefore the suggested reforms embodied in the report which constitute its chief value. The question of hours is faced with the full realization of the need for elasticity. It is therefore urged that specified hours off duty should be allowed and specified holidays involving an annual fortnight with pay and board, two half-days a week, and one full day a month. Any uniform provided should not include a cap, which has come to be regarded as a badge of servitude. Separate bedrooms should be provided unless any other special arrangement is acceptable to the workers concerned, and such bedrooms should not be in the basement and should have windows opening directly to the air. In regard to wages, a minimum scale relative to class of work and age of worker should be carefully determined, and the whole of domestic service should be brought within the field of unemployment insurance. For the determination and enforcement of these conditions the report urges the development of three lines of activity. The *Ministry of Labour* must co-operate in the business of registration for jobs, with due reference to the maintenance of standard conditions. Thus it is hoped that existing private registry offices may be superseded. Domestic workers must themselves organize, and existing *trade unions* of general workers should cater for their needs. The actual determination of conditions to be demanded by the organized workers and recognized by the employment exchanges should rest with *joint councils* of employers and employed, both local and national, operating under official stimulus and benediction.

Well—here is a large programme and a difficult one. We shall await with profound interest the response which it evokes from the National Conference to which it will presently be submitted.

WOMEN POLICE: THE POLICE COUNCIL, AND AFTER.

On 4th March, 1930, the Home Secretary called a Police Council to consider his scheme for a Police College, to amend certain existing police regulations, and to consider scope of duties, numbers, conditions of service, and regulations for women police. On 17th March the same agenda was before the Scottish Police Council.

This was an event of the first importance in the history of women police. Ever since the passing of the Police Act, 1919, the National Council of Women year after year by resolutions passed at Conferences, by deputations to successive Secretaries of State for England and Scotland, by evidence submitted to departmental Committees, has advocated the application of the Police Acts to policewomen, and especially that regulations for policewomen, defining their duties and standardizing conditions, be submitted to a Police Council in accordance with Section 4, Police Act, 1919.

At the joint deputation from the N.U.S.E.C. and N.C.W. to the Secretaries of State, introduced by Miss Picton Turbervill, M.P., on 2nd December, 1929, this way of securing a reasonable number of policewomen was again put forward, and in his reply Mr. Clynes described it as "a proper claim" and "a reasonable proposal to have these regulations so clearly stated as to enable any intending recruit to know clearly what her position is to be

and what her duties are." He also said: "I know no reason why the Police Council should not consider the question of policewomen, and consider it with every sympathy to go far in meeting your claims." The deputation further asked that a woman to represent and speak for the policewoman should be invited to the Police Council.

Unfortunately, a great gulf is fixed between the promises and performances of successive Home Secretaries with regard to policewomen, and no Home Secretary during the past ten years has found himself able to bridge it. Circulars—good, bad, and indifferent—have been tardily issued and completely disregarded; and now the first attempt to apply the Police Acts to policewomen by way of a Police Council has proved abortive. The reason for this failure is not far to seek: with no definite proposals submitted, no woman to present the case for the policewomen, and several avowed opponents of women police serving on the Council—which concluded its business in one day—no time was wasted on women police, and in the graphic words of *The Police Chronicle*, the Council "made short work of the women!"

This failure of the Police Council will be felt most by the provincial policewomen whose need for regulations is certainly greater than that of the Metropolitan policewomen.

Turning for a moment to London it is important to remember

that the promise to increase the number of Metropolitan police-women to 50 was given by the then Home Secretary—Sir W. Joynson Hicks—to a deputation from the N.C.W. on 23rd March, 1926—five years ago—though one might think from Mr. Clynes' replies in Parliament that the promise was one of recent date. In view of this fact the question becomes urgent, what are the "administrative reasons" advanced by the Home Secretary as the reason for holding up the promised increase? We know that a very large number of suitable recruits have applied for these appointments, and though the question of accommodation may be one reason for delay, the need is so urgent and the demand from all parts of the Metropolitan Area so insistent and sustained that once the facts are known Parliament will surely insist that there be no further delay in appointing the fifty additional women for London.

