

JUS SUFFRAGII.

# The International Woman Suffrage News

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## UNIQUE SITUATION IN ITALY.

### Bye-law of I.W.S.A. Constitution.

"The International Woman Suffrage Alliance, by mutual consent of its auxiliaries, stands pledged to preserve absolute neutrality on all questions that are strictly national."

### CONTENTS.

	Page.
Italy: Woman Suffrage Bill passed by Chamber of Deputies..	2
The New Electoral Law .....	2
History of Suffrage Movement in Italy .....	3
Some Pioneers of Suffrage in Italy .....	5
Features of the Month .....	6
Australia: Equal Divorce: South Australia .....	6
New Testator's Act: South Australia .....	6
Czecho-Slovakia: Woman M.P. Resigns .....	6
Denmark: Government Civil Service Bill: Victory for Equal Pay Women and Electoral Law .....	6 7
France: Church Women ask for Suffrage .....	7
Senate Commission Opposes Woman Suffrage .....	7
Germany: Equality Established for Women in New German Constitution .....	8
Great Britain: Conference of Women's Organisations on the Representation of Women on the League of Nations .....	8
Women's Freedom League Report .....	9
India: Bombay Suffrage Society Formed .....	9
Conference on India .....	15
Woman Suffrage Deputation to London Appointed....	9
Luxemburg: Women Vote in National Plebiscite .....	9
New Zealand: Education and Health Appointments .....	9
National Council of Women and Parliamentary Eligibility .....	9
Prohibition .....	9
Nicaragua: Woman Suffrage Society Formed .....	9
Norway: Children's Laws in Norway .....	9
Liberal Women Support Proportional Representation Woman Member of League of Nations Parliament....	10 10
South Africa: Eligibility to Municipal Councils in Cape Province Rhodesia Gains Woman Suffrage .....	11 11
Spain: Woman Suffrage Proposed .....	11
Switzerland: Feminist Summer School .....	11
First Woman Suffrage Discussion in Nationalrat..	12
Woman Suffrage Proposed in Bale-Ville .....	11
U.S.A.: Political Situation on Suffrage and Prohibition .....	12
Uruguay: Woman Suffrage Society Formed .....	14
International Appreciation of Miss Sheepshanks .....	14
Yugoslav Women in Council .....	14
I.W.S.A. Treasurer's Receipts .....	15
Tunis: Electoral Rights for Tunisian Women .....	16



DR. M. ANCONA,  
President of the Lombardy Committee for Woman Suffrage.

### The Italian Situation.—Late News.

As we go to press we hear from Dr. Ancona (Milan, Oct. 10) that the Chamber has suddenly been dissolved, and that the Senate will not meet before December—i.e., after the General Elections, which take place on November 16. The Italian suffragists hope that this means no more than a few months' delay in the ratification of their Bill by the Senate. Dr. Ancona points out that the situation is a unique one, as there is nothing in the Italian Constitution that suggests the possibility of a law that has been passed by the Chamber of Deputies not being presented to the other House—i.e., the Senate,—even in the case of the dissolution of the Chamber.

The Italian suffrage societies are in consultation as to what action they should take under these unprecedented circumstances.

## ITALIAN CHAMBER PASSES SUFFRAGE BILL.

### GOVERNMENT BILL PASSED.

By the passage of a Government Bill giving women equal political rights with men, the Italian Government have given to their countrywomen rights which German women only succeeded in attaining through the paroxysm of revolution, and rights which the women of Great Britain have not yet fully obtained.

We do not yet know if the Senate will pass the Bill without amendment, but we are assured before the end of September this Bill will be discussed and passed by the same Senators who passed a few months ago, by a big majority of votes, the Sacchi Bill. As this assurance comes from those who are themselves members of the Government, we are justified in believing that before the end of the present session Italian women will receive their political emancipation.

We rejoice in this great victory not only for ourselves but for all the women of the Latin countries who are not yet emancipated, for undoubtedly the example of Italy will be followed by the Governments of other countries.

#### THE NEW ELECTORAL LAW.

On January 1, 1919, the walls of Milan were covered with Woman Suffrage advertisements, signed by the feminist societies of the city. On these posters nothing appeared about the rights of women, nor was mention made of the work women had done during the war. We simply said: "We want the Vote." Indeed, it was not a question of debating with the anti-suffragists, who did not come out into the open, but of persuading the Government to give us a new electoral law, a law which was acceptable to all the parties who were then making public their political programmes, and acceptable to the Government itself, who had, indeed, promised this reform.



ITALIAN SUFFRAGISTS AT THE MILAN CONGRESS, 1919.

The proposals of the Bills submitted to the Chamber in 1918 by Signori Sandrini, Cotugno, and Canega, might still come under the consideration of the Chamber; but we knew quite well that they had no chance of success. All these Bills differed fundamentally, and it was, therefore, impossible that any one of them could secure the united support of the Deputies who had backed another.

We were indeed very annoyed with the Radical Deputies, who caused Signor Sandrini's proposals to fall through by proposing to give the vote only to women of thirty years of age or more who had, in addition, a certain degree of educational qualification. The promises of the Conservative and Clerical parties seemed to us more reliable than those of the Radicals, who hitherto had always deceived us in the Chamber, a fact which we did not hesitate to state quite frankly.

All the political parties sent delegates to our Congress at Milan, which had never been done in the case of former Congresses. The two Radical delegates, Deputies of Milan, Signori Gasparotto and Agnelli, remained with us throughout the Congress, but the other delegates left after the inaugural meeting. During the progress of the Congress and the days following Signor Gasparotto pledged himself to form in the

Chamber a *Suffragist Party*, and to introduce the new Bill. He found in Signor Martini, a well-known author and statesman, who had always been a suffragist, and whose wife, the late Signora Gianita Martini, was one of the pioneers of woman suffrage in Italy, the leader of the new party. Frankly, it was a group rather than a party, for it included only sixteen Deputies.

