

The Bookhams Bulletin

Organ of the Bookhams Social Service Bureau

No. 40

SEPTEMBER 1943

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Editorial

Two Government White Papers of outstanding importance have been issued within the past two months, which, if passed by Parliament, must have far reaching effect upon the country as a whole. First, that upon War Pensions, whilst a great many improvements for disabled men and women have been recommended, it is felt there is further room for an increased scale of pensionable awards, and whatever benefits Parliament may bestow, it must be generally recognised that those who became disabled in their country's service must have the prior claim, and furthermore we must not lose sight of the fact that there are over 25,000 totally disabled men of the Great War of 1914-18.

It is hoped that by the time the *Bulletin* has been circulated the new Royal Warrant upon War Pensions will have been enacted.

The second white paper, issued by the Board of Education, is called Educational Reconstruction. It is difficult here to give a full survey, but it may be of interest to summarise the principal reforms described in the document:—

Improved facilities for the training of children under compulsory school age by the provision of

nursery schools where there is a need. The raising of the school leaving age to 15 without exemption, with provision to raise to 16 at a later date. Reorganisation of the present public elementary schools, up to the age of 11 years. The emphasising of religious instruction as an essential element in education. Enable schools provided by voluntary bodies to play their part in the proposed developments. The introduction of a compulsory part time education during working hours up to the age of 18. Proper facilities for technical and adult education. Extension of physical and welfare of children and young persons.

There are nine other recommendations, and to those interested this 36-page document costing 6d. is recommended.

It has long been recognised that this country has led the world in voluntary work of some description, and even during war time so many persons are rendering some voluntary service. In order to maintain the distribution of the *Bookhams Bulletin* an appeal is here made for distributors. Will those who can give less than half-an-hour each quarter please communicate with the Editor, or Mr. R. Andrews, "Five Beeches, Dorking Road.

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Citizens Advice Bureau Leatherhead & District

Whilst the proportion of claims for lost clothes rationing coupons is high compared with the many other enquiries made at the Citizens Advice Bureau, many of these concern prisoners of war in the Far East, particularly in Tai and Malaya. From information received regarding these camps there is at the moment more news coming from Hongkong, where conditions appear to be more satisfactory than elsewhere.

An internment camp in Bangkok the capital of Siam, contains about 300 British internees who are being treated exceptionally well with a fair supply of food, and to those who may have relatives and friends in Japan and Japanese occupied territory, it is possible to send a 25-word message. Particulars of the postal message service can be had from the Bureau.

We have been informed by the Ministry of Food that a new scheme for expectant mothers came into operation on 25th July, and the following scale of rations can be received by the introduction of a modified ration book, R.B.2:

Milk, 7 pints priority on her R.B.2, as well as the ordinary non-priority allowance on her own R.B.1. Shell eggs, 2 on each allocation (1 on each book). Dried

eggs, 3 packets at each allocation (2 on R.B.2 and 1 on her own R.B.1). Meat, an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ -ration on R.B.2 as well as a whole ration on her R.B.1. Oranges, the same priority as children holding R.B.2 when supplies are available.

Certain classes of employees may be entitled to payment of wages during their annual holiday for which the Holidays with Pay Act was introduced in 1938. Such provision is made by the Wage Boards, Agricultural Wages Committee, or the Road Haulage Central Wages Board.

From time to time the Bureau receives many enquiries concerning holidays with pay, and your position can always be determined by consulting the Bureau.

During a debate in the House of Commons in July, the Minister of Pensions announced that the emergency grant would be a minimum of £1 and a maximum of £10. Application forms for emergency grants can be obtained from the Regional Officer Ministry of Pensions, whose address can be obtained from the Bureau.

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Bookham and the New Order!

Very many schemes, all so far "castles in the air," have been voiced, ranging from the Beveridge plan to the introduction of a new British Restaurant, but there is never a whisper about the improvement in the standard of living of the old age pensioner, or improved scales of payment by way of outdoor relief, or the general welfare of the children of our fighting men. Such matters as these at the moment appear to be left for voluntary organisations to carry out.

