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ETHEL GORDON FENWICK, S.R.N., HON. EDITOR 1888—1947.

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Editorial.

The Power of Redemption.

IT MAY BE REMEMBERED that in a recent issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, attention was drawn to the widespread alarm aroused by the increasing number of convictions for child neglect, and that concerning the question of how best to deal with this vital question—The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Goddard, had referred to the suggestion of the Bishop of Lichfield that instead of imprisonment, which got nowhere “the Tuition of Mothers” was the best way to deal with this terrible problem.

It is not surprising to find that the Salvation Army, with its tradition for the redemption of the fallen, should for the past four years have been carrying out such a scheme for the tuition of those mothers who have appeared before the Courts for child neglect.

We feel sure, therefore, that our readers will be greatly interested and, indeed thankful, to know that this splendid work is now going forward, under the management of the Women's Social Work of the Salvation Army at Mayflower, Plymouth, where we were recently privileged to visit.

On our arrival at Plymouth, it did not take long to find the very pretty way up Seymour Road past charming dwellings, leading to the top of the hill, where the gateway into Mayflower was reached.

A little way along the drive a path lead off to the right by the lawn, which we followed until we found ourselves on the terrace and at the main entrance of the, well proportioned residence of Mayflower, where we were most cordially welcomed by Snr. Major Newcombe (the Matron).

Immediately conducted through the tiled and spacious hall, we entered Major Newcombe's office, when she kindly explained some of the detail of the work. Very soon there came a very hospitable interlude when the Home Mother (the officer responsible for the domestic department) kindly brought, and joined us, at tea—so refreshing in this bright and pleasant room. At “Mayflower” there is accommodation for nine mothers and eighteen to twenty children under five years of age. The object of the training is to teach these mothers how to run a home and care for their children. The cases admitted are primarily those mothers who have been before the Courts and who, convicted of their first offence of child neglect, are sentenced to do four months' training in “Mother Tuition” instead of being sent to prison and separated from their children or otherwise punished.

There are six resident-staff—Major Newcombe, the Matron; the Senior Home Mother; the Warden; and

three junior Salvation Army officers; two daily helpers. The visiting doctor is within easy call. Major Newcombe considered that child neglect was due to various causes such as adverse circumstances, ill health, having too many children in too short a period, but the most common cause of all was gross ignorance!

In a kindly, realistic way, this team of devoted workers thoroughly train these mothers in how to clean, wash, cook, sew, and care for their children night and day, in a methodical manner. The mothers therefore have to clean all their own quarters.

The Family Life Routine.

The children sleep and feed with their mothers. Starting on a tour of this homely, spacious house, brought us first to the mothers' dining room, a fine oak panelled room with many windows, here for nine families, nine tables—one for each mother and her children, where she sees to the feeding of her children (four children for one family is the limit admitted). After breakfast every morning all meet for prayers. Every evening at 6 o'clock, the women bath their children—so irksome! until they have learned how, and see the result—then it becomes a pleasure! We learn that despite their apathy and fecklessness, these mothers have a deep affection for their children.

To continue our tour—still on the ground floor—comes the children's play-room with wide sunny balcony, which leads into the babies' nursery, with cots and rest stretchers for after-dinner rest; then a well-equipped infants' toilet and lavatory—here is a row of nine white enamelled pails, with covers, for holding dirty clothes which are not allowed to lie about, and must be washed daily. There is the mothers' ablution room, the children's bath room, the mothers' lounge, where, we learn, two voluntary welfare workers—retired teachers from the Board of Education—give the mothers lectures on general education; and fortnightly a health visitor gives instruction on child care. Every Friday a voluntary worker teaches sewing, how to mend and make do, and how to make new garments. Then we came to the main kitchen, fitted with a fine Esse stove, where cooking classes are given and the mothers cook their own meat for the next day. The hairdresser, another voluntary helper, comes monthly to see that the children's hair is in order.

Crossing a small court we come to the laundry, simply fitted with basins (hot and cold water), boiler and wringer, but no modern gadgets, as the mothers would not have them under their home conditions. We noticed a long line of fascinating babies' and children's garments, well laundered, in the airing-room.

Returning to the house there was the mothers' scullery for the washing up of the children's china (unbreakable ware and their own), the babies' kitchen, where the

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