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Organ of the Bookhams Social Service Bureau

No. 46

MARCH 1945

One Penny

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Editorial

Insecurity has always been a decisive factor in the value of human existence, leading to despair, loss of moral values and a strong tendency towards class hatred. This mood was very prevalent during the years of depression and unemployment and it was not until a second world war came upon us that a general feeling towards a better social system gradually evolved, and although there has been some improvement in the general standard of living among the workers, there is as yet, much to be done for the old age pensioners, the widows and the war & industrial disabled.

It is well known that in the case of old age pensions, a supplementary pension is available providing that the means of the pensioner satisfies the authorities. This also applies to the widow, but the scale of allowances in respect of any children is far below any monetary grant to be able to feed and clothe the children. In the cases of the disabled, except for certain classes of severe disablement, there is no supplementation.

These few facts are evidence of insecurity, and should the Social Insurance Bill become law, the position of these classes of persons

will not materially change for the better, unless new legislation is enacted by Parliament. This matter must receive attention, but by whom?

Most other classes of the community have been taken care of thro' recent government measures—the school children, under the new Education Act, 1944; service men and women, embodied under the Re-instatement of Employment Act, 1944; the disabled, under the Disabled Persons Employment Act, 1944.

There is, of course, the Unemployment Assistance Act, 1938, which provides supplementation, and it is suggested that some basic action be taken by local organisations to put forward the case of these persons to the local Member of Parliament.

Such steps that could be taken with the ultimate objective of being placed upon the Statute Book would ensure security.

It is pleasing to note that for certain types of machinery and tools the control has been lifted. It is hoped that by this release the Department concerned will improve the needs of the housewife.

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Is This Your Concern?

In the House of Commons on January 16th, the second reading of the Wages Councils Bill was passed. This is nothing new in the annals of Parliamentary history, but an extension of previous Acts relating to Wages Boards, for upon this subject the Trade Boards Act was introduced in 1909. Subsequently the Trade Boards Provisional Orders Confirmation Act followed in 1913, and finally the Trade Boards and Road Haulage Wages (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1940.

It is recognised that such Acts of Parliament clearly indicate the necessity of Government control in the matter of wages, but does this go far enough in the cases of occupations outside this Bill? Such levels of wages set up as a general standard in industry cannot be fully appreciated until there is a full recovery in our overseas markets, this being a matter of immediate concern not only to the overseas trader, but also to the consumer.

The question of the nationalisation of the land put forward in the policy of the Labour Party, has given rise to much comment. The pros and cons of such a situation arising are too lengthy to set out here, but what would be the effect upon the person who after years of saving for the purchase of land to build his house, and later finds he is a national tenant?

Would he be compensated upon the same terms as laid down in the Town Planning Act? As owner-occupier the answer is no! Maybe he would be better off in receiving say £2 a week under some social security plan? So much is said about the four freedoms and "the Englishman's castle is his home," that if land was nationalised then "the Englishman's home will be a castle in Spain."

The Representation of the People Act should give greater facilities for the use of the vote, not only in Parliamentary but also for Local Government, and in view of the extension of the franchise, those entitled to use their votes in matters relating to Local Government should be free from political bias. No party politics should be the anvil upon which the benefit of the Urban District should be hammered. It may seem that the subject of Local Government Elections is premature, but in these days of rapidly moving events, one should keep abreast of current events whether they be local or national.

No confusion must exist about the loosely applied term "the working class people." Whoever is gainfully occupied is a working class person, and even those who have retired, either through age or have been pensioned, still remain part of this over-rated term.

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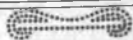
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The Forces & Families and Ex-Service

The work concerning the welfare of our Fighting Services is, alas, little known, and although the greater part is in the hands of the Service departments, it has been found essential that the Incorporated Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Help Society should bear a great part in the work, particularly as it is now responsible for the welfare of Service Women even to the extent of obtaining hostesses for women on leave. It works in very close co-operation with the S.S. & A. Families Association who provide assistance to the dependants and families of fighting services.

The services rendered by these two organisations have been of immense benefit in a hundred and one ways, from providing a home for a dog when the man joined up to supplying dentures for the wife of a service man, and it is now possible to provide travelling vouchers to allow service wives to visit their children in hospital.