The Press all over the country has given great publicity to recent happenings with regard to women police. The meeting arranged by Miss Picton Turbervill in the House of Commons on 11th March, 1931, and attended by many M.P.s and representatives of important societies, has brought the matter of women police again into the open: there it must remain in order that the resolution passed unanimously at that meeting may be carried into effect: "This meeting, representing Members of Parliament and Women's Organizations from all parts of the country, calls upon the Home Secretary and the Secretary for Scotland to draft regulations for policewomen for submission to a Police Council called and selected for that purpose."

As a result of that meeting a Parliamentary group representative of all parties has been formed to work for women police inside the House of Commons and they may be assured that their actions will be followed with the closest attention by every county and borough in Great Britain where Women Police is one of the burning questions of the day.

EDITH TANCRED,

Convener, Women Police and Patrols Committee N.C.W.

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THE KEY OF PROGRESS

A Survey of the Status and Conditions of Women in India

By SEVERAL CONTRIBUTORS

With a Foreword by H.E. THE LADY IRWIN

Edited by A. R. CATON

Published by the Oxford University Press under the auspices of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.

Price 7s. 6d. net.

A few Appreciations

Sir Philip Hartog. (Review in "Nature," 23rd January, 1931.) "Miss Caton and her collaborators have produced a book which is indispensable to the student of Indian problems—social, religious, educational, sanitary, industrial, and political."

"Punch." (Review, 10th December, 1930.) "Miss A. R. Caton has edited, under the title 'The Key of Progress,' a small volume presenting the main facts concerning women in India and the various reformatory activities at work. This book forms, in fact, a kind of Women's Supplement to Part I of the Simon Report."

Mr. K. T. Paul, Member, India Round Table Conference. (Review in "The British Weekly," 15th January, 1931.) "An Indian edition should be immediately issued and sold at one rupee each. Translations in all the chief Indian languages should be immediately arranged for and sold at four annas a copy. Millions ought to read it without delay."

Mrs. Underhill. ("Starr.") "It is full of valuable information, for it states facts rather than opinions, and the apt title proves the importance of those facts."

Mr. M. R. Jayaker. "I have no doubt that the book will be a very valuable addition to the literature on the question."

Mr. J. A. Richey. Formerly Educational Commissioner for the Government of India. "I have read the book with great interest. The Editor is to be congratulated on the amount of material she has managed to condense into so small a compass without destroying the interest of the reading matter. I am sure the book will be great value."

Dr. Ogilvie Gordon. "The successful outcome of a project daringly conceived and brilliantly brought to completion."

Mr. Isaac Foot. "The book is most opportune, dealing as it does with questions which touch the root of many social problems in India. It seems to me to be an excellent summary of the position."

REVIEWS.

WHY?

Messrs. Belloc and Chesterton teach that the more religion you have the more you can joke about it, and the same seems to be true of children. To the Victorian parent, children's questions were a joke, just as twins were a joke.

Elsie: What is that Father?

Parent: A cow.

Elsie: Why?

That only needed the support of a suitable illustration to be thoroughly enjoyed by other parents in the days of *Alice in Wonderland*. But nowadays "it is becoming increasingly appreciated," writes the publisher, "that if we fail our children in the first spontaneous questions we shall be given no second chance to answer them in later life." Which statement would have been the greatest joke of all to Elsie's father.

Mr. Len Chaloner, the author of *Children's Questions*,¹ does not consider the type of question Elsie followed up with: his book is short. And he has, of course, his own view of what failure consists in. For the Victorian parent, failure seems to have consisted in ignorance of sensible, tangible, clean, and decent facts, and his advisers furnished him with a Parents' Encyclopædia. It was probably not much use for dealing with Elsie and the baby, but then one fell back, metaphorically, on the gooseberry bush, or some other traditional joke such as "Because the higher the fewer" or "Because Y's a crooked letter." To the advisers of the neo-Georgian parent, however, failure evidently consists in the practice of the encyclopædic or gooseberry-bush response; and success on an acute and informed sympathy with child-psychology (as outlined by said adviser), and the general view that to the pure all things are pure. This means that though the questions may be spontaneous, the Perfect Modern Parent's answers cannot be. This Parent is made, not born with the baby.

According to this plan, questions about sex, which the modern adviser considers to have special importance in connection with the child's later development, have to be answered so unhesitatingly, so truthfully, and so simply that it is no wonder if many a modern parent seeks help. Mr. Chaloner's book is short, cheap, and well written; it avoids the dogmatic manner and the extreme view. It offers little that is new, but will probably satisfy a growing demand.