We were not inactive. While the suffragists of Rome worked in political circles, we perceived that feminist journals were necessary, since the political Press remained practically closed to us, in spite of a load of promises! Among the periodicals which were published were *L'Idée Feministe*, of Rome, with which was associated Donna Antonia Nitti, the energetic and gifted wife of Signor Nitti, who succeeded Signor Orlando as Prime Minister; *Il Cimento*, also published in Rome, in which were articles by Signora Dobelli Zampetti, one of the most distinguished suffragists; and by Signora Chiaroviglio, the daughter of Signor Gioletti. In Milan the Suffrage Society founded *Voce Nuova*, edited by Signorina Ravasi and Dr. Tarugi, whose work for woman suffrage and great talents are well known to Italian women.

In February, when the Conference of Allied Suffragists visited Signor Sonnino, the Italian delegate received from him an assurance that the Sacchi Bill would be passed without delay. As a matter of fact it was passed by the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate in the spring, and the difficulty continually raised by the anti-suffragists, that one could not give political rights to women before removing their civil disabilities, fell to the ground.

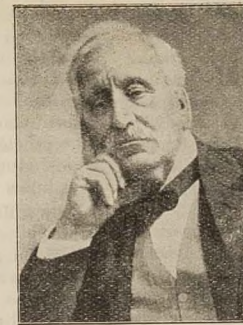
But the same moment witnessed the fall of the Orlando Ministry, which had promised us electoral reform; and Signor Nitti, who succeeded as Prime Minister, though a suffragist in theory, said, with Signor Giolitti, that the moment for the reform was not yet ripe. At the same time there was throughout the country a big agitation in favour of Proportional Representation. All parties were in favour of this reform, and Signor Nitti promised that it should be effected, which made us fear that once more the Chamber was going to deal with the electoral law and *leave the women out*. And we also deeply resented the fact that the Government had granted political rights to the Arabs of Tripoli before granting them to Italian women.

On July 30 Signori Martini and Gasparotto, with fourteen other deputies, representing all parties, introduced a Bill to give political rights to Italian women on the same terms as men. It provided, however, that women should not be eligible to vote in the 1919 elections, but at the following elections. This clause, a hard one for us, had been introduced at the instigation of some Socialist Deputies, and though we disliked being forced to accept this clause we saw it was necessary in order to persuade politicians and the Government itself to consider seriously the possibility of a reform for which they were not over-anxious. The reason for this clause was that the addition of 11,000,000 women to the electoral lists would delay the elections for at least six months—which was impossible. We think we may justly add that the fear of so many new women electors somewhat influenced the Deputies, who by no means look forward with pleasure to a general election. So we had to accept this clause rather than prejudice the passage of the Bill.

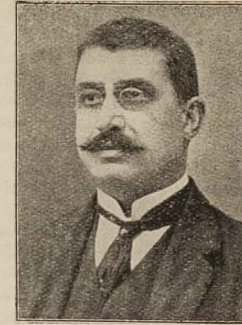
We hoped that Signor Martini's Bill might be tacked on as an amendment to the Bill for Proportional Representation, which was being pushed through the Chamber very quickly. But this was not done. The Proportional Representation Bill was carried; and Signor Martini's Bill was referred to a Special Committee, of which S. Martini was president, Signor Gasparotto reporter, and Signor Sandrini secretary. It is to these three Deputies that we are indebted for the exceptional speed with which the Bill was examined and presented to the Chamber, with a new and favourable report from Signor Gasparotto. Our delegates, who were in Rome at this time, and the secretaries of our Suffrage Federations had an immense amount of work to do in persuading the Deputies and the Prime Minister to adopt this Bill. Up to the last day, although there was no opposition to the *principle* of woman suffrage, every attempt was made to persuade the Government that the Chamber, whose sittings had already been prolonged beyond the constitutional limits—indeed there should have



LUIGI GASPAROTTO,  
Reporter.



FERDINANDO MARTINI,  
President.



AMEDEO SANDRINI,  
Secretary.

The Reporter, President, and Secretary of the Parliamentary Commission for the Political Rights of Women.

been a general election in 1918,—had not the right to deal with such an important reform, and that it would be better to leave the question of woman suffrage to be dealt with by the new Parliament. Some big daily papers, notably *Le Corriere della Sera*, published articles to this effect on the very day of the debate on the Martini Bill.

That day was for us a day of agitation and suspense. For the Government suddenly brought forward a new Bill, similar in every respect to that of Signori Martini and Gasparotto, but with some additional clauses, namely, that the local Government elections (*les elections municipales et d'arrondissement*) should take place in 1920, so that women could vote, and that the Proportional Representation system should be applicable at these elections. Another clause deprived prostitutes of the right to vote.

The Parliamentary Committee could not come to an agreement with the Government, and it was impossible to force the latter to drop the final clause, though several Deputies showed up its iniquitous injustice during the public debate, which was neither long nor interesting. The Chamber was not well filled, and there was little opposition, two Deputies only, a Conservative and a Socialist, opposing the motion. The most brilliant speeches in support of the Bill were those of Signor Gasparotto and Signor Turati, and the speech of the Prime Minister left no doubts as to the passage of the Bill put forward by the Government. The result of the division was 174 in favour and 55 against.

The effect of the Bill is to give the vote to all Italian women who have reached the age of twenty-one and who can read and write, and to illiterate women of thirty years. Women lunatics, paupers, deaf mutes, criminals, and such prostitutes whose names are inscribed in the Register of the Prefecture of Police, are deprived of the vote.

Men only will vote in the coming elections of 1919. But women will be able to vote in 1920 for local government elections (*conseils d'arrondissement et les conseils municipaux*) and in all succeeding political elections. We are assured that in the elections of 1919 women will be eligible as candidates.

We await with the greatest impatience the vote of the Senate, which, we are assured, will be favourable, and which will take place at the end of September, so that we can at last celebrate the victory of our great cause.

We have no fear as to the way in which the women of Italy will use their political rights. They are worthy of this new responsibility, and those of us who have lived in Southern Italy are convinced that the fears of some Deputies of the ignorance of the women of the South are absolutely without foundation. Signor Nitti very aptly replied to one of the Northern Deputies, who dwelt upon the danger of putting the voting paper in the hands of the peasant women of the Sila: "The women of Calabria or of Sicily have as much intelligence and good practical common sense for voting purposes as many of the highly educated women of Europe and America!"

