

## WAITRESSES AND WORKERS IN THE CATERING TRADES.

Recent publicity concerning the wages and conditions of waitresses in cafés and restaurants calls to mind the previous history of this large and badly paid trade, in which thousands of women are employed. As early as 1919 the Government was requested to set up a Trade Board for the Catering Trade, and after numerous requests, supported by many women's organizations, the Minister of Labour—then Sir Robert Horne—stated definitely that a Trade Board would be set up. The Ministry of Labour at that time collected very full evidence as to the conditions prevailing in the trade, and there was no doubt that in many sections excessive hours were worked for exceedingly low wages.

Waitresses were sometimes expected to subsist mainly or even wholly on tips, and it is probable that the kitchen workers, who usually have no share in these tips and tend to be overlooked in any public agitation, fared even worse.

It is not surprising in view of the failure of successive Ministers of Labour to carry out the undertaking given to set up a Trade Board that conditions in the trade have not improved; indeed, it seems almost certain, considering the continued unemployment and the general position of industrial women, that conditions in many sections of the trade have become even more deplorable.

It is satisfactory to note from the report of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress presented at Plymouth, that the Trade Union movement as a whole proposes to take steps to organize these badly paid and often overworked women. We wish them every success, and as a foundation we trust that a renewed effort will be made to secure the early establishment of a Trade Board.

MADELEINE J. SYMONS.

## THE MAKING, BAKING, & SELLING OF BREAD.

These things were managed very differently in years gone by to what they are to-day. A visit to the Bakers' and Confectioners' Exhibition, held annually, gives an excellent idea of modern equipment and modern methods, but the difference between these and the methods of yesterday is as wide as that between chalk and cheese.

### The Assize of Bread.

Before 1815 a baker was not free to make and sell what he wished, at any price he might think fit. For centuries "he was required by law to make his various kinds of loaves of different weights, often times calculated to a fraction of a penny-weight, and these constantly varying from week to week, or at the furthest from month to month."

According to the Act of 1266, there were no less than seven kinds of bread, one of which was "sinnell" (not, be it understood, "sinnel cake," but bread!). All of these had to be sold for one farthing each, the size of the best loaves being naturally much smaller than that of inferior bread. The weight varied and was regulated by the market price of the quarter of wheat, "consequently with each rise or fall of 6d. in the quarter a different weight was assigned by the table of assize to each particular one of the seven kinds of loaves."

### Pains and Penalties.

There were hideous punishments, too, for defaulters. In the fourth year of Edward II a baker named John of Stratford, for making bread less than the assize was with a fool's hood on his head, and some of his loaves hung about his neck, drawn on a hurdle through the streets of the city. Think of the conditions of the streets in those days, and the jolting of the hurdle.

White bakers were not allowed to make brown bread, and brown bakers were equally forbidden to make white. For some

time they had different guilds or fraternities. The loaves were sold by regatresses, who were given thirteen to the dozen, the extra one representing their profit, and they had to be sold in the King's Market.

The Bakers' Hall has stood on the same site since 1198. The first hall perished in the Great Fire, and the second was said to have been built by Sir Christopher Wren. The present building was erected between 1719 and 1722, but there is a very fine new approach with incised stone mural decorations illustrative of the guild and its craft. The lines are filled in with lead.

### A Wonderful Tank.

The Master is elected annually, but the Clerk and the Beadle are institutions.

The present Beadle, Mr. Knight, has been there over twenty years. He simply loves the old place, and has taken considerable trouble to gather and verify interesting facts. Once when he was poking about he began scraping the old leaden water tank measuring 8 feet by 4 feet by 2 feet, and discovered some fine relief ornamentation. Assistance was supplied by the Company, the Bakers' Arms were revealed, the date, 1720, set in a beautiful design of floral wreaths and figures amongst which a girl holding a sheaf of wheat is conspicuous. The lead used contains a large percentage of silver.

Workers took some trouble with their work in those days. A fine spacious oak staircase; a set of old woodcuts representing thirteen stages of breadmaking; some Adams' chairs; a grandfather clock dated 1685, in a case of English lacquer; remains of the ancient oven and two kinds of spit formerly used with the old open fire for roasting barons of beef, are amongst the treasures in which he takes a pride.

On the fine chimney piece in the Court Room is carved the motto of the Company, "Praise God for all."

All these wonders as well as many others are tucked away amongst modern offices in a back street of little Old London.

ANN POPE.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Offices: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.  
Telephone: Victoria 6188.

### INTERESTING EVENTS.

We hope that many of our members may be able to come to London for the following events:—

1. *Reception in Honour of Dame Edith Lyttelton* (Substitute Delegate to the League of Nations Assembly). 12th October, at 4.30 p.m. Cards of admission 2s. 6d. (including tea).
2. *Public Meeting on Reciprocal Vows in the Marriage Service*. Central Hall, Westminster, 12th November, at 8 p.m. Speakers: Miss Maude Royden, Lady Barratt, and others.
3. *Conference on Widows' Pensions*. Monday, 12th November, 2.30 to 4.30.
4. *Conference on Married Women's Income Tax*. 13th November, at 10.30 to 12.30.
5. *Conference of Officers of Societies*. 13th November, at 2.30 to 4.30.

### PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

The most important work of the early autumn is connected with the Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament on the Guardianship of Infants Bill. The fate of the Bill hangs in the balance, and much will depend on an active campaign in the constituencies. The most useful form that such a campaign can take is to send articles and paragraphs of all kinds to the local Press. There is reason to believe that the Committee is not as yet wholly convinced of the need for the Bill. It is important, therefore, that evidence of public interest should be forthcoming. A new leaflet giving striking instances of injustice under the present law has been issued (price 2d., reduced price for large quantities) and other literature for Societies desiring recent information on this matter.

MADAM.—May I bring to the notice of your readers a sustained interest in the welfare of women of the world. I allude to Kashmir. Condemnation is much to be deprecated. Native princes, but having been given a lead by administrators to think, were of British race, they have shown on their people in a good way of life. That is more than others is no doubt as much due to their own capacities.

But having said so much, might I be allowed to express to certain great and preventible sufferings of the people of a native ruler?

The following extract from a private letter to me, which I am content to let the public see, provided their own womenkind are well provided for, is of interest. The writer has lived for over twenty years in India, and has seen many things. One has worked harder or with more success than another, and pity into the hearts of young people for (in common with the devoted doctors) feel warmly. In fact, some of his experiences that I have had to modify them!

Much good might be done if the authorities showed an interest in Maternity and Infant Welfare, even where at first sight new legislation would seem to be unnecessary. The Hindu religion is a very adaptable one, and does "adapt" it.

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