Mr. Chaloner's book is designed for the parent, and will be of more interest to him than to the student of psychology. The work of Mr. and Mrs. Isaacs reverses the appeal. The records of work carried on at The Malting House School will provide a fund of material for students which has probably, in its own line, in England, never been equalled. Its value depended on the trained observation which directed the recording; and is increased by the clarity of style which characterizes the comments. Clarity is no slight virtue in a professional psychologist.

The book, as a whole, suffers a little from peculiarities of arrangement. Some of the most valuable material is contained in appendices, which either seem to have an entirely independent existence from the body of the work or else might, one feels, have been profitably included in the introduction. Still, this is certain a gift-horse to the child-psychologist.

Mr. and Mrs. Isaacs² quote Professor Stern, in agreement or disagreement, for his works are already classics which no contemporary can disregard. *The Psychology of Early Childhood*³ has been translated by Anna Barwell into easily flowing English. One sense in which this book is a classic is that it does attempt to cover the ground: it provides a framework, a scheme. In some places the content is thin, because little reliable research has been done on those branches of the subject—"The Child and Music" is an instance of this. But the thinness is never covered with verbiage.

H. S. A.

¹ *Children's Questions*, by Len Chaloner. Noel Douglas, 3s. 6d.

² *Intellectual Growth in Young Children (etc.)*, by Susan and Nathan Isaacs. Routledge.

³ *The Psychology of Early Childhood*, by W. Stern, trans. A. Barwell. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 18s.

A POET'S WIFE.

Among those tragedies of war of which the full magnitude has only dawned in later years is the death of Edward Thomas, the poet. He was an unspectacular poet, who never attained in his own time the fame which Miss Wilhelmina Stich has attained in ours. He was, rather, a poet's poet; known and loved during the short span of his poetic output by an elect group, of whom De la Mare was perhaps the most generally recognized member. But to-day, more than a decade after his death, his quiet poetry is creeping into fame, and therewith a new interest is beginning to gather round his life and personality.

This interest will be stimulated—though in no way satisfied—by the small and quite unique autobiographical account which his wife has now written concerning the brief interlude of their married life.¹ The story is transparently veiled under a fictitious name. It is highly abstracted. That is to say, a mass of experience is pruned out of the tangled undergrowth of existence, so as to leave the shapes of the eternal trees clearly in view. The author's whole attention is concentrated upon the portrait of an intimate relationship between two persons during certain years of life. It is perhaps this rigid pruning which gives the book much of its force and beauty. But much also is due to the delicate and perceptive handling by the narrator of what is selected. One feels that Mrs. Thomas writes infrequently and only under great provocation. But when she does write she writes with fastidious care. At any rate it is with fastidious care that she has selected from the raw material of her life the essential subject matter of this story, and her selection as well as her treatment is masterly.

We have said that interest in Edward Thomas will be stimulated but in no way satisfied by this book. He remains, throughout its pages, a shadowy figure. We see him at home, grappling with the irritations and delights of a domesticity poor in cash yet very rich in the abundance of life. We see him losing himself in the English countryside about which he wrote with such devoted understanding. We are even allowed to see him—from the outside, never of course from the inside—grappling with those dark, melancholy fits which make Mrs. Thomas's tale a thing of light and shadow. She writes of these dark times with an unreticence which only simplicity and an unerring appreciation of beauty could make tolerable. And if to some readers they should at moments seem to fall short of the tolerable, we can only reply: wait until the end of the book and all will be well. "Remember that whatever happens, all is well between us for ever and ever." It was with such words in her ears that Helen Thomas took leave of her difficult poet on that frozen country morning which took him to the war.

But still, with all its frankness, its stamp of truth, its skill and its beauty, we know almost as little of Edward Thomas at the end of the book as at the beginning. The person that we begin to know is Helen Thomas—who is worth knowing.

M. D. S.

SCOTTISH WOMEN AND BYGONE DAYS.²

A book that has been selling well in the North since the autumn, and that deserves—in spite of its limited scope—to be better known in this country, is Miss Eunice Murray's *Scottish Women of Bygone Days*. The chief criticism to which it lays itself open, and which must be dealt with at the outset, is that same limited scope; and if Miss Murray would give the benefit of her wit and her wide range of reading to the women of the sister countries and their bygone conditions her readers would reap a rich harvest of enjoyment. As it is—with its concentration on Scottish women only—it is full from cover to cover of good stuff, both for the platform and for private entertainment; and one's chief regret on putting it down is that it is not twice the length.