The work must of necessity continue, and realising the ever increasing calls upon the funds, a national appeal—"Forces and Families Day" will be launched in September. Leatherhead Division will urgently need sellers for this occasion, and the Divisional Secretary, Surrey House, Church St., will be grateful for any help. It is appreciated the many calls one

has, but the work of the Help Society and Families Association must carry on.

The work of the British Legion continues its responsibilities on behalf of ex-service men and women, such matters as pensions, employment, convalescent treatment, etc. are first considerations.

Apart from the benevolent side of the Legion's work there is the social side for the arrangement of various sports competitions, etc. Many branches throughout the country have their own premises, not merely as a meeting place in which to while away the time over a friendly glass, but to keep alive the spirit of comradeship which was first kindled in the war of 1914-18 and now being passed on by our younger comrades in a new spirit of Service—not self.

Those ex-service men not in the British Legion should see the Branch Secretary of the district in which he lives:

Ashted: Mr. B. J. Jackson,
Denehurst, West Farm Avenue

Bookham & Effingham:
Mr. W. A. Muggerridge,
St. Jean, Crabtree Lane.

Fetcham: Mr. W. Watson,
Rylston, Cobham Road.

Leatherhead: Mr. A. Lovett,
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A Matter of Conscience

"Little Chats"—fictitious, yes, but not wholly imaginary—have at times been reproduced in these pages to show how Savings-minded different sections of our general public were becoming. This chatter was intended, like a certain radio feature, "to start you talking," then saving, and eventually savings-working. There is need for more workers. As the backbone of the British Army has always consisted of N.C.O.'s, so the Group Secretaries (sometimes called collectors) form the backbone of the great centrally controlled Savings army.

Bookham and Fetcham Savings workers recently met socially at a new year party at Fetcham Village Hall. Gaiety and frolic alternated with gravity and figures. Competitions wore a Savings complexion. It was announced that both Wards had, thanks to the sustained efforts of group secretaries, succeeded in reaching their "Maintain our Men" objectives for the period June-December. Bookham had similarly maintained its two Beaufighters last winter.

£40950 was the amount saved in 1944 by members of Bookham's 37 Savings groups—an advance of nearly £5000 on 1943. This brings to £137080 Bookham's total group Savings since the modest opening of the campaign with 7 groups in February, 1940. In recalling these

early efforts we must not deflect our gaze from the tasks ahead. "We've got to keep on Saving"! This injunction confronts us as a challenge. There must be no faltering. As the Prime Minister has said, "This is just the moment not to slacken . . . the duty of all persons is to help the fighting man." It is a responsibility that rests on all of us. We are all in this war, and it is not yet won—it is very much ON. Vast reconstruction will follow it, and continued savings out of income will be necessary to meet the cost of feeding the starving, healing the sick, restoring trade, re-building our cities. The National Savings Movement will prove of infinite value in ensuring benefits to coming generations. It is our present efforts that matter, and our rising generation will, we hope play a great part in it.

At the Annual General Meeting of Bookham Ward Savings Committee which will be held at the Baptist Hall on Wednesday, March 14th, at 8 p.m., you will hear a review of the past and plans for the future. A special speaker from the National Savings Committee will "brief" us for future "operations." Musical & dramatic items will also be presented during the evening. See special bills and posters.—G.

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A Woman's Work

At a Nottingham matrimonial court recently a man complained about his wife doing too much work, stating that she rose at 7.30 a.m. and until sometimes 2 a.m. the following day she was working all the time. There were 13 people in the house including two other women, and his wife did all the work. When questioned by the magistrate about the complaint the woman replied "I love work." The age of the man was 19 and the woman 20. The case was adjourned for a month in order that the probation officer should intervene. This case seems to run counter to the old poem running "men must work and women must weep," but apart from the fact that the woman in this particular instance was apparently recently married and seemed to be very happy in the station of a housewife. Wouldn't the everyday married woman admit generally that the work she did took up all her time?

Conditions were certainly easier for the housewife just previous to the war than they were some 40 or 50 years ago, and some of us remember the soap manufacturer's question printed on their cartons, "Why does a woman look old sooner than a man? and the answer that it was partly owing to the husband not having to do the family washing.

Of course during war time one must make allowances for standing in queues and having to fetch

goods from the tradesmen instead of having them delivered, and in the country this trouble is very often accentuated by the distance from the shops. By the bye there is a yarn about a woman who following her usual practice of joining up in any queue, found one day when she reached the head after a long period of waiting that the shopkeeper was selling razor blades!

