

meetings. There is still time to get more signatures before the Petition is presented, and forms for this purpose can be obtained of Miss Morgan, Buckingham Place, Brecon.

The National British Women's Temperance Association federated to the World's W.C.T.U., will hold its National Council meetings the same week. Many women are expected to attend as delegates, and the foreign representatives, who will this year be present, will make the occasion one of great interest and significance in the progress of temperance reform.

A special vessel has been chartered by Dr. Lunn to bring American delegates.

Burning Questions.

THE CRY OF ISHMAEL.

MADAM,—I take up my pen with some diffidence to answer the questions concerning the bitter cry of the illegitimate child, so ably put by one "Anne Belasyse." It appears to me a question which it is the duty of all women to face, and also to try and answer, because it is one which puts our so-called civilisation to hot shame.

I will answer the six questions of your correspondent as briefly as possible.

It is not possible to subordinate the natural law to any human law.

Moral law must be founded on justice.

The laws of so-called civilised nations concerning the illegitimate child are unjust.

The force which will compel the adjustment of these laws will spring from the duty a mother owes to her child.

It is not only the young and the poor who suffer under this false ban of illegitimacy. How about the well educated, sensitive man or woman, who is brought up in ignorance of the ban and discovers it after a pure and innocent youth? I call to mind the story of a friend. I was the parson's daughter, brought up, in a certain sense, in awe and respect of the great man and his wife who lived at the Hall. Here grew up in loving unity two sons, the one some five years senior to his brother; the elder a noble boy, proud and gracious, of strong and dominant spirit; the younger a gentle youth, imbued with adoration and admiration for the strong elder brother. The years passed, the boys grew to manhood; the hand of the reaper, Death, gathered in by flood and field several lives intervening between these young men and a title and broad lands. I was a girl at the time, and well remember my father being sent for to the Hall, and the terrible pallor of his sweet old face upon his return, as he walked up our pathway to the porch. "Unto the third

and fourth generation," he was repeating softly to himself.

"An unjust law; dear Father! a bitter, unjust law."

And then he told me of the terrible scene which he had witnessed. The family lawyer, the father and mother, the two gallant lads, the news that the father was heir to titles and wealth, his despair, the cry of the stricken woman, the anguish of the eldest born, when, after all the years, it was made known to him that he was born out of wedlock, and could not inherit his father's honours—that he, the beloved first-born, must stand aside, branded for life, suffering for the sins of his parents, or for the terrible injustice of a selfish law, made for the protection of those who need it not.

I remember when father had had his tea, how I, restless and heartbroken, fled from the house, out into the wood close by, and how I threw myself upon the earth and wept, and how the hours passed, and the summer moon came out, and how, when creeping listlessly home, I met this broken son of Hagar, and how I took his hand and cried out against this iniquitous law, made by man and devils, and which God and woman have yet to revoke. These things are the memories of thirty years ago, and we women are only now slowly awakening to the primary duty of the sex—the right to demand equality before the law for our own children, male and female. I am, yours truly,

"THE WIFE OF ISHMAEL."

MADAM,—Allow me to thank you sincerely for having inserted the powerful and dramatic letter on the above subject in last week's RECORD. It is treated in a manner with which most Nurses would be in sympathetic accord with the writer. Nurses of all women are brought most into relation with bitter human truths and helpless mother suffering. At some future time I would like to deal with the legal position of the illegitimate child and his unhappy mother, but at present I have time only to jot down a few ideas which occur to me of the factors in life which materially help to make the condition of these poor outcasts a dark spot on the horizon of our civilisation.

Mr. Horsley, that splendid champion of the prisoner, when asked to give his views as to what tended most to the demoralisation of the people and consequent criminality, if I remember rightly, said (1) the British Parent (2) the Respectability of the Church.

I propose to deal with the second factor he suggested as making for the production of criminals.

In a village where I recently stayed I had

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