

I had the great honour and happiness of knowing intimately the late Father Dolling. One of the secrets of his influence lay in the fact of his always being ready to listen with extreme patience to anyone who consulted him. People wanted to come to him because they were sincerely welcomed.

(c) Thirdly, we must study human nature. We should read psychology and the best modern novels. We ought to know the world we live in, and study its moral and social problems. If the educated young man or young woman of the present day deigns to consult us, we must at least know what he or she is talking about. The easily-shocked clergyman will be no use to them. But the fearless priest, with convictions and understanding, will at least win their respect and may win their souls.

(d) And, lastly, we must be fervently persistent in all our dealings with individuals. We must not let people slip away easily. If we watch and pray for a particular person, and go on watching and praying, then we shall in very many instances succeed. The soul will decide for Christ, and make the great surrender of self to His keeping in the faithful membership of His Holy Church.

Yes, the Church of England can only succeed in winning the people of England back to the Faith when we, the priests of the Church, act on the belief that "one by one"—and in no other way—are the children of the new Israel gathered to God.

D.—CIVIC RELATIONS OF THE MINISTRY

BY MISS A. DEANE, O.B.E.

II.—CHILDREN THE NATION'S GREATEST ASSET

A great deal is being done in the country to-day with regard to the health and welfare of children both for the period before they go to school and after. We want to know how these things apply to our own locality.

We are concerned, in the first place, with prevention of infant mortality, and are bound in parochial work to consider the help that is possible for mothers. The most progressive Local Authorities have appointed "Health Visitors" to advise and help mothers with regard to the care of newly-born infants. These visitors go to the houses after the notification of birth, which has to be made to the Medical Officer of Health within thirty-six hours, and is now compulsory under the Notification of Births Act. In many places there are still no Health Visitors, but the parish nurse undertakes the work instead.

The work done by the Health Visitor or parish nurse should be linked with an Infant Welfare Centre, where mothers can come and get instruction and assistance, and bring their babies regularly. A doctor is as a rule in charge of the infant consultations, examines them, and advises the mothers. The home visiting in connection with the Centre should only be done by trained visitors, and as a rule the Centre organizes health talks with practical demonstrations.

There are many other things which are done in connection with a really good Infant Welfare Centre, such as the provision of meals and good milk for expectant mothers, and the provision of dental treatment, etc.

State aid can be obtained for Welfare Centres; the Ministry of Health is responsible for the health and welfare of children under five, and half the cost of approved schemes for the care of mothers and babies can be

paid for by the Ministry. The Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918 extended the powers of Local Authorities with regard to approved schemes, and made provision for grants in aid.

Day Nurseries, Crèches, and Nursery Schools are now in existence in all parts of the country, and under the Maternity and Child Welfare Act half the total cost of these, if approved, can be paid for by grants.

Children from two to five years old attend Nursery Schools, where such exist. The Education Act of 1918 gave power to the Board of Education to pay grants in aid to the Education Authority or to approved voluntary schemes for Nursery Schools. When we think of the homes in which the majority of our working people live, and we compare the conditions under which the mothers have to bring up their children with those of people who can command a big nursery and a nurse in their private house, we should be thankful that these Municipal and Voluntary Nurseries and Crèches and Nursery Schools exist, and should do our utmost to advocate their extension. Nobody who has watched the effect of their good work on the small people in a parish could fail to do so. At the early age of five the child passes on to the infant school.

The medical inspection of school children insures that attention is paid to the health of the scholars right through their school life, which is still all too short; children leave the elementary schools at the age of fourteen, and indeed at the age of thirteen, and until the Education Act of 1918 is enforced this will continue.

In many places now the Education Authorities have Care Visitors, who follow up the medical inspection reports, and see that the child gets the treatment advised. Treatment is carried out at the School Clinic in big centres, where there is daily attention paid to minor ailments, and dental treatment, etc., is provided. It is impossible as a rule for country districts to have any centre of this sort, the schools are so scattered. Sometimes arrangements are made for the children to go into a neighbouring town; more often there is a visiting nurse as well as a visiting doctor.

As a result of the development of medical inspection, we have to-day open-air schools for delicate children and special schools for those who are defective or very backward.

In studying the welfare of children, we should remember that a great many of the children coming to the elementary schools are often suffering from insufficient food and are badly nourished. Under the Education Provision of Meals Act, 1906, the Education Authorities were empowered to provide meals within the limit of a halfpenny rate for children who are suffering in this way. This Act was amended in 1914, and removed the limit of the halfpenny rate, and now fifty per cent. of the cost can be paid by grants from the Board of Education.

The difficult time of adolescence needs our serious attention; had the provisions of the new Education Act been enforced, we should have at any rate had continued education for a certain number of hours in the week and in the daytime for every elementary school boy or girl. Nobody has claimed that the system of Evening Continuation Schools has been satisfactory; those who have attended them have often been too tired after a day's work to reap the full benefit of them.

The boys and girls of these schools have to become wage-earners at the earliest possible moment, and at the age of fourteen, if not before, they go out into the industrial world to fight the battle of life for themselves, more often than not very badly equipped and needing desperately the

friendship and wise guidance of those who are competent to advise and help them. The teachers, who have been their best friends at school, do their utmost to keep in touch, and the growth of Old Scholars' Associations in connection with the schools has been a very great help to this end.

Good work is being done to-day by the Juvenile Employment Committees established under the Education (Choice of Employment) Act, 1910, for the purpose of giving advice and help with regard to choice of employment to boys and girls leaving school, and they have in most cases established a system of "after care" by which people interested in juvenile questions keep in touch with individual cases during the difficult years from fourteen to seventeen or eighteen.

These "after care" visitors are often the heads of clubs, Scout Masters, and others who are doing what they can about recreation, and in this they should always be linked, where possible, with the local Juvenile Organizations Committee. Splendid work has been done in some parts of the country by Recreation Councils or Federations of Organizations dealing with recreation, which have obtained grants in aid of the work, in the first instance from the Home Office, and now from the Board of Education under the scheme which was started during the war, and known as the Juvenile Organizations Committee.

Where teachers and parents have the help of a really good Juvenile Employment Committee, they can feel that the years of adolescence are in a measure cared for if employers and workers and those interested in the well-being of the young worker are able to join together in facing the local juvenile problems.

Those who have come closely in touch with lads and girls of fifteen and sixteen to-day who are out of work must feel that the lack of discipline and the long hours of leisure are a menace to the future of the country. What sort of citizens will they make? Have those who have decided to economize in education faced the fact that the unemployed youth with nothing to do is a prey to the spirit that proverbially finds mischief for idle hands? Whereas, if the moment had been seized for continued education, the whole community would have benefited, not only now, but later.

We must surely believe that much of the unrest that has beset the country of late has been due to ignorance, and yet we find people opposing education and deciding that here at least we will begin to economize; it is false economy. There is very much to be done in the matter of creating a right public opinion about education, because legislation cannot go ahead of it. There are some to-day who recognize that the failure to carry out the provisions of the Education Act, 1918, is nothing short of a national disaster, but there are many who are unconvinced. It is the adolescent who is suffering to-day; in many places they have no work, no opportunity of continued education, no Juvenile Choice of Employment Committee, no Recreation Council. The neglect of the adolescent to-day means that your citizen of to-morrow will have deteriorated physically, mentally, and morally. It is a matter which gives food for thought. The child from infancy to the age of fourteen is well provided for if existing machinery is properly used, and then it breaks down. Is it too much to ask for the concentration of voluntary effort upon this problem of the adolescent, not to-morrow, but to-day?