#### History of the Woman Suffrage Movement in Italy (1863—1919).

The opponents of woman suffrage are fond of saying that there has never been any woman suffrage movement in Italy. They have in their minds the militant movement (the only one they seemed to be aware of), which has never gained any

converts in our country. It must also be remembered that very often the same individuals and the same associations which have been working for the vote for women have also been working for various social and philanthropic reforms, and they are much more widely known for these latter activities than for their suffrage propaganda.

A characteristic feature of the Italian suffrage movement is that it was a Parliamentary movement before it became popular among the majority of women. In 1863 a Conservative Minister, Signor Peruzzi, proposed giving the vote to women for local government elections (*Conseils municipaux et conseils d'arrondissement*), and the Committee of Deputies which first considered this question made a report favourable to the extension of these suffrage rights to women. Unfortunately, a new Committee of Deputies was elected; this Committee reported unfavourably on Signor Peruzzi's motion, and it was defeated.

About the same time (1865) Anna Maria Mozzoni, in her first writings on the position of women, demanded the equalisation of political rights for both sexes. As a matter of fact, she had been forestalled in her ideas by other women, notably in 1848; and the whole feminist and suffragist doctrine had already been expounded by Mazzini in his writings, which had an enormous influence on the political thought of Italy. But Anna Maria Mozzoni was not an isolated political propagandist as were the women of 1848, and she continued the work which she had begun among an ever-widening circle of enlightened women. During these same years a Neapolitan Deputy, Salvatore Morelli, laid before the Chamber of Deputies Bills for the reformation of all the laws concerning the rights of women and children (*recherche de la paternité, divorce, suffrage, etc.*)—subjects of which he had already made a survey in a book and several pamphlets. But the Chamber, which in 1863 seemed disposed to grant municipal rights to women, gave on this occasion a hostile reception to Signor Morelli, whose good intentions and progressive spirit were unfortunately not accompanied by any oratorical gifts. In consequence, the proposals of Signor Morelli were defeated, amid the derision of the other Deputies.

In 1871, 1876, 1880, 1883, 1884, further proposals for the concession of the local government vote were made. We still read with gratitude and pleasure the speeches of Signor Depretis (1880), and particularly that of Signor Lacava (1884), and it is regrettable that in spite of the support of these and other famous men, and the favourable reports of several Parliamentary Committees, procedure was so slow that it was not possible to bring about a full discussion of the reform at an opportune moment. Unfortunately, when in 1888 it was set down for discussion in the Chamber, Signor Crispi, who was Prime Minister, opposed the Bill, which was again defeated.

Nevertheless, something of importance for Italian women was done. A law of 1877 allowed them to act as witnesses (public or private), and several provisions in the commercial and civil codes had been made in a more liberal spirit. But what changed the whole position of women, moral and intellectual, was the permission given by a Conservative Minister, Signor Coppino, in 1876, to a young Florentine girl to study in a boys' school. Since that happy day all schools, from the elementary school up to the university, were opened to Italian girls, and the principle of co-education was established. This explains why Italian feminism has never had to battle for education as, for instance, German feminism has had to do; and one cannot praise enough the Ministers who followed the lead of Signor Coppino and showed the same liberal spirit.

Many new recruits to the woman suffrage movement came from among the university women—B. and A. Sacchi, Teresa Labriola, Maria Montessori, A. Dobelli, C. Baracelli, A. Pagliani, etc.—but there were also aristocrats such as Donna Giacinta Martini; writers such as Grazia Deledda, Virginia Treves, Clelia Pellicano, Olga Lodi, etc.; painters, such as the Baronne Clesia Lavelli; philanthropists, such as Alessandrina Ravizza and E. Maino; schoolmistresses, many of them Socialists, such as L. Malnati and T. Mariani; workers, such as R. Troise; even foreign women, such as M. Grassi, P. Schiff, L. R. Bartlett, etc.

It was after 1890 that the feminist movement began its appeal through societies instead of by individual manifestations. In 1892 was founded at Milan the first women's society, *Lega per la tutela degli interessi femminili*; it had in its programme the suffrage for women, and made in 1894 the first inquiry into "the position of the Italian woman." In 1908, owing to political movements, it was dissolved by the Government, and its activity, when it was reconstituted, was no longer considerable, though it lingered on till 1912. But in this period arose the great feminist societies, *Associazione per la Donna*, *Unione Femminista*, *Comitato Pro Suffragio Femminile*, *Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne*, which all had, with the exception of the *Consiglio Nazionale*, votes for women on their programme.

About 1894 were formed the first Socialist associations among women, and, chiefly on account of the work of Signora Kulishoff and Malnati, the Socialist party introduced into its programme feminine suffrage. But since the Reggio Congress (1911) women Socialists were forbidden to work in non-Socialist associations, and nearly all of them left our suffrage societies. They have a women's paper, *La difesa delle lavoratrici*, which is very well conducted.

Our feminist organisations have also had magazines, some of which, notably *La Donna* (A. Beccari, C. Rossi Lazzati), *La Vita Femminile* (R. Amadori), *Le Giornate per la Donna*, have exercised great influence over the progress of the cause, but they have proved short-lived.

In 1906 some suffragists, among others Dr. Sacchi, Mantone, asked the mayors of their communes for permission to put their names among those of political electors. Their demand was supported by the argument that the electoral law does not speak of male electors, and the Statute of Charles Albert, which is the fundamental law of the kingdom of Italy, says that all citizens have the same rights, even political rights, unless deprived of them by a special law; which was the case with the local government electorate, which is stated by the law to be exclusively confined to male citizens; but not with the political electorate. In almost all cases the judges to whom the matter was submitted pronounced against the suffragists, but at Ancona the Court of Appeal, in a sentence drawn up by Signor Mortara, the very person who at this moment is Keeper of the Seal, found that the mayor of the town had very properly inscribed among the electors ten schoolmistresses who had applied. This, however, did not prevent the High Court of Rome from expressing a totally different opinion, and obliging the mayor to strike the suffragists' names off the electoral rolls.