In 1919 the then leading statesman stated in the House of Commons that "this country should be a home for heroes to live in," but it is a very heroic effort on the part of the old age pensioner to live, and a gallant effort by the persons with fixed incomes to live and meet their various commitments, especially in the matter of rates now at 10/- in the £.

There is no need to remind one that there is a war on, such classes of people mentioned know this only too well, and without hindering our war effort, in any way whatever, economy can be effected in reducing unnecessary jobs.

Much has been said and written about the increased cost of living, and many factors must be taken into account for the rise in prices, but does a 4d. packet of seeds

justify the sale of peas and beans at 1/- a pound? Again, the Trade Unions have been a contributory factor in higher wages, but when the wife of a service man applies for a War Service Grant, her meagre allowances are subjected to investigation.

No doubt Bookham may wonder how such improvement towards the New Order can be made. The answer is quite simple: get your Member of Parliament interested in these social problems; pass resolutions at the meetings of the various organisations to which you belong, and urge the necessity for these to be carried out.

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(late T. R. Clark)

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"Their Day"

It is not generally known that a very great deal of work is being accomplished by the Incorporated Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Help Society, and the Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Families Association in providing assistance for service men and women and their dependants and families. Very many calls are made upon the resources of these two bodies, and a national appeal is to be launched in September. Whilst realising the many calls upon your pockets and purses, in proportion to the population Bookham has always lead in its generosity, so we appeal again for your support to this cause to help our service men and women and their families.

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Mrs. Churchill's "Aid to Russia" Fund

Not for one moment, Mr. Churchill told the House of Commons, must we forget the tremendous burden that Russia has borne, and the debt that we owe to her. Already much has been done through the Red Cross by the people of Britain to relieve Russia's suffering. 4,500 tons of medical and surgical supplies, 400,000 woollen garments and half a million blankets have been sent by Mrs. Churchill's "Aid to Russia" Fund. But far more is needed. A huge consignment of surgical instruments, drugs and clothing is being assembled to meet Russia's latest needs. Will you join with your fellow countrymen in paying for these supplies?

Suburban Pride

London Pride, that flower which ~~used~~ to adorn many an edging in suburban gardens at the beginning of this century, has had a song written about it, but it is doubtful if anyone would do similarly with regard to suburban pride which flourished so much about the same time, viz.: during the Edwardian period that followed the Victorian era with its own particular "make-believes."

The following illustrations may help to convey (to those unaware of what their parents went through) some idea of the efforts made to meet the small incomes which were then current.

A woman visits the local grocer and asks the price of demarara sugar, the reply being given with the shopkeeper's usual humility "twopence a pound, madam." She then asks him to give her a quarter of a pound, the reason for this vast expenditure of one half-penny being (as she said) that she is making something!

Another customer asks him to *send up early* to her home two bundles of firewood. This was when such a purchase amounted to one penny.

A third instance is the case of the local greengrocer with his horse and cart making his usual morning round calling for orders, one of which he bawls out to his mate 'pahnd o' taters to be booked.' The cost of this also was $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Again, two tradesmen's boys meet as one of them emerges from the gate of a suburban villa. "Wot are yer doing there, Bill"? asks one. The other, a butcher's boy, replies "I've been knocking at the door for a long time but can't get any answer, and I've brought the Sunday joint." "Why don't yer shove it through the letter box," asks his friend.

When considering these facts, one must naturally be astonished at the rate values have increased during the last forty years. The great advance came after the last war when business houses found that not only men who had not been called up, but those who had been demobilised, were obtaining jobs elsewhere, and consequently they had to increase the salaries especially of key men, in order to keep them. Will this war bring about a similar rise, and if so pensioners with fixed incomes will again suffer as they did after 1918.

It has been suggested that the government will keep control going for some time after the cessation of hostilities, but it is a question as to what will happen subsequently.

—R.A.

Doesn't News Travel!

Vichy radio quite recently stated that a Tibetan monastery in the Himalayan mountains has just heard the news of the outbreak of the present war.