There are no pretensions to literary style in Miss Murray's collections and collations. The matter flows on easily and discursively from page to page, with not a dull paragraph. Whether she deals with the cumbersome clothing with which our foremothers hampered themselves, or the customs fastened on them by still more hampering conventions; or with the religious fervours and political intrigues by which they were beset, it is good reading and instructive, and frequently has the element of the unexpected.

¹ *World Without End*, by Helen Thomas. Heinemann, 6s. net.

² *Scottish Women and Bygone Days*, by Eunice G. Murray. (Gowans & Grey, Ltd., Glasgow.)

Our foremothers' lives were not attractive, valued from these pages and in the light of modern lamps. The general impression is a material frownsiness, coupled with astonishing mental alertness and independence. The record of the amusements of Mary Queen of Scots who is supposed to have had such a dull time of it in Scotland, would make even the Bright Young People "sit up." And the delicious suggestion that the dreadful penances enforced at public worship by the stricter sects of religious Reformers on recalcitrant or back-sliding members of the congregation, were popular because they supplied sensation and excitement in the dreary round of uneventfulness, is, one is inclined to agree, sound psychology.

There is a pleasant allusion to a now forgotten work called *An Account of the Fair Intellectual Club*, which was an adventure far more daring than the Lyceum or even the Pioneer; and there are several quotations from lofty authority on the duty of woman, and especially of wives, on whom the virtues of meekness and submission are particularly enjoined; after which it is comforting to read of the "hundred of enraged women of quality" who set upon an unpopular ecclesiastic "with staves and peaks; they beat him sore." And what remains in one's mind when all the rest fades is the volume of achievement, mental and material, under unthinkable conditions of danger and discomfort, dirt and difficulty. They were Women, those Scottish women of bygone days.

Miss Murray dedicates her book to "The Women of all Ages who Defied Convention and held aloft the Banner of Progress." She herself has played no mean part in the march under that banner; and one hopes that this record—to be kept at one's elbow or at one's bedside—is but the forerunner of others and that English women, and Irish, may provide further material for her pen.

C. NINA BOYLE.

LITERATURE ON DISARMAMENT.

The following is a list of useful leaflets published by the Women's International League, from which sample copies may be obtained on application to the Secretary, 55 Gower Street, W.C. 1:—

- (1) Leaflet: "Why You Should Sign the World Disarmament Declaration." Printed on one side, green ink on white. Price, 1,000 for 5s.; 100 for 7d.; post free.
- (2) Leaflet: "International Declaration on World Disarmament: To All who Want Peace." Printed on one side, blue ink on white. Price, 1,000 for 5s.; 100 for 7d.; post free.
- (3) Leaflet: "1931—Disarmament Year. Your Opportunity." "Why You should Sign the World Disarmament Declaration." Printed on both sides, black ink on blue. Price, 1,000 for 6s.; 100 for 8d.; post free.
- (4) Leaflet: "Prevention of Future Wars." Printed on one side, black ink on green. Price, 1,000 for 5s.; 100 for 7d.; post free.
- (5) 8-page leaflet: Reprint of Speech made by the Right Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P., at the Queen's Hall, London, on 9th February, 1931, at the Disarmament Demonstration of the Women's International League. Price, 1d. per copy; 3s. a 100.
- (6) Booklet: "Disarmament—The Question of the Day." Compiled by G. A. Innes, League of Nations Union. Contains facts and figures about Disarmament and answers to the commonest questions. Index for quick reference. Space for additional notes. Indispensable to speakers and canvassers. Price 1d. per copy.
- (7) 4-page leaflet: "Disarmament and Unemployment." Price 2d. a dozen; 1s. 3d. a 100; post free.

Of the many publications of the League of Nations Union may be mentioned in particular two leaflets, reprints of broadcast addresses by Mr. Vernon Bartlett: "The Old Way and the New," January, 1929, price 1d.; "What Disarmament Means," February, 1930, price 1d. These may be obtained from the League of Nations Union, 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W. 1.