The *Ancona Sentence* took the matter up strongly, and prepared public opinion for the Parliamentary debate which took place next year, when a petition signed by Signora Mazzoni and a great number of other women was laid before the Chamber. Signor Cuzzi reported, and several Deputies spoke in favour of the petition, but Signor Giolitti, the Prime Minister, expressed the opinion that electoral reform should be preceded by a reform of the civil law—that is to say, the Chamber should

first give the women full civil rights, which they had not, especially with regard to marriage rights (*l'autorisation maritale*), and then grant political rights *by degrees*, beginning with the local government vote. This idea was adopted by the Italian Chamber, though some Deputies, notably Signor Sonnino, supported the opposite thesis—namely, that electoral reform could and should precede the reform of the civil code. Nevertheless, in 1907, the Chamber appointed a Committee which studied feminist questions so profoundly that nobody ever knew what became of it!

The suffragist movement during these years spread over the country. The women who had signed the petition of Signora Mazzoni formed the first Suffrage Committee in Rome, and other committees sprang up in the great towns of Italy. Meetings were held in Rome and Milan, lectures were given in nearly all towns. The first Congress of the National Council of Women was attended by over 1,000 women, and the suffrage discussion lasted over a day. During the same year (1908) the *Unione Femminile* of Milan reassembled the women in another Congress, which also proved a great success. Since 1908 nearly every year there have been meetings and congresses in the big towns. Courses of lectures on the rights of women, on labour legislation, etc., have been organised by the suffrage societies, public debates have taken place, notably at Milan, and, in spite of the ridicule of men and women, our suffragists did not cease to push their propaganda wherever they could penetrate. We cannot help laughing to-day when we hear the suffragist declarations of some people who treated us as mad six or seven years ago, or when we read the sympathetic resolutions of such-and-such political association which denied admission to women, or of such-and-such women's club which accepted our subscriptions on condition we did not talk on its premises about the vote!

What is more regrettable, in looking backward, is the remembrance of the disputes which divided the Italian suffragists. One section was persuaded that we must ask for the vote for women on the same terms as men. The younger members, and notably the Socialists, were equally convinced that we should ask for votes for all women, including illiterates, though illiterate men were not enfranchised. The partisans of universal suffrage were in the majority, and the suffrage associations, which shortly afterwards formed a federation and affiliated to the I.W.S.A., agreed that their object should be to obtain the vote for all women. But in spite of that the Socialist members left our associations after the Congress of Reggio.

A few minor victories helped to keep up the courage and hopes of the suffragists. In 1890 women were made eligible for various charity committees, such as hospital boards, etc., the members of which are chosen by the municipal councils, and here and there several women were nominated. In 1893 they were given the vote and made eligible for the *conseils de prud'hommes*, and in 1909 the same rights were given them for Chambers of Commerce.

This latter victory inspired us with some hope for the revision of the electoral law, and in 1910 Signor Gallini brought forward a Bill for the abolition of marital authority (*l'autorisation maritale*), the admission of women to the legal profession, etc., and the right to the local government vote.

Signor Sonnino, who was then Prime Minister, was quite in sympathy with the women's cause, but unfortunately his Cabinet fell a few days later, and with it disappeared all hope for Signor Gallini's Bill.

Two years later the Chamber debated a Bill to give the vote to illiterate men. On this occasion Signor Mirabelli introduced a Bill for woman suffrage. Signor Giolitti again opposed



BAR. CARLA LAVELLI,  
Painter.



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SIGNORA PASINI,  
Italian Suffragist and Author.

the measure, and his influence was such that, in spite of several brilliant speeches from Deputies, including Signori Sonnino, Miliani, Lucifero, Treves, etc., the proposal was defeated by 209 votes to 48. The suffragists who were present in the galleries of the House noticed that several Deputies absented themselves from the House during the taking of the vote.

Among the 48 who voted for the Bill were Socialists, Conservatives, Clericals, etc.—a proof of the fact that the woman suffrage question cuts across party lines. And though the Socialist party actually had woman suffrage in their programme, the other parties were by no means solidly anti-suffrage. It was really the personal influence of Signor Giolitti that brought about the defeat of Signor Mirabelli's Bill, and the acceptance in its stead of an order of the day which asked the Chamber to consider the equalisation of the civil rights of women—a plan which had already been suggested by Signor Giolitti in 1907.

This failure did not, however, discourage the suffragists, who continued their agitation, but under altogether new conditions. The campaign of the English militant suffragists received an extraordinary amount of publicity in our country; the Press took it up, and papers which had formerly ignored the whole suffrage question now reported incessantly the doings of Mrs. Pankhurst and her colleagues. Needless to say, the view taken of the suffragettes' exploits was far from a kindly one, and with the exception of a few papers, such as the *Secolo*, of Milan, all the papers pronounced the English suffragettes as lunatics, hysterical women, and even worse. Unhappily, they simply refused to believe that there was any constitutional body working for woman suffrage. Many women ceased to support us—women who were sympathetic merely, but not courageous enough to endure the ridicule that was poured upon the suffragettes. And it was probably as a reaction from that attitude that Italian suffragists glorified the tactics of Mrs. Pankhurst to a greater extent than did many of her own countrywomen. However, the fact remains that this hostile campaign in the Italian Press eventually benefited our cause, for it compelled public opinion to consider the problem of woman suffrage. In 1912 and 1913 there was not a single publication, not a single play, not one course of lectures, which did not mention the "suffragettes" and the political rights of women. It was at this moment, amid the ridicule of the woman suffrage cause by every journalist and caricaturist, that the new Chamber which was about to debate the reform of electoral law, opened. But we must say that it is to the credit of our Deputies that they invariably discussed all matters relating to women with the greatest respect and dignity, even when they were not overwilling to solve our problems.

The elections of 1913 took place during the Government of Signor Giolitti, and he had a huge majority in the new Chamber. The Socialists, urged by Signora Kulishoff and other women of their party, tried to force a vote on woman suffrage. But it was impossible to gather enough deputies in the Chamber to make a vote on the Bill valid, so it fell to the ground. The Chamber, however, agreed—an easy matter—to an order of the day which prayed the Government to bring forward as soon as possible a Bill for woman suffrage.

We were more disappointed by this failure than by the one of 1912. But the outbreak of the war hindered our propaganda. Nearly all the suffragists did a great deal of war work—in the Red Cross, the military hospitals, canteens, etc. At the beginning of the war men admitted freely that they had not believed it possible that women could accomplish such splendid work. And certainly the war work of Italian women—in spite of the fact that there had always been large numbers of working-women, especially in the Central Italian provinces—was a revelation to our politicians, and entirely changed their attitude to the suffrage question, though after the war they were rather inclined to forget all the Italian women had done.