This subject of the housewife's work is a reminder of another old saying, viz.: "a woman's work is never done," but isn't it? To the mere man who has married a house-proud spouse, there must seem an unjustifiable amount of time taken up with certain finicky details of little or no consequence except to the woman. This reminds the writer of a yarn where the boot was somewhat on the other foot. A certain woman who believed in going 50-50 with her retired husband in the housework (but managed to keep herself well within 25 per cent.) reproved him for not having dusted the furniture and referred to the dust on the piano in which, she alleged, she could write her name. The crest-fallen husband, who had only just previously been through a gruelling time with her on some other item, was at a loss to explain this omission, but in tendering an apology brightened up considerably by telling her "That was one of the advantages of education"!

In the days of the political emancipation of women, the leaders thought that by obtaining

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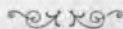
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the vote, women generally might take an active interest in politics, but even now it is calculated that a woman generally (if she votes at all) makes her cross against the same name as her husband.

Again, for years past labour-saving devices have been invented so that women's work should be eased, and it seems strange that a complaint as mentioned at the commencement of this article should be put forward today. As the chairman of the magistrates justly remarked, "Not many men complain that their wives do too much housework."

Note.—With the exception of the magistrates & the complaining husband and his wife, all characters mentioned in this article are fictitious.—R.A.

George and Bob, the Country Gardeners

Cheerio, Bob! Once again the time has come for hard work in the garden and allotments, not that I mean there has been an easy time, as its all work if you do the job properly, and to get good results you've just got to do every job properly. Now is the time when plans must be made where and when to plant your seeds from which we hope to reap the 1945 harvest.

Yes, George, and my advice is don't be too hasty in sowing the tender vegetable seeds such as carrots. I always think the first week in April is the best time for early horn carrots, and mid-July for main crop. Parsnip, onion and summer cabbage seed should go in in the order mentioned. Hollow crown parsnip, while for ordinary cropping onions I like the white Bedford Champion or James Keeping; but if for showing then Ailsa Crag or Golden Globe, or a Zitta type.

There's one thing, Bob, that quite a number of people don't seem to understand yet, and that is that the garden is like a human body and needs feeding with a good dressing of manure plus a liberal dressing of artificial or National Growmore or other commercial compounds, of at least 2ozs. to the square yard. No one can expect to get good crops year

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after year without feeding the ground. It just can't be done.

Now a word of advice, George, to order your seed potatoes as soon as you can, as deliveries are sure to be late and I know that seed will be scarce. Quite a lot of people are content to let the farmers grow potatoes, but I say grow your own. The lessons of 1943-4 should be clear enough for all to understand. We have found potatoes difficult to obtain in January, February and March, so I suggest planting a late variety such as Majestic, Dunbar Standard or Gladstone, where the soil is suitable for the latter. Gladstone gives a medium size potato which keeps well, so don't expect to get large ones from this variety. Another thing I advise you to do is to order your tomato plants early, although I think there will be plenty of these.

I quite agree with all you've said, Bob, and how about a bit of colour in the garden? I hear the flower seed situation has improved a little and we should be able to get a few plants of Asters, Stocks, Salvia, etc. from our local nurseryman, as well as seeds for these and other well loved flowers. Again I would say order early, as stocks may still not be sufficient to meet all demands for a season or two.

Yes, George, but let's come to something to eat. You know I think runner beans and the dwarf beans are a good investment and

one of the best dishes I like to see on the dinner table. These both like plenty of moisture, so I always advise people to plant them so that its easy to water the roots and spray the flowers if we get a dry spell, when as much as half the crop can easily be spoilt by lack of moisture.

Talking of runner beans, Bob, do you know there's quite a lot of of folks who still don't preserve them for after-season use, perhaps because they think its a big job, but its very simple; all they have to do is to pick them fairly young and then shred them as for cooking, place in a wide-mouthed glass jar with alternate layers of beans and salt, and when fully packed cover over as for jam, and they'll come out for use as fresh as when grown, making a very pleasant change from cabbage.

Well, don't let us forget the salads, George. A really good lettuce wants beating, so prepare a spot for these. I recommend All the Year Round, Webb's wonderful, cabbage varieties, or a self folding variety such as Little Gem. The latter in my opinion is the best on the market for sweetness and crispness.

Well, they say live and learn, and we learn from each other as we chat. Now we're all looking forward to an early peace, and I hope we shall then still keep our gardens producing food, as there is none to equal our own growing.

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