

The Bookhams Bulletin

(Organ of The Bookhams Social Service Bureau).

No. 14.

FEBRUARY, 1937.

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Editorial.

Once again the Editor and all connected with the "Bookhams Bulletin" wish our Readers a Happy New Year with Health and Prosperity.

Since the last issue of this Journal the country has passed through a constitutional crisis and all will regret the renunciation of the throne by King Edward VIII. None more than these where his patronage had been bestowed: the British Legion, the Personal Service League, the Boy Scouts' Association and many others, were always in his interest. It is not for us to judge his decision. Our wish is that he will live long and happily and our assurance is that he will ever have a warm place in our hearts.

The human trait has been largely responsible for a good many of the finest qualities, particularly when the need for others arises, and it is with a deep sense of gratitude that our thanks are extended to those who have provided that "little something extra" during last Christmas.

It is over thirty years ago since the world was thrilled by the first wireless S.O.S. message and even to-day the mention of S.O.S. conjures up visions of distress and rough seas.

There are persons in the Bookhams to-day who are passing through rough seas of distress, and the Social Service Bureau transmits its S.O.S. message through this Journal to you to bring aid to those sinking in the sea of despair.

In connection with the work of the Bureau Sister Alicia has kindly consented to be at the Barn Hall on Wednesday mornings between 11 a.m. and 12 noon, to receive and consider applications for assistance.

It must be understood that the Bureau acts more in an advisory capacity and further to co-ordinate cases with other Organisations in the district, as only in extremely urgent and necessitous cases can the granting of assistance be considered.

By way of a reminder, will Hon. Secretaries of Organisations please let the Editor have notices, articles, etc., as early as possible.

Telephone : The Editor,
Bookham 399. "St. Jean", Crabtree Lane.

Silver Jubilee Commemoration Clock Fund.

It is with great pleasure that we can announce the total amount required for this Fund is now within easy distance of being collected.

The following is a further list of subscribers, which include those not previously acknowledged as well second subscriptions:—

Messrs. H. F. Allman, F. Barford, Mr. & Mrs. Bellows, Mr. & Mrs. Forster Brown, Messrs. T. Calvert, Cameron, Curtis, Mrs. J. Elton, Messrs. Ford, Greathurst, Miss Green, Mrs. Hewlins, Messrs. Higby, S. Hogg, R. T. Leadbetter, L. R. Hutchison, A. Lutman S. T. Morris, Mrs. Pelling, Messrs. L. Robertson L. G. Rose, W. R. Smith, E. Stevenson, Dr. Waterfield, Messrs. Woodford & Worrall.

Little Bookham Boys' Club

Since its inauguration on 5th October, 1936, the above has had a very successful season. Its inception was due entirely to Mr. J. Greathurst, who has worked hard and given a great deal of time to the Club.

The average attendance of Members each evening has been thirty, which indicates that the Club is filling a desirable function. On December 23rd Mrs. Hesse presented the prizes to the winners and runners-up in the first Games Tournament. The second Games Tournament will be started towards the end of January.

Among other things the Club has been presented with an excellent set of table tennis, of which full use has been made and has been much appreciated by the Members.

For the older boys a billiard table would be a great acquisition, and it is hoped that some generous donor or donors may be found to present one to the Club in the near future.

The Club meets on Monday and Wednesday evenings 7 to 9.30 p.m. and all visitors who are in any way interested in the welfare of the youth of the village will be made very welcome.

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Air Raid Precautions.

Crouching under the crumbling structure of an economic system which starves men in the midst of plenty, the world catches the first faint rumblings of another Armageddon.

Shrinking from such a prospect, we try to reassure ourselves by arguing that science has already made war—at any rate a long war—quite impossible.

Some time ago Mr. Baldwin told the House of Commons that even in the last war we knew of two inventions so terrible that we forebore to use them. Other men such as Professor Haldane and Lord Halsbury, describe gases that will slay millions of civilians in a few days, and taking comfort from such utterances we try to believe that war is now too terrible a thing to happen.

But is this true? I am afraid not. If the peace of the world is broken, all the signs point to another war of attrition even longer and more gruelling than the last.