But even among the many activities of the war we could not forget our feminist problems, and we waited with a legitimate impatience for Signor Sacchi to present to the Chamber a Bill for the concession of our civil rights—a reform which had been promised by the King in his speech at the opening of the Parliament in 1913.

A big suffrage congress was held in 1916, and another big congress was held in 1917, representative of five feminist societies, including the Suffrage Federation. Both these were held in Rome, and the latter was opened by a magnificent speech by Signor Sacchi, who was then Keeper of the Seals, and concluded with a no less brilliant speech from another Minister, Signor Comandini. Compliments and praise were heaped upon us, but for all that Signor Sacchi's Bill was still in the portfolio of the Ministry—a very distressing condition of

things for us, for we were well aware that the Chamber would not give us the vote until they had given us full civil rights, especially equal rights under the marriage laws.

In 1918 Signor Salandra placed before the Chamber a Bill to give the vote to soldiers under twenty-one years of age. Several Woman Suffrage Bills were brought forward at the same time. The Socialists proposed to give the vote to all women; the Radicals suggested that the vote should be given to women of thirty who could pass an educational test, and to the mothers of soldiers killed in the war. Finally some seventy Deputies suggested that the vote should be given to women who could read and write. It would have been quite easy for these various groups to find some common meeting ground, and we were extremely disappointed when Signor Salandra's Bill was passed, and the consideration of woman suffrage remitted to the following Parliamentary session.

However, our cause had advanced appreciably since 1913, for all the political parties had woman suffrage on their programmes, and all the feminist associations helped us in our agitation, and in Milan alone we had the support of 47 associations. Another new feature was the receipt of many subscriptions, and politicians, including the Prime Minister, Signor Orlando, declared themselves converts to woman suffrage. The Press, though saying little, certainly treated our claims with much respect and deference. And undoubtedly the victory of the English suffragists had made a very great impression on our opponents. Most important of all, we had the explicit assurance of the Prime Minister that the question of woman suffrage would be discussed by the Chamber whenever a Bill for the reform of electoral law was introduced.

Meanwhile there was held at Milan a Suffrage Congress, which was extraordinarily successful, even though the times were most inopportune, as Signori Orlando and Sonnino had just left the Peace Conference, and the Chamber had been summoned to learn their reasons for this action. One of our journalist friends was impressed by the absolute calm with which the Milan Congress discussed its business, and said in an article that even the suffragists had no enthusiasm for their cause. He was unable to divine that this calm was simply a sign that we were sure of an early victory, and also that we were all in perfect accord as to the means we should take to attain it. Signorina Troise, the courageous secretary of our federation, said in her closing address that the Congress of Milan was the last Suffrage Congress that we should hold. And her prophecy has been fulfilled.

M. ANCONA.

### Some Pioneers of the Woman Suffrage Movement in Italy.

ANNA MARIA MAZZONI began while yet quite young her feminist propaganda, which was the chief aim of her life, and which she continued for fifty years. Her lectures on the position of women, her books and pamphlets on the same subject, her work at the time of the reform of the Penal Code (*Codice Zanardelli*), her translations of foreign suffragist works, all these are familiar to Italian women. In 1906 she presented a Petition for Woman Suffrage to the Chamber of Deputies, on which a long debate took place.

On the day of the passage of our Woman Suffrage Bill we had the pleasure of Signora Mazzoni's presence in the Chamber of Deputies, and she received a sympathetic ovation from the suffragist members of the Chamber.

TERESA MARIANI was an apostle of the emancipation of women. The lectures given by her all over the country, her pamphlets, and the articles she published in the various reviews and newspapers are innumerable. An article on "Fallen Women," which appeared in our periodical, was considered subversive of public order, and Signora Mariani, who was a Socialist, was prosecuted for it. She conducted her own defence, and was acquitted. The Suffragist Congress in Turin in 1911 was organised by Signora Mariani, and she was foundress and president of the *Comitato Pro Voto Donne* di Torino. Her work in Turin has, since her death, been carried on by her devoted friend, Signorina Tania.

DONNA GIACINTA MARTINI (d. 1911) was the first president of the National Woman Suffrage Organisation, from which sprang the Italian Woman Suffrage Federation, and for which she worked up to the day of her death. Her husband, a famous writer and statesman, Signor Ferdinand Martini, is the introducer of the present Bill for Woman Suffrage, and was president of the Parliamentary Committee appointed to consider the Bill.

VIRGINIA TREVES TEDESCHI (d. 1914) is better known under the name of "Cordelia," the pseudonym under which she published many novels and short stories for young people, and a feminist volume, "The Woman Worker." She was president of the Lombardy Committee for Woman Suffrage, of which, with Signora Maluati and several others, she was the founder. When, in 1909, the commercial vote was granted to women she was the first woman who voted, in the capacity of manager in the big publishing firm of Trèves. It is amusing to record that as she had never been to a public school she had to submit to an educational test!

DR. ANNA KULISHOFF was born in Russia, and is one of the most prominent women in the Italian Socialist movement. To her we owe the inclusion of woman suffrage in the programme of the Italian Socialist party. Everyone should read her "Family Polemics," of which she is joint author with another Socialist leader, S. Turati; and her pamphlet, "Man the Monopolist." In 1912 and 1913, when the Italian Chamber was occupied with electoral reform and universal manhood suffrage, she threw all her force and political influence into the cause of woman suffrage. Like all other Socialists, she does not work with the non-Socialist suffrage organisations, and might even resent being counted among them as a supporter!

#### FEATURES OF THE MONTH.

This is a month of congratulations: first to the women of Italy, who within one year have seen both their civil and political disabilities done away with. Their Suffrage Bill has just passed with a triumphant majority through the Chamber of Deputies, and we are assured that the Senate will ratify it.

In the United States two more States have ratified, New Hampshire and Minnesota, making sixteen out of the thirty-six ratifications necessary for the victory of the Federal Woman Suffrage Amendment.

The women of Rhodesia have gained the vote, and are also eligible as members of the Legislative Council.

The women of Germany have gained a great victory by the redrafting of the German Constitution, which now places women in a position of full equality in marriage and in the Civil Service.

