

A GREAT FORWARD MOVEMENT.

Mr. Lloyd George, in his "War Memoirs"—a book to be read and pondered over—gives an interesting account of the "natural growth of the Welfare Movement" while he was Minister of Munitions. He writes:—

"One of the most welcome features of my post as Minister of Munitions was the opportunity it placed within my reach of doing something to better the social and industrial conditions in the manufacturing establishments which came under my direct, or indirect, control. Legislation reflected the growing desire in industry among both workers and employers for better standards in the workshops . . .

"The establishment of the Ministry of Munitions and the new industrial development which it organised gave an impulse to important changes in the situation.

"In the first place, the State, as represented by the Ministry, became a large-scale direct employer of industrial labour, and on an even larger scale an indirect employer of labour in the establishments engaged in munition work which were brought under its control. It was thus in a position to exercise persuasion, pressure, and, if necessary, compulsion, upon employers throughout the country to adopt higher standards for ensuring the welfare of their workers during the hours of employment.

"In the second place, the withdrawal of a large part of the male population from industry into our fighting forces brought about the introduction of female labour on a scale never previously contemplated, and into industrial occupations which had formerly been staffed exclusively by men. There had, of course, before the War, been a considerable body of female labour employed in certain types of factory—particularly in textiles—but it now invaded unusual fields of the heavy industries, the shell filling factories, and even ship building. In most of these establishments, rough and unseemly conditions prevailed, and had hitherto been put up with by the men workers, but it was recognised as impossible to ask women to submit to them.

"A singularly favourable opportunity thus presented itself for introducing into industry a great forward movement for improving the general conditions of the welfare of the workers—an opportunity of which, as Minister of Munitions, I proceeded forthwith to take full advantage.

"One of the first tasks of the Ministry of Munitions was the creation of national filling and explosive factories; and from August, 1915, a woman staff inspector of the Ministry was at work visiting these as fast as they were opened up, and keeping in touch with the Board of Management regarding the very important and varied questions of the welfare of women in this often dangerous work. Her duties included advice and help in the selection of women supervisors, in the training of the special types of labour required, and in the provision of doctors and nurses for its care. In September, 1915, I appointed a Health of Munition Workers Committee, to advise on questions concerning 'industrial fatigue, hours of labour, and other matters affecting the personal health and physical efficiency' of the munition worker. . . . In December, 1915, I took the further step of appointing Mr. B. Seebom Rowntree Director of the Welfare Section of the Ministry, which I invited him to organise. . . .

"The welfare arrangements which were initiated included the provision of staffs and proper accommodation. The staffs comprised supervisors and assistant supervisors of welfare; and, in the larger works, matrons, nurses, lady doctors, cloak-room attendants, etc.

"The provision of welfare accommodation included such matters as washing facilities, sanitary conveniences, cloak-rooms, canteens, seats in work-rooms, supplies of overalls

and caps, and recreation facilities. It was necessary to persuade some employers that one broken basin and a jug of cold water was insufficient washing provision for a staff of 300 workers; that workers engaged in hot, heavy and exhausting work should be able to have convenient access to clean drinking water and not to be reduced to running the risk of typhoid by drinking water intended only for manufacturing purposes; that the efficiency of workers would be increased if they were not required to work all day in clothes drenched in the morning on the way to the factory, and if they could take their meals in comfort in a mess-room, or—better still—get cheap and wholesome food in the canteen, instead of gobbling scrappy meals beside their machines."

In a speech as Minister of Munitions, in February, 1916, Mr. Lloyd George remarked:—

"It is a strange irony, but no small compensation, that the making of weapons of destruction should afford the occasion to humanise industry. When the tumult of war is a distant echo and the making of munitions a nightmare of the past, the effort now being made to soften asperities, to secure the welfare of the workers, and to build a bridge of sympathy and understanding between employers and employed, will have left behind results of enduring value to the workers, to the nation, and to mankind at large."

In the third volume, just published, Mr. Lloyd George takes up the tale from the formation of his Cabinet and the way in which he dealt with the food supply, the shipping problem, and the peril of the German submarine. As before, he criticises with the utmost frankness both the personality and the capacity—or the lack of it—of public persons, both politicians and those in high places in the Navy and Army.

Well, now he has retired to live on the land, and has expressed himself as never having been so happy in his life. Maybe close contact with Mother Nature, and her kindly forces, will mellow some of his judgments.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL TRAINING.

An address recently delivered at Oxford by Sir Michael Sadler, in which this distinguished educationist expressed his belief that "the focus of all liberal education of the future will be the practice and training of the body, in fitness, grace and self-control," has aroused a correspondence in *The Times* on this important subject.

Colonel A. C. H. Duke, welcoming this announcement, says he does so especially "because attention may now be called to, and some surprise expressed at, the complete absence of facilities for gymnastic recreation or physical education in the University of Oxford. If evidence is required to establish the wisdom or utility of making such provision, the success that has followed upon the establishment a few years ago of the Edinburgh University physical welfare schemes is amply sufficient. . . .

"While for generations past benefactions expressly designated to further scholastic attainment have undoubtedly served to establish Oxford in its pre-eminent academic position, the foundations of a school of physical education are as yet unlaid.

"Hence the great opportunity offered for acceptance by a benefactor endowed with the foresight of a realistic visionary and a pre-conception of values accruing from physical culture and education."

And Colonel E. L. W. Henslow (retired), late Inspector of Army Physical Training, writes:—

"Without going into details, and the scarcity of suitable 'P.T.' personnel, it is very obvious that the generation of to-day and those of some years to come at our older universities are not, with the exception of those who are keen games players, really equipped to take their place in a modern world hustled as it is by dictators who make the 'body-physical' the basis of their future hopes."

*"War Memories of David Lloyd George." (Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 44, Essex Street, London, W.C.2.)

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