Consider first the question of air raids. Bombing machines now carry bombs weighing from half-a-ton to two tons. The effect of such bombs if dropped on a town would naturally be serious, but I cannot agree that the whole of London would be reduced to ruins in the first week. Although Germany made tremendous efforts in the last war to attack London by air, the actual damage done was negligible. Even if in another war fifty times the amount of high explosives were dropped on London, the damage would not be too devastating.

It must be remembered that defensive weapons develop at roughly the same rate as offensive ones. If huge enemy bombers carrying tons of bombs came over from the Continent they could not entirely escape attack by our modern high speed fighting machines.

One of the commonest of modern alarms is that germ bombs dropped from aircraft would wipe out huge areas and so bring war to an end in a few weeks or months.

This is hardly probable. If a box of germs the size of a house could somehow be scattered over London—and it would be an almost impossible feat—the increase in the effective number of germs in the London air might scarcely be noticeable. To do any damage at all, germs would have to be concentrated in

small areas. But what sort of germs could be used? Apart from the extreme probability of killing the germs in the process of scattering them from an aeroplane, only a very few cultures would be suitable for use; and it is a fact that tests conducted under conditions suitable for bacteria are seldom those applicable to the conditions of war.

Probably those which poison water would offer the greatest chance of success, but even with these prospects, it is not entirely encouraging.

Recently it was found that a sewerage affluent had been discharging into one of the big reservoirs. Yet although this had been going on for some time the casualties resulting from it were comparatively small.

So, too, the dangers of poison gas are perhaps a little exaggerated. There are one or two poisons, such as Lewisite and hydrocyanic acid gas, which could now be used, but so far as I know there has been nothing discovered quite so terrible as a gas which under every day conditions could wipe out populations by the hundred thousands.

It has been stated by eminent Chemists that the only gas which is really convenient in use is so heavy that a combination of weather and other conditions are required which limits its power as a weapon to a marked degree.

On the other hand respirators have improved out of all recognition. As far as gas and gas preventatives go, honours are easy.

In view of such a situation arising the Government have been tackling the problem and Local Authorities throughout the country have been asked to assist in this scheme of air raid precautions.

A Public Meeting was convened on Monday, 18th January, 1937, and it is not necessary here to give any details, but it is emphasised that air raid precautions must be set in motion without delay, and in this direction, the Hon. Organiser, Mr. L. Robertson, requires volunteers. All information can be had from the Leatherhead Urban District Council, Council Offices, Leatherhead.

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The Bookhams Social Service Bureau The Year's Work

During the past twelve months, the Bureau, as in previous years, has carried on a quiet and unobtrusive work of alleviating in various ways cases of distress that have come under notice.

In the Spring there were several such cases, but fortunately Bookhams is now sharing in the brighter outlook. Even so, during the last month three cases of poverty have appealed for help, and upon investigation were found to be both necessitous and deserving, and the little help at the moment which means so much was forthcoming. It is not possible of course, to give details, but it may be mentioned that including the Christmas distributions a total of almost £23 was dispensed during the year, in many cases letters of gratitude testifying how acceptable the help has been.

1935 Last Christmas owing to generosity from various sources mentioned in the February "Bulletin" for 1936, the distribution was larger than usual. No doubt this year, if necessary, similar generosity would have been forthcoming, as it was, 15 gifts of coal or groceries have been made, and coal to an additional ten recipients, by the kindness of Mrs. Allen.

The Milk Fund for needy children at the School has always been a feature of the Bureau's work. Last Spring owing to representation from the Bureau, the Council went into the matter, and the Medical Officer stated that 14 children were in need of extra nutriment. It was decided this could best be given by means of milk, to be supplied at the School, and the Bureau made a grant of £6 towards the cost.

The Committee suffered a severe loss when Miss Gilham left Bookham at the end of April, and she was much missed by the wide circle to whom she had so frequently given her services and sympathy. We are glad to say that Sister Alicia has very kindly consented to fill the breach and has undertaken the work of visiting. The Leatherhead Urban Council has granted the use of a room at the Barn Hall on Wednesday mornings so that Sister Alicia will have a convenient centre for receiving applicants for help and advice.

The Committee lost another valuable helper and a well known public worker, when Mrs. A. Chesterfield left the District.

Mrs. Westendarp kindly consented to take

(Continued at foot of next column)

The Bookhams Bowling Club

Some local Organisations bemoan the fact that they cannot obtain anything like a fair attendance of Members at their Annual General Meeting, but that is not the case with the Bowling Club, which is a lusty infant, now three years old. Last year and this, the attendance has amounted to about two-thirds of the Membership, and on both occasions there was only routine business to discuss.