We welcome the news that Woman Suffrage Societies are formed in Nicaragua and Uruguay, and look forward to their affiliation to the I.W.S.A.

French suffragists have suffered a temporary setback by the rejection by the Senate of the Woman Suffrage Bill passed by the Chamber. But just as we go to press we learn that the Chamber has for a second time, by a huge majority, decided in favour of women voting in the General Election, and, in addition, has adopted a motion demanding that the Senate ratify the Woman Suffrage Bill already voted by the Chamber. If this action proves effective, we shall hope soon to issue a French Victory Number.

Among the women appointed as representatives at the first International Labour Congress, which is to be held at Washington at the end of this month, are:—Britain: Miss Constance Smith, as one of the technical advisers to the Government. Labour delegates are: Miss Mary MacArthur, Secretary, Women's Trade Union League, and Miss Margaret Bondfield, Shop Assistants' Union. France: Madame Jean Bouvier, General Labour Federation.

#### AUSTRALIA—South Australia.

##### Equal Divorce Adopted: New Testator's Act.

The annual report of the Women's Non-Party Association of South Australia shows a year of active work. As the result of the campaign in favour of equal divorce, in which all candidates at the Federal election were circulated, an amendment putting the sexes on an equality in divorce was incorporated in the Act.

The Testator's Family Maintenance Act, for which the Society has worked since 1915, was also passed last session. It empowers a judge to award some provision to deserving wives and dependent children whose husbands or fathers have willed all property away from them.

#### CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

##### Woman M.P. Resigns.

The Times reports that Miss Alice Masaryk, daughter of the President of the Republic, has resigned her seat as Deputy in the National Assembly in order to devote the whole of her time to Red Cross work.

#### DENMARK.

##### Government Civil Service Bill.

##### Victory for Equal Pay in the Rigsdag.

LEFT. The member of the Folketing, Sjren Svendsen, made a speech on the reasons for which he believed women should be paid less than men. Women, he said, could not carry out the same work; they had more days of illness; they were not, as a rule, providers for others; and good wages would "drag women away from the home."

Her Svendsen allowed that many women could do as good work as men, perhaps even better, and the speaker was also clear that many women had dependants. These considerations, however, did not affect the honourable member's belief that it would be just to value the most capable woman's work lower than the least distinguished man's, and to pay a woman, for example, who provides for three or four children, lower than an unmarried man.

##### SOCIAL DEMOCRATS.

The leader of the Social Democratic Group (Vald. Olsen) said that his party agreed unanimously to the principle of equal pay. There had been some doubts, because the party had feared that if the Bill were carried the administration would try to reduce the employment of women, which would be a disservice to women. He concluded by saying: "The women's representatives have declared for the principle, and, as social democracy has always supported it, we have given it our unanimous support."

This reasonable and clean-cut standpoint towards our demand, here expressed by the Social Democratic party, is one of which we are glad to be able to express our unstinted approval.

##### CONSERVATIVE.

As leader for the Conservative party, Mr. Abrahamsen, member of the Folketing, expressed his satisfaction that the Government had proposed equal pay for women and men. In the course of his speech he remarked that there was no proof that women could furnish the equal work for the equal pay, though he admitted also that many women are so capable that they can do the same and better work than men. The speaker thought the principle of equal wages accorded well with equality in the field of politics, and the proposed equality of men and women in marriage. It must be women's own business to make good in the face of competition. The speaker concluded by saying that he had gladly supported the proposal for equal wages, and he begged all honourable members not to forsake this principle.

Women's old and well-known enemy, Professor Birck, characterised the principle of equal pay as one of false equality. He finds it much more horrible that an unmarried woman should have the same pay as a married man than that an unmarried man should have the same pay as a married woman.

##### RADICALS.

The next speaker was Fru Elna Munch, whose speech met most excellently the objections brought against the introduction of equal pay. The speaker pointed out the deep interest that women had in the introduction of equality in this field, inasmuch as attempts had been made to trade on the notion of women's inferiority. Fru Munch brought out the unreasonableness of stamping beforehand the work of the ablest woman as inferior to that of the weakest man, and was of opinion that women would make good in open competition. As to women needing more sick leave, in all probability the cause was a cause itself brought about by low wages; that they, as well as their official work, had had to do a great deal of housework which men had had done for them. Moreover, many ill-paid women had to live with such a strict economy that it was no wonder it affected their health.

Fru Elna Munch said in her peroration: "The speaker for the Left expressed his fear that high wages might tempt women away from their homes. I do not see that there is any cause

for this fear. Anyhow, it is not so at present that women when married try to enter the civil service, teaching posts, and other official positions. It cannot be expected that married women will make this attempt just because the pay is raised. It is almost always the unmarried who seek the posts in question. When they have had the special training, when they have been teachers or have had some other State employment, it happens that they get married, but it cannot be asked of them that they should sacrifice the position in life to which they have been trained, and in which they take a warm interest. The pay cannot be fixed with an intention to make them throw up their jobs, and so perhaps it would be best, especially for the sake of the home, to pay them so well that they are in a position to get the necessary help."

In answer to the repeated objection that the married women's status will be reduced when women get the same pay as men, the speaker made the following striking declaration:—

"There might have been some sense in this objection if the position had been that there was a certain fixed sum for division, but there has never been any talk of this. If a married teacher, for example, receives 4,000 kroner, this sum is not a halfpenny more because a teacher, whether married or unmarried, is paid as low as 3,000 kroner, and I do not, for example, understand what pleasure it can be for a schoolmaster's wife to be able to say, 'My husband gets only 4,000 kroner, but we have been able to see to it that schoolmistresses never get more than 3,000.'"

In conclusion, Fru Munch referred to conditions in foreign countries, giving a description of the wonderful way in which women in the belligerent countries had done men's work, even in positions which under ordinary conditions no one would have dreamt of giving to women, and how as a result the equality of men and women is being introduced even in countries which have been most conservative in this respect. The speaker pointed out that in the paragraph in the Peace Treaty about work—a paragraph which is meant to apply to all members of the League of Nations—one of the most important provisions was the demand for equal pay for work of equal value, and she expressed a hope that the Rigsdag would take this opportunity of establishing the principle.

