

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., the new Prime Minister, soon got his Cabinet together, and it is remarkable for one innovation—he has for the first time offered Cabinet rank to a woman. Miss Margaret Bondfield has been made Minister of Labour, and can add Rt. Hon. to her name as well as M.P. This is a step forward, which has aroused great interest and satisfaction.

As the Ministry of Health is the Government Department most closely associated with the professional affairs of Registered Nurses, the majority of us welcome a new Minister at its head, and hope a more sympathetic understanding of our affairs may result from the change. The Rt. Hon. Arthur Greenwood, M.P., Member for Nelson and Colne, has been appointed to this very important office.

We warmly welcome Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P., as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, and hope she may find time to study nursing problems—so important are they in attaining high standards of public health.

Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P., has appointed Miss Ellen Wilkinson M.P., to be her Parliamentary Private Secretary.

The Marie Curie Cancer Hospital, which is exclusively for women, run by women, and named after a woman, is to be opened in Fitzjohn's Avenue, Hampstead, N.W. It is hoped it will be ready for work, in the autumn and opened by Mme. Curie, the discoverer—with her husband—of radium, and will be the first large radium clinic to be organised in this country by medical women.

Miss Elizabeth Scott, the architect who designed the Shakespeare memorial theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, is making the plans for the alteration of the house. The senior surgeons respectively of the South London Hospital for Women, the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, and the New Sussex Hospital, will be members of the medical staff.

The Annual Conference of the British Commonwealth League was recently held in London.

Miss Chave Collisson, Hon. Organiser of the League, who presided, submitted a resolution urging the Governments within the British Empire, in sending in their reports on nationality to the Preparatory Committee of the first Codification Conference of the League of Nations, to state that:—

"(a) There is a strong demand from women's organisations throughout the Empire that the law should give a woman the same right as a man to retain or to change her nationality.

"(b) That the British and Australian Parliaments have unanimously adopted resolutions in favour of a woman retaining her nationality on marriage with an alien, it to be open to her to make a declaration of alienage.

"(c) That many members of the Nationality Committee of the 1926 Imperial Conference were in favour of a change in the law which would provide for the British woman an opportunity of retaining her British nationality on marriage with an alien."

The proposal was carried.

At the recent meeting of the Council of the League of Nations held at Madrid, in connection with the White Slave traffic, the Secretary-General was instructed to communicate with Governments in the Near, Middle, and Far East, whose territories have not yet been visited by members of the League Commission, to ask whether they would consent to the extension of the inquiry into their dominions.

CHILD WELFARE.

Mr. Arthur Greenwood, M.P., the new Minister of Health and President of the Conference on Child Welfare, held in London last week, said that they had made in the last quarter of a century an astounding progress, as judged by the figures of infantile mortality, but he did not believe that they had done all that they could. Nor did he believe that the resources of existing legislation were being applied to the full. In the most enlightened areas there were still black spots which were offensive to public life. It was clear that the work which was being done in infant life was rendered less valuable because of the causes which lay before the birth of the child. Their work, therefore, was bound to look backwards to the mother and forward to the school child. They knew that, whatever might be the complex courses which had led to the large number of deaths in child-birth in the past, ante-natal care was bound to have a great influence in reducing the rate of maternal mortality. One of the problems to which he had given his attention in the last few weeks had been the care of the expectant mother and the care of the infant. He could not say very much at this stage, but he hoped that he might be privileged, before he left his present position, to do something to strengthen the health services relating to maternity and infant welfare; to improve the status and opportunities of the midwife; and to ensure that, so far as was humanly possible, the terrors of confinement should be removed from the mother. It had been difficult in so short a time to build up a comprehensive programme, but, so far as he could, he meant to leave his mark on the public health services.

Bad as social surroundings were in towns and villages it was still true that the vast majority of children were born normal and healthy, yet they could not keep them normal and healthy. Children who entered elementary schools had physical defects which should never have arisen. Work must be of a preventive character, and carried out with a wide vision. What was wanted was a continuous watching care in the interests of the community at large, and the first new big test, to which the conference had been devoting attention, was the question of children between the ages of one and five years. He spoke in high appreciation of the work which was being performed by local authorities and voluntary associations, but he did not believe that the value of that work was large enough. He considered, however, that in conferences of this kind enthusiasm was reborn and inspiration doubled.

COMING EVENTS.

July 11th.—The British College of Nurses. Annual Meeting of Fellows and Members. 3 p.m. Reception. 4.30-6.30 p.m. Headquarters on view.

July 11th.—St. Marylebone Infirmary. Distribution of Prizes to Probationer-Nurses by Ald. Ernest Sanger, J.P., L.C.C., at 3 p.m. Tea in the Garden.

July 13th to 20th.—Royal Sanitary Institute Congress at Sheffield.

July 18th.—Public Luncheon to Women Members of Parliament. Holborn-Restaurant. 1 p.m.

July 25th.—Miss Cattell "At Home." 194, Queen's Gate, S.W.7. 4 to 6 p.m.

July 26th.—Meeting General Nursing Council for England and Wales, 20, Portland Place. 2.30 p.m.

July 27th.—British College of Nurses. Council Meeting. 39, Portland Place, London, W. 2 p.m.

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