It only goes to show the great interest Members take in their Club.

Early in January the Third Annual General Meeting was held and it took an hour-an-a-half to discuss the past and make preparations for the future.

Messrs. H. Allen, P.G. Everett and R. Andrews were re-elected as President, Hon. Treasurer, and Hon. Secretary respectively. Mr. Hall was elected Hon. Assistant Treasurer, Mr. G. A. Fuller was re-elected Captain and Mr. Masterman Vice-Captain. The elected Committee were Messrs. F. Barford, J. Beattie, J. Greathurst, E. C. Hall, P. W. Locke, J. Peto and Mrs. I. Williams, the Chairman of which will be Mr. E. C. Hall. Mr. A. Longhurst was re-elected Green Ranger.

The members are looking forward to the Annual Supper on February 3rd, which is the special event of the year, when besides the usual fare and entertainment, the Prize Distribution of two Silver Trophies and twenty-one Silver Spoons won in competitions will take place.

Winter bowls was a subject that also came under discussion, and some new members paid their subscriptions. There is still room for more, and anyone desirous of joining should visit the Barn Hall on Wednesday or Saturday evening, when a cordial welcome will be extended.

Tempus fugit verily! In the last issue of the "Bulletin" we spoke of the beginning of the winter games, in the next issue it is hoped to deal with the commencement of the summer play.—R.A.

her place on the Committee, and Mr. Morris of the Ratepayers' Association has also been co-opted.

The Bureau appeals for continued assistance in money, clothing, etc., to enable it to continue its work during the current year. Gifts such as cast-off clothing are always welcome and may be sent at any time to Mrs. Jackson in the High Street.—R.T.

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Civic Notes—II.

By "Mitre"

RATES. How often have you heard, if you have not said it yourself, that rates are an intolerable burden, out of all proportion to the benefit received. You look on the back of your rate demand and see that more than a shilling in the pound is required for education, although you may have no children going to School. Why can't we pay for what we get, you ask? So much a week for school, and a shilling in the slot for street lighting. The principle of benefit as received, however, is impossible as a main basis of local taxation. The benefit cannot always be measured and allocated. Further, many services are required by persons unable to pay for them and it is the duty—and to their benefit—that such services should be provided by the Local Authority.

Contribution according to ability to pay is the principle basis of local taxation and is undoubtedly the fairest method. Ability to pay is assessed according to the rental value of the real property, lands, buildings occupied, as laid down in the Rating & Valuation Act, 1925. This is not quite so fair, because the poorer a person is the greater the proportion of rent to income, and the richer a person is the smaller the proportion of rent to income, thus the poorer the person, the more per pound of his income he pays in rates. Looking at the question from another point of view, why should a tiny office used by a Stockbroker or Diamond Merchant, where he may make fabulous profits, be rated less than a large warehouse, hotel or show-rooms where the profits are likely to be on a smaller scale?

The actual assessment of rental value gives rise to further injustice on account of lack of uniformity in the standard of rating. A low-rated district will not pay its due proportion of the County Rate, while a highly-rated district will pay more than its share. The lack of uniformity has been largely due to the non-compliance with the strict interpretation of the Act of 1925, whereby nett annual value should be rental value. To achieve uniformity, the Central and County Valuations Committees have been active during recent quinquennial re-valuations, and the present prospect is another general increase in values at the next re-valuation in 1939. No alarm need be felt if this rise in

assessments was met by a corresponding reduction in rates in the pound levied by the Local Authority. It is to be feared that the Local Authority, being a spending authority, would be disinclined to reduce their expenditure once the money was obtained by means of increased values. There is no effective control over local expenditure except the unwieldy method of democracy, the ballot box. It should also be remembered that increased local assessments will have a corresponding effect on Schedule A., Income Tax and Water charges.

The system of rating by reference to rental value, although not absolutely just, is retained by reason of its convenience and because there is no really practicable alternative. The only serious rival is a system of local income tax, which would be too costly and unwieldy to administer. Grants from the Exchequer for specific purposes, e.g., roads, education, as well as in aid of the rates generally, help to alleviate the iniquities between classes of property and between rich and poor which may predominate in a particular district. But it is not advisable that such a system of grants in aid from a central source should be extended unduly, with its destruction of local independence.