Later there spoke Sögaard (Left), who approved the claim for equal pay if accompanied by an addition for supporting a family; Pinholt wished an equal standard of living, but not equal pay; and Sundbo, who elaborated on the theme that women were unsuitable for positions where speed and initiative were required, and that cookmaids were usually better wives than business women.

##### IN THE LANDSTING.

Fru Hjelmer (Radical) thanked the Government and the woman member of the Wages Commission (Fru Thora Pederesen), and some of her remarks drew from the leader of the Left the admission that the member of the Commission from the Left did not by his personal attitude express that of his party, which would vote for the Bill. Unfortunately, Her Ejsing could not give this assurance without quoting Her Sundbo's foolish speech (about cookmaids and business women) in the Folketing.

In the main we have good ground for thanking the members of the Rigsdag of the party of the Left, and we dare to trace in this the influence of the woman members, who have had the by no means easy task of bringing the party over to the present position in regard to women.

We note with satisfaction that the passing of the principle of equal pay—the largest forward step for women since they got the franchise—has gained the assent of all parties.

##### FOLKETING.

The result of the debate on the great Wages Bill in the Folketing can best be summed up in the speech of the Finance Minister on July 29, that "the fact that this proposal shall apply equally to men and women appears to be unanimously accepted." The Wages Bill will not, therefore, be in reality two laws, one for men and one on a lower standard for women.

After the introduction of the Bill members of all political parties spoke, and a great number agreed on the question of equal wages. —*Kvinden og Samfundet*, September 15.

The Wages Commission Report came up for the first reading in the Landsting. Marie Hjelmer spoke in favour of the principle of equal wages, and the leader of the Left took the opportunity to state that the Left as a party had nothing against the principle—it was only certain members who were in doubt. —*Tidens Kvinden*, September 6.

#### Women and Electoral Law.

*Tidens Kvinder* gives an account of the demand now being made for the amendment of the electoral law by the Danish Democratic Society. They criticise the present law in failing to give effect to democratic principles by restricting the choice of candidates, and refusing to allow a candidate not supported by a party of 10,000 to have any share in the supplementary seats. They point out, too, that experience has shown that it is extremely difficult for women candidates to be elected to the Folketing, which constitutes a serious restriction on their newly won franchise.

The particular reforms urged at the annual meeting of the Society are embodied in the following proposals:—

1. Counties should be made into constituencies, each with as many members as it now has constituencies.

2. Each party, and also the Independents, should be allowed to put up as many candidates as they choose. The names should be arranged on the ballot paper in party groups and Independents. In the first count the party will be considered, and afterwards the count will be by proportional representation.

It is maintained that this will be advantageous in enabling more women to be elected, because women candidates can be put up alongside of men candidates without danger of the vote going to the woman being lost to the party if she herself fails to be elected.

#### Women's Work and Women's Wages.

Principle of equal pay accepted in the Danish Rigsdag. It sounds like a fairy tale, but it is true nevertheless. In spite of all well-meant efforts to stamp women as second-class workers, despite all reflections as to women being less reliable, more unhealthy, having fewer needs and smaller economic responsibilities, and so on, the legislative body of this country has unanimously fixed the same pay for men and women in the same positions.

An enormous moral and economic burden is thus taken off women's shoulders. The back is straightened, self-reliance grows, the sense of responsibility is increased. On the same footing as their men colleagues and friends, women can get to work. The State as an employer has ranged itself by the side of the women in the struggle which is and will be waged as to the exploitation of women's work, and with that strongly ally at our side the struggle can be carried on with redoubled vigour.

Women have been warned that the fixing of equal pay for men and women in the same position in the service is the best help to men in their rivalry with women. The warning had no effect. We willingly render this help to men. We do not wish to be "shielded" by a lower scale of wages. Where we cannot work on equal terms we can go under. Our demand in this and in other points was not dictated by the interests solely of women, but by those of society as a whole.

It is our conviction that society establishes itself best by choosing its workers on their qualifications, and not from considerations of sex or cheapness, and what we aim at is that men and women should be fellow-workers and not rivals.

Our hope is that the victory will prove a blessing to men and women and the work for the State's service, which they will carry on as fellow-workers on an equal footing.

—*Kvinden og Samfundet*, September 18.

#### FRANCE.

##### Senate Commission Opposes Woman Suffrage.

The Paris correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* reports that the Senate Commission appointed to examine the question of Woman Suffrage, which had already been adopted by the Chamber of Deputies by a large majority, have reported unfavourably. They have also rejected a proposal to give votes to war widows or the relatives of those who had been killed in the war.

##### Church Women Ask for Suffrage.

Women organised for other purposes are coming to realise the importance of the feminist demands if their organisations are to be able to make their influence felt in many of the things that are of special interest to their members. The programme for public action just issued by the Social and Citizen Educational Commission of l'Action Social de la

Femme, a Catholic society with a wide membership, takes quite a strong line on several points of the feminist programme. Among many other items which lie within our scope appear the following three of the main planks in the feminist programme: (a) That women also should have universal suffrage; (b) that where a post is open to both men and women they should receive the same pay for the same work; and (c) that insurance should be provided to secure that maternity allowances should be given to enable women to rest before and after childbirth, and to nurse their children. That this large organisation of Catholic women is taking the political side of its work very seriously is evident from the contents of its official organ. Of the two most recent issues, which have just come to hand, one gives in detail, in connection with women's need for the municipal vote, an account of the machinery of the elections to municipal councils, and their functions; and another, writing on women in trades unions, emphasises the fact that it is nonsense to discuss whether or not women are to enter trades when it is obvious they already are in them. "If the question of trade unions is of interest to men, it is with greater reason one for women."

### GERMANY.

#### Equality for Women Established in New Constitution.

The new German Imperial Constitution, in the drafting of which the 38 women members elected by the people took part, passed its third reading on July 31. In this is set forth for the German people the broad legal lines on which is based the future parliamentary system, and also those on which the individual life may take shape. German women may well look with pride on their work, imbued as it is with the new democratic spirit, and which gives to them what, as far as we know, no other land has yet granted—full political, legal, and vocational equality of rights with men. With pride they can say that under this constitution they are to-day the freest women in the world.