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Red Cross Parcels for Prisoners of War

Many enquiries have been made concerning the prices of parcels for prisoners of war. As the contents of parcels vary, and prices alter from time to time, it is very difficult to be entirely accurate.

Below are details of a parcel and average prices of the typical contents. The Red Cross is able to buy bulk supplies on special terms, and is granted duty-free prices by the Customs & Excise Department, which means that articles are much cheaper than if bought in a shop. It also receives the same priority granted to the Services regarding new foodstuffs coming on to the market, and works in close co-operation with the Ministry of Food. The average cost of a parcel is as follows:

	s.	d.
Biscuits with calcium	4	$\frac{1}{2}$
Cheese, processed	3	$\frac{1}{2}$
Chocolate vitamised	3	$\frac{1}{2}$
Fish	7	$\frac{1}{2}$
Fruit or pudding	6	
Syrup or Jam	6	
Margarine vitamised	4	
Meat, hot	10	
Meat, cold	6	$\frac{1}{2}$
Bacon	1	
Milk	7	$\frac{1}{4}$
Sugar		$\frac{3}{4}$
Tea	3	
Vegetables	4	$\frac{1}{2}$
Cocoa	3	$\frac{1}{2}$
Oatmeal with calcium	3	$\frac{1}{2}$
Eggs	8	

Soap	1	
Cigarettes, packing materials, overhead costs, transport, &c.	1	9
	10	0

Red Cross parcels have actually saved men's lives, so when you have a few spare shillings you cannot do better than contribute to the British Red Cross Prisoners of War Parcels Fund, when it will be used to provide some of the articles shown above.

It is apparent that the Japanese authorities have converted the army camp at Changi into a civilian internment camp. Nothing is known of the conditions in this camp, but the following information gives a little idea of the situation before Japanese invasion.

Changi is a district on the east coast of Singapore Island, about 18 miles from the City, & became well known when the army authorities decided to build an army camp there. At the beginning the construction of the camp was on a small scale, but later when more than one regiment was stationed there, the camp was enlarged to such a degree that it was recognised a "complete little town" on its own. All the buildings are modern and up-to-date in every respect and there are also large blocks of flats built on the same lines as civilians.

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George and Bob, the Country Gardeners

Hullo, George, it doesn't seem long since we were talking about planting out our tomatoes, and yet here we are with the harvest right upon us. What a pity we had such dry weather, as that has been the cause of the stunted growth of most vegetables, but I gave my tomatoes some good waterings and now find it has paid me for the trouble.

Yes, Bob, things are not too bad in spite of all that's been said and the many grouses there's been. We've more to be thankful for than to grumble about. I hope you harvested your onions in the dry spell as it is essential they should be dried well or they won't keep as long as they should. I'm now planting out my spring cabbages and hoping for the best. I am also saving my own onion and leek seed, and shall soon have to put some muslin covers or paper bags over the heads of both. And what about getting our stocks of manure in as soon as possible so it can be stacked for use in late winter?

That's a good idea, George, and here's another. I'm now about to put in some Lee's Immense Winter lettuce seed, as this variety does excellently in my ground and gives results when a really nice lettuce is appreciated. And today I started to prepare the clamps for storing beet and carrots, on

the same principle as that used by farmers for potatoes, using good straw and covering with earth to a depth of 9 to 12 inches.

Well, I shall soon have to get home for supper, but I must say again that we have so much to be thankful for, especially in war time. We have had an abundance of fruit of all kinds—currants, gooseberries, raspberries, plums, pears and apples, and it really has been a treat to see the fields full of oats, barley and wheat, whereas before the war it was a rare sight to see such a field for miles, and I only hope that our agriculture has taken on a new lease of life which will last for many years.

—BOB.

Bookham Poultry Club

Monthly meetings as follows:—

Oct. 6th, Brains Trust.

Nov. 3rd, Plucking and Trussing Demonstration. Egg Competn.

Invitations are being extended to distinguished experts for these meetings, so make a special note of these dates.

You may bring friends as guests to one meeting.

All Club particulars from Hon. Sec.,
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