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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

The following women were elected to Urban District Councils at the recent elections:—

| Council. | Name of Councillor. |
|-------------------------|--|
| Adwich-le-Street | Miss M. M. F. Clark (Ind.). |
| Annfield | Mrs. C. Gibbons (Lab.). Mrs. F. Smith (Lab.). Mrs. Marsden (Ind.). |
| Ardley (East and West). | |
| Arnold | Miss S. Fisher (Con.). Mrs. E. H. Mountain. *Mrs. B. E. Jackson. *Mrs. H. Macnamara (Ind.). *Mrs. Caine (Ind.), Unopposed. Beckingham . . . Mrs. Campbell (Ind.). Bedlington . . . *Mrs. Johnson (Lab.). Biddulph . . . *Mrs. S. Linney. Bishop Auckland . . . *Mrs. Bull. Blaydon . . . Mrs. D. Hardy (Mod.). Brentford . . . Mrs. Hill (Ind.). Brierley Hill . . . *Mrs. F. Hodgetts (Ind.). Bude . . . Miss Gladys Pitt (Ind.). Chatteris . . . Mrs. E. A. Edgecumbe (Ind.). Chatteris . . . Mrs. F. A. Barrett (Ind.). Chester-le-Street . . . *Mrs. Bruce (Lab.). Chester-le-Street . . . Mrs. Jackson (Ind.). Chingford . . . *Miss M. L. Mathieson (Ind.). Chislehurst . . . *Mrs. F. H. Field. Coulson and Purley . . . *Mrs. Bluett (Ind.). Croston . . . Mrs. Baker. Desborough . . . *Mrs. Bosworth (Lab.). Dorking . . . *Miss Douglas (Ind.). Earson . . . Mrs. Veitch (Ind.). Eastwood . . . Mrs. Butler (Ind.). Edmonton . . . *Mrs. Barrass (Lab.). Edmonton . . . *Mrs. Hearn (Lab.). Edmonton . . . *Mrs. Lowd (Lab.). Edmonton . . . *Mrs. Barnes (Ind.). Farnworth . . . *Mrs. Timberlake (Ind.), Unopposed. Finchley . . . *Mrs. MacInnes (Ind.), Unopposed. Frimley and Camberley . . . *Mrs. J. Todd (Ind.), Unopposed. Hay . . . Mrs. S. Lilwall. Hayes . . . Mrs. Gray. Hebburn . . . *Miss Peterkin. Hendon . . . *Mrs. S. J. Bannister (Ind.). Holmfirth . . . Miss Annie Baker. Hornchurch . . . *Mrs. E. M. Field (Ind.). Ilkley . . . Mrs. Forster. Irthingborough . . . *Mrs. Palmer (Lab.). Kenilworth . . . Mrs. Randall. Kettering . . . Mrs. Clarke (Lib.). Kettering . . . *Mrs. Leviru (Lib.). Kingsbury . . . *Mrs. Millward (Ind.). Lancing . . . Mrs. R. Gammons. Littlehampton . . . Mrs. Drummond Murray. Longbenton . . . Mrs. Hatton (Lab.). Lynton . . . Mrs. Hume. Malden . . . *Mrs. D. M. Porter (Ind.). Marlow . . . Mrs. Forbes Lister. Melksham . . . *Mrs. Swanborough (Ind.). Millom . . . Mrs. Keast (Lab.). Millom . . . *Mrs. Munroe (Lab.). Newhaven . . . *Miss M. M. E. Coher, J.P. Newmarket . . . Mrs. Palmer. Normanton . . . Mrs. Bland (Con.). Normanton . . . Mrs. Horsley (Con.). Preesall . . . *Miss Gladys Ashworth (Ind.). Quarry Bank . . . *Mrs. Cook (Lab.). Rayleigh . . . *Mrs. F. M. Cottee. Romford . . . Mrs. Minns (R.A.). Rothwell . . . Mrs. Cook. Rugby . . . Mrs. E. Yates (Lab.), Unopposed. Seaford . . . Miss M. Buck. Sheerness . . . *Mrs. Ratcliffe. Sheringham . . . Mrs. Atkinson. Shildon . . . Mrs. Evans (Lab.). Sidcup . . . Miss J. E. Oliver (Ind.). Sidcup . . . *Miss M. K. Pillman (Ind.). Southgate . . . Mrs. C. O. Shepherd, M.B., Ch.B. (Ind.). Southgate . . . *Mrs. Vandy (Ind.). Standish . . . *Mrs. Bottomley. Stretford . . . *Mrs. Bagley (Lib.). Stretford . . . Mrs. McNicholl (Lab.). Tanfield . . . *Mrs. J. T. J. Nicholson (Lab.). Teddington . . . Miss Dorothy Marshall, (Ind.). Teignmouth . . . *Miss K. Anson Cartwright (Ind.), Unopposed. Thurnscoe . . . Mrs. Spencer. Thurstonland and Farnley Tyas . . . Mrs. E. E. Mitchell. Tipton . . . Mrs. Bagnall. Tipton . . . Mrs. R. L. Beecham. |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Tottenham | *Miss R. F. Cox (Mod.). *Mrs. Kitchener (Lab.). Mrs. Weymark (Lab.). |
| Tring | *Miss Boyson (Ind.). Mrs. Kerr, (Ind.). Miss Margaret Vaisey (Ind.). |
| Walton-on-Naze | *Mrs. Sichel. |
| Welwyn | *Mrs. L. G. Glaisyer (Ind.). Nurse D. Jenner (Ind.). *Mrs. J. Pinner (Lab.). Mrs. Moss, Unopposed. |
| Wem | *Mrs. Johnson. |
| Whitchurch | *Mrs. Cowan, Unopposed. |
| Willesden | Mrs. Worsfold. |
| Witham | *Miss C. A. Pettison. |
| Wood Green | *Mrs. Bolster (Lab.), Unopposed. |
| WALES. | |
| Aberdare | *Mrs. Jenkins, O.B.E. (Ind.). |
| Abersychan | *Mrs. Sudgay (Lab.). |
| Criccieth | *Dame Margaret Lloyd George (Lib.). |
| Llantarnam | Mrs. Carver. |
| Panteg | *Mrs. Harding (Lib.). |
| Pontypool | *Mrs. Gower, J.P. (Ind.). |
| * Stood for re-election. | |