Critics are therefore invited to concentrate their attention on the total expenditure of Local Authorities and leave the rating system alone.

Bookhams Ratepayers Association

The Annual General Meeting of this Association will be held on Friday, February 26th, in the Barn Hall, at 8.15 p.m. Every ratepayer in the district is invited to attend and to ventilate any matter connected with the locality.

Any person wishing to become a member—and every ratepayer *should* be a member—is asked to communicate with Mr. R. Bishop, "Jonod," Dowlans Road (Phone Bookham 465).

Forthcoming Events

Ratepayers' Association.

Whist Drive, 23rd February.

Whist Drive, 16th March.

British Legion, Effingham & Bookhams Branch
6th February—S.E. Area Conference at Westminster.

10th April—Surrey County Conference at Merstham.

Further information regarding Dances, etc., from Legion Hall, Lower Road, Effingham.

Unemployment Assistance Board

In April, 1937, the Unemployment Assistance Act will come into operation, and the following summary may be of some interest to meet the future needs.

Special Needs.—Lord Rushcliffe emphasised that although the Regulations provided a general standard approved by Parliament which must guide the Board, they also give full powers to the Board and its Officers to exercise discretion so as to meet the special circumstances of an individual case. Any need, except medical needs arising in the household of an applicant, could be met by the Board without any arbitrary limits, and it will be the duty of the Board's Officers to meet those needs where they find them, whether or not the applicant had specially asked for the needs to be met. The Board will welcome the co-operation of other bodies engaged in the question of relieving unemployment, in bringing to light genuine cases which are not at present receiving the help that the Board's instructions shall enable them to have.

Army Reserve Pay.—In cases where the Reservist is an applicant, half the Reserve Pay only will be brought into account. In cases where Reserve Pay is received by a member of an applicant's household, a new concession will be made, in that the whole of the Reserve Pay will be allowed for the personal requirements of the Reservist.

Service Pensions.—There is a real difficulty in principle in ignoring any payment from Public Funds to the applicant himself. At the same time if as a result of bringing the service pension into account against the applicant's needs, the determination would no doubt produce hardship, the applicant will be able to go to the Appeal Tribunal or the individual case can be brought to the attention of the Board as in the preceding paragraph. In cases of Service Pensions drawn by a member of an applicant's household, new instructions will be issued which provide for the person possessing a pension shall have an allowance for personal requirements equal to the scale rate under the regulations, plus one-third of the amount of the pension.

War Widows and Dependents' Pensions.—A further concession will provide that the first 30/- of any War Widows or Dependents' Pension will be allowed for the personal requirements of the Pensioner and her dependent children, if any. This will cover the great majority of Widows' Pensions which are normally at the rate of 20/- to 26/8 a week, but cases where the pension is

in excess of 30/-, will be examined on their merits.

War Disability Pensions.—The Statute will provide that the first 20/- of a disabled man's personal pension shall be disregarded. The Act will not permit the Board to treat wives' or children's allowances in the same way as the pension belonging to the Pensioner himself, but it will be found in practice that reasonable treatment will be given to individual cases. In cases of badly disabled men receiving more than 20/- a week, it was quite possible that the disability would involve the Pensioner in specially heavy expenses, and instructions will be issued that regard shall be paid to such expenses in dealing with that part over 20/- a week.

Middle-aged Applicants, living alone in Lodgings.—It is not proposed generally to reduce existing allowances where an applicant living alone in lodgings is over 55 years of age, unless there are available resources which materially affect the assessment. In practice the age limit of 55 would not be rigidly applied in such cases.

Earnings of Sons and Daughters living at Home.—The marked improvement in the treatment of earnings which the new Regulations provide as compared with the old ones, expresses the hope that with sensible administration no legitimate excuse would be offered to sons and daughters to leave home because of the Board's administration of the "means test".

In the event of any difficulty arising regarding application under Unemployment Assistance Act, the Local Labour Exchange will always furnish information, or in the case of any ex-Service man, the Employment Officer of the local Branch of the British Legion will be pleased to assist.

Coronation Celebrations in the Bookhams

An enthusiastic Committee is working hard in preparation of a comprehensive programme of festivities for 12th May next. Helpers are welcome, and Mr. R. Bishop the Hon. Secretary will also be glad to receive any suggestions you care to make.

