

## OUTSIDE THE GATES.

### A NEW ADMINISTRATION.

The world seems to have been whirling around in double quick time since last we went to press. Then we were controlled by a Unionist Government—and now, with the support of the Liberals, Labour governs, with Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister. The organisation of the Labour Party was so perfect that in a few hours the whole Ministry was in office, and hard at work. Naturally with Ministers tripping down Whitehall at dawn, and with their noses to the grindstone by 10 a.m., there has been a considerable awakening amongst permanent officials. New brooms and dusters appear, by all reports, to be disturbing the microbe of leisure in every corner, and funnily enough, up went the price of stocks in the Conservative City of London!

We Registered Nurses are most intimately concerned with the Ministry of Health. (Here in spite of a regiment of "chars" the refreshing odours of soap and turpentine are never apparent); and for the fifth time since our Act was passed, in 1919, we have a new Minister of Health. Let us hope the new Minister will have some sympathy with the rank-and-file of the profession, and will listen to their

### THE FIRST WOMAN MINISTER.

The eight women Members of Parliament, a picture of whom, posed on the Terrace of the House of Commons, we present, are actively at work.

Miss Margaret Bondfield has been appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour, so will answer questions in the House of Commons for that Department. Miss Bondfield is the first woman Minister in this country. The following is a snapshot of her activities. Born in 1873. Secretary of the National Union of General Workers (Women Workers' Section), and chairman of the Trades Union Congress (which she has now resigned). Was delegate for the Congress to Russia in 1920. Assistant Secretary of the Shop Assistants' Union, 1898-1908. Was herself first a teacher and then a shop assistant. Labour Adviser to Labour Convention at Washington and Geneva under League of Nations. Member of Central Committee on Women's Training and Unemployment. Returned for Northampton at last General Election.

### MAIDEN SPEECHES.

Miss Susan Lawrence made her maiden speech in the House on January 16th. She regretted that there was no



THE EIGHT WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

Left to right—1. MISS DOROTHY JEWSON (LAB.), 2. MISS SUSAN LAWRENCE (LAB.), 3. VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U.), 4. MRS. WINTRINGHAM (LIB.), 5. THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL (U.) 6. MRS. HILTON PHILIPSON (U.), 7. LADY TERRINGTON (LIB.), 8. MISS MARGARET BONDFIELD (LAB.).

claim that *rights* conferred upon it by Parliament shall no longer be stultified by medical autocrats, who have seized absolute power in our Governing Body, the General Nursing Council, with the support of past Ministers of Health.

### NEW MINISTER OF HEALTH.

Mr. John Wheatley, Labour member for the Shettleston Division of Glasgow, has been appointed Minister of Health. He began his working life as a miner, and has been deeply interested in the all-important question of Housing, and is President of the Scottish Labour Housing Association. It is improbable that he has any extensive knowledge of Nursing and Midwifery, with which his Department has certain responsibilities in England. It will therefore be the duty of earnest nurses interested in the evolution of their valuable work for the benefit of the community to get into touch with him, and instruct him in their rights under the Nurses' Registration Acts. Mr. Wheatley knows from personal experience the pinch of poverty: he should sympathise with the rank and file of a very "suppressed" body of women workers, who have struggled long and courageously for liberty of conscience and action.

mention of education in the King's Speech. She criticised the action of the Board of Education in their action in regard to limiting the grants in respect of the provision of meals for necessitous children. Her speech was received with Labour cheers.

One of the most striking speeches delivered in the debate on the Labour "no confidence" motion was that of the Duchess of Atholl. She examined the Government's programme in detail. She referred to juvenile unemployment centres, and to the proposal for providing increased facilities for general and technical education. She concluded by declaring that the King's Speech was one which showed an understanding of many and varying sections of the people. She was heartily cheered on resuming her seat.

Miss Margaret Bondfield said her points had to do with the suffering amongst unemployed women, which she recognised was a small part of a very large problem. She complained that the Government had not made the most of their opportunities in dealing with the relief of unemployment among women. They had neglected schemes for training these women. Labour cheered her warmly.

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