Women were returned to the Ardsley, Brentford, Chatteris, Hay Longbenton, and Panteg Councils for the first time. The average percentage of electors voting was small, although higher than in the case of the recent county council elections. In many districts between 40 to 50 per cent of the electors voted, and some places reached 60 per cent. Only 25,000 of the 80,000 electors on the Tottenham register polled, and in Edmonton the poll was the smallest on record, only 19.64 of the electorate voting.

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EXCHANGE VISITS WITH GERMANY.

We feel sure that some of our readers would be glad to avail themselves of the proposal made in a letter we have received from the Berlin Group of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. We give below a copy of the letter and we have at the office particulars of several offers from German ladies desirous of making exchanges. Readers who may be interested are invited to write, in the first place, to the N.U.S.E.C., at 4, Great Smith Street, S.W. 1.

BERLIN.
3rd March, 1931.

DEAR COMRADE,

The Berlin Group of the W.I.L.P.F. wishes to help build up an individual exchange between our countries so as to further the thought of Peace and Understanding between the different nations.

As a great deal is already being done from several quarters for school-girls or -boys and students, the Berlin Group would prefer to extend their efforts to grown-ups; namely, persons who could arrange an exchange during their vacations for a couple of weeks or so; or young girls who could probably stay for a longer period. One advantage would be to learn the other's language, but it would be of even greater importance to understand the other nation's customs and ways and to get to know the different countries.

Naturally it would be necessary to institute the most careful inquiries in each case, and we may surely reckon with your assistance at your end.

We know there are many Germans who are eager to go abroad and take the foreign person to their homes here for the same length of time, and we hope it will be possible to arrange such exchanges amongst members and friends of the W.I.L.P.F.

We also hope this will help in a small way to bring about a better understanding and friendship among our people and that already 1931 will see such friendly connections established.

Kindly let us know who the lady is who will take this work in hand at your end; address any inquiries you may have to the undersigned, if you please.

With cordial greetings, faithfully yours,
MRS. THEA BRINCKMANN.

Berlin-Tempelhof,
Schulenburgstr. 87.

WORKING FOR WORLD DISARMAMENT.

We should like to be able to respond to the following letter, which we have received from the Women's Peace Crusade, by being able to send to the Crusade Headquarters the name of the Secretary or of an individual member from each of our affiliated Societies. Will secretaries and individuals read the letter carefully and consider whether they would not be able to offer to undertake the work suggested? Everything points to the urgency of carrying out as much work as possible throughout the country, as quickly as possible, in support of world disarmament. It would be immensely valuable if each of our Societies could help in the manner proposed.