In view of the smallness of the grant from the Leatherhead Council, outside subscriptions will be necessary, and these should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Griffin, The School House, Great Bookham.

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Carnival Procession on Coronation Day in the Bookhams

The procession will form up in Church Road, by Sole Farm Road, and proceed through High Street and Dorking Road, to the Recreation Ground, where judging will take place. There will be four classes as follows :—

1. Tableaux (mounted on Vehicles or Foot). These will be provided by the various organisations in the district, and will illustrate episodes in the history of the Bookhams, or some specific idea like "Peace."
2. Decorated private cars.
3. Tradesmen's decorated vehicles.
4. Children's decorated bicycles, tricycles, scooters, etc.

Prizes will be awarded in each class, points being given for originality, artistry and skill.

The Committee hope, with the co-operation of the Tradesmen and others on line of route to decorate the streets in a uniformly tasteful manner. Further information may be obtained from Mr. L. G. Rose, "Heatherdene", Grove Side, (Telephone Bookham 258), or Mr. R. Bishop, "Jonod," Dowlans Road, (Telephone Bookham 465).

Wild Flowers Found in the Bookhams

Our Primrose well deserves its name (Primæ Rosæ—the first rose), for though in the fields the daisy may have preceded it, it is the first of the woodland flowers even in February.

This blossom is commonly described as sulphur-coloured, but as a distinguished botanist remarked "the colour of the flower is so peculiar as to have a name of its own, artists maintaining that primrose-colour is a delicate green." Even the Poet Edmund Spenser characterised its tint.

The flower is usually in full bloom in woods and on banks from March till May. It is left untouched by cattle, not one of the primrose family being relished by animals except pigs.

Years ago, the petals of the primrose were gathered by the country people and made into an ointment, which though highly prized in villages could not have been a remedy of very great power.

The leaves of the primrose as well as the stems and flower-cups are sprinkled with a fine white powder having a musky odour.—A.P.

Let's see what's on!

Will Secretaries please note, it is no use complaining to other people if their Fixtures do not appear in the "Bookhams Bulletin." Those Organisations who want their items included should communicate with the Editor, "St. Jean," Crabtree Lane, or Telephone Bookham 399.

REGULAR WEEKLY FIXTURES.

Sundays—

Brotherhood, 3 p.m. (Congregational Hall).

Mondays—

Women's Thrift Club.

Coal and Clothing Club, 12 p.m. (School).

Women's Fellowship, 2.30 p.m. (Church House)

Women's Meeting, 3 p.m. (Congregational Church Parlour).

Women's Own, 3 p.m. (Baptist Hall).

Girls' Life Brigade Cadets, 5.30 p.m. (Baptist Hall).

Junior Club, 7 p.m. (Church House).

Boys' Brigade, 7.15 p.m. (Baptist Hall).

Girls' Friendly Society & Girls' Club, 7.30 p.m. (Church House).

Bookham Choral Society, 8 p.m. (Congregational Church).

Rovers, 8.15 p.m. (Scout Hut).

Little Bookham Boys' Club, 7 to 9.30 p.m.

Tuesdays—

Life Boys, 6 p.m. (Baptist Hall).

Blue Birds, 6.30 p.m. (Congregational Hall).

Camp Fire Girls, 7.30 p.m. (Congregational Hall).

Young Men's Club, 7.30 p.m. (Church House)

Wednesdays—

The White Ribbon Band of Hope. Last Wednesday in each month at Congregational Church, from 6.30 till 8 p.m.

Little Bookham Boys' Club, 7 to 9.30 p.m.

Thursdays—

Cubs, 5.30 p.m. (Scout Hut).

Girls' Life Brigade, 6 p.m. (Baptist Hall).

Scouts, 8 p.m. (Scout Hut).

Young Men's Club, 7.30 p.m. (Church House)

Bookham Women's Constitutional Association Monthly Meetings at the Barn Hall.

First Thursday in the month at 3 p.m.

Fridays—

Brownies, 4.30 p.m. (Scout Hut).

Girl Guides, 6.30 p.m. (Scout Hut).

Rangers, 7.45 p.m. (Scout Hut).

Good Companions Club, 8 p.m. (Barn Hall)

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