10th April, 1931.
WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE AT GENEVA,
FEBRUARY, 1932.

DEAR MADAM,

The Women's Peace Crusade Council met on 23rd March in reference to the above Conference, and were agreed that it was urgently necessary to co-operate in every possible way for the purpose of creating a strong public opinion in favour of a real common reduction of armaments.

The Council therefore resolved to enter into an active educational campaign by collecting signatures to the International Declaration on World Disarmament started by the Women's International League, and now being circulated and signed in over 40 countries. This Declaration has been signed by Lord Cecil and many other distinguished persons of all parties, and has the support of the League of Nations Union. The campaign for this purpose, to be effective, must be rapidly organized, and amongst other things a house-to-house canvass planned. This is encouraging work. In North Wales one-fifth of the population has signed.

The Women's Peace Crusade is therefore asking all its affiliated Societies to send in before the end of April the names of the Secretary or of any of the members of their branches who would be prepared to get into touch with other Societies of either men or women in their localities for the purpose of calling a meeting to start the

work; it also urges upon them the desirability of forming a Committee for this purpose. Headquarters would be able to supply literature and suggestions as to how to carry on the work. It is greatly hoped that this letter may receive a prompt and cordial response, for the world is presented with a great opportunity and everything will depend upon the extent to which public opinion can be aroused and informed.

Yours sincerely,
ELDRED HORSLEY,
Chairman, Women's Peace Crusade.

The Secretary,
National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.

CORRESPONDENCE.
CRUELTY TO WILD ANIMALS.

MADAM,—I am afraid that I must demur to your description (note on the fur-trade, 4th April) of a certain leaflet by Major Van der Byl as "useful." This leaflet is usually sent out accompanied by another by the same author in defence of hunting, so that I must conclude that Major Van der Byl is more concerned to preserve blood-sports than to put down other cruelties. I suggest that you recommend instead the leaflet on the same subject published by the R.S.P.C.A., or literature published by the American Anti-Steel-Trap Society, which is definitely in sympathy with the movement against cruel sports.

As you remark, a problem nearer home is that of rabbit-trapping. Now in order to clear our minds on the question of cruelty to wild animals we have to realize that the distinction made by the law—for the laws against cruelty do not apply to "ferae naturae"—is made on the assumption that wild animals are pests and that it is necessary to destroy them by fair means or foul. Strictly speaking, this assumption is now only justified in the case of the rat. It is, however, partly justified in the case of the rabbit, since this unfortunate animal is so prolific that its destruction by humane means only does present a problem. In the case of the victims of the hunt, however, the distinction is not in the smallest degree justified, since deer, foxes, and even hares are preserved for the purpose of sport. Badgers and otters, which are also hunted, are not pests at all, but animals which can and should be protected. I will not take up your space in detailing the peculiar arguments which have been brought forward in defence of these sports. I shall be glad to give information to any reader who is interested, or it can be obtained from the League for Prohibition of Cruel Sports, 101 Chandos House, Westminster. It is sufficient to say that any such defence must show either that the sports in question are not cruel or that they are necessary. We can hardly hope to deal effectually with utilitarian cruelties while condoning those that are absolutely wanton.

MURIEL C. C. CHAPMAN.

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COMING EVENTS.

B.B.C.

Monday, 20th April. 7 p.m. "New Books." Miss V. Sackville-West.
Wednesdays, 10.45. "The Week in Westminster." 29th April:
Major Lloyd George, M.P.
Thursdays, 7.25. The World and Ourselves. 23rd April: "Sweden."
Fridays, 7.25. India. 17th April: "Races and Religion."
Saturdays, 9.20. The Ideal Holiday. 18th April: Major Hills, M.P. v.
Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis: "Cornish v. Welsh Coast."

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

20th April. Jumble Sale at "The Quest," Clarendon Road, W.11.
Gifts welcome.

IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION.

To 7th May. Olympia.

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UNION OF DEMOCRATIC CONTROL.

21st April, 8 p.m. Caxton Hall. Lord Lothian: "The Situation in India."

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

23rd April, 4.30. Minerva Club, Brunswick Square. Mrs. Rama Rau: "Indian Women and the New India."

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