When the women members of the Assembly resolved that from the first fundamental article, "Men and women have, in principle (*grundsätzlich*), the same rights and duties as citizens," the words "in principle" should be struck out, they were quite justified, considering how open these words are to interpretation and restrictions. Did not our Civil Code of 1900 lay it down that men and women were "in principle" to have equal rights? This did not prevent the principle being grossly set aside to the detriment of all German wives. For this reason one cannot help regretting that the first formula was adhered to, and we can only hope that no unpleasant consequences will result from the elasticity of the words "in principle" when new bills come to be based on the Constitution.

On three important points, however, women's rights are safeguarded from this danger:—

1. With respect to the definitely established equality of voting rights between men and women on all questions of legislation, administration, and economic corporations.
2. By the acceptance of the proposal of the women members of Parliament to introduce into Section 128, which deals with the position of civil servants, the proviso that "all laws of exception against women officials should be abolished."
3. In the adoption of the additional paragraph to the article on the family, that "matrimony is based on the equal rights of both sexes," also proposed by the women members of the National Assembly.

#### EQUAL VOTING RIGHTS; EQUALITY IN CIVIL SERVICE.

The inclusion in the Constitution of equal voting rights is only the confirmation and acknowledgment of the rights acquired in the revolution and already exercised by women. The new provision on women civil servants, however, completely alters their position, because up to the present they were restricted in every direction by special laws. To begin with, the much-discussed condition that women officials, as, for example, teachers, post office and telegraph workers, must remain celibates, which was as unjust as it was unreasonable, has ceased to exist throughout the Empire, and a forward step has been taken of the first importance both in principle and in practice to German women. That this resolution means the possible admission of suitable women civil servants to the most prominent positions in the Government and Civil Service, possibly even to the Presidency of the

Empire, seems to admit of no doubt. It also follows that the present inequality in the salaries of men and women cannot be continued, either in principle or practice. Notwithstanding these facts, it will be necessary to pass a special law to safeguard the interests of the mass of women civil servants.

#### EQUALITY IN MARRIAGE.

The most important success is the acknowledgment of the equality of the sexes in marriage, since it concerns all woman-kind. This paragraph, apart from the great moral importance of the recognition of the principle of equality, is valuable in indicating the necessity for the reform of the civil law in the direction of those claims which have been put forward with the greatest energy by the women's movement for a quarter of a century. It also means the immediate abolition of the legal oppression of the wife, which is only defended by fictitious reasons, including all the consequent hardships and disabilities to which she, as wife and mother, is exposed as a consequence of the doctrines of the husband's right of decision in all things concerning married life and marriage property rights, and of the parent's power over children.

#### MOTHERHOOD TO HAVE STATE PROTECTION.

The phrase, "Motherhood has a claim on the protection and care of the State," introduced into the Constitution on the suggestion of the Democratic Party, contains a principle of the most fundamental importance as regards the new value placed on the ethical foundations of marriage.

#### ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

A further long-standing demand of the women's movement is also given effect to in the recognition of certain special rights of illegitimate children and their mothers. On this subject proposals were introduced by the Majority Socialists and the Independent Socialists to the effect that illegitimate children should be given exactly the same standing as legitimate, a proposal strongly supported by the women members of these parties, and as resolutely opposed by the women members of the Christian People's Party and the German National Party. The proposal of the Socialists was not adopted, but in its stead the following was finally incorporated in the Constitution: "Legislation has to provide that illegitimate children shall be given the same conditions for their physical, mental and social development as legitimate." The proposal of the Independent Socialists that the mother of an illegitimate child should be entitled, even in civil employment, to the title "Mrs." (*Frau*), which had been adopted in the second reading, was ultimately dropped out for formal technical reasons on the third reading, but it will probably be introduced into the special bill formerly mentioned.

The knowledge of the fact that on this first important opportunity the results of woman suffrage for German women should have been so unmistakable and brilliant, will, we hope, be received with joyful satisfaction by our co-workers in the International Women Suffrage Alliance.

MARIE STRITT,  
Reichsverband für Frauenstimmrecht.

### GREAT BRITAIN.

#### Conference of Women's Organisations on the Representation of Women in the League of Nations.

This Conference took place on September 4th, in Caxton Hall, Westminster. Eighty women's societies had been invited to send delegates, and there was an attendance of a strongly representative body of women. The chair was taken by Mrs. Rackham. The first resolution, passed by speedy agreement, emphasised the need for securing the representation of women on the bodies connected with the League. The most keenly discussed question was the method of nominating and recommending women representatives. The final decision reached is embodied in the following resolutions:—

1. That this Conference shall take measures, by the appointment of a Provisional Committee, to receive and consider (and if necessary to recommend from them) names of women, nominated by the societies participating in the Conference, to be submitted to the British Government and to the Secretariat of the League of Nations as suitable for membership of the various bodies of the League or for appointments in other capacities for which the Government or the Secretariat may be respectively responsible. The Committee shall submit this list of names, with their recommendations, to a further meeting of this Conference.

2. That this Conference agrees to form a Provisional Committee of 15 members, in addition to the 7 members of the Organising Committee, to be elected by postal vote on nominations, all organisations invited to this Conference being given the opportunity of nominating and voting in accordance with the representation now allotted to them; this Provisional Committee shall act as an Executive Committee, and shall have the duty of submitting to a further Conference proposals for a permanent National Committee.

3. That until this Provisional Committee has been elected the Organising Committee of this Conference shall act as Executive Committee to this Conference.

Of special interest were the resolutions which followed on International Organisation for Securing Representation. One authorised the Committee to invite women of other countries to form National Committees on the same lines as in Britain; and another called on the Secretariat of the League, in case an International Women's Bureau should be proposed, to keep the Standing National Committees of Women fully informed about its constitution by circulation of the draft scheme for consideration. No decision was come to as to the advisability or otherwise of such a Bureau being set up.

A protest was made against the British Government's appointment of two men and no women as its two delegates to the International Labour Conference at Washington.

—W.I.L. Monthly News Sheet, Oct., 1919.

### Women's Freedom League Report.

#### SEX DISQUALIFICATION BILL.

Very successful summer campaigns have been run at Aberystwyth, on the Clyde Coast, and at New Brighton, where audiences agreed with the speakers that the Government must be urged to pass into law without delay its Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill to secure that women may be allowed to qualify and practise as barristers and solicitors, become Justices of the Peace and serve on juries, with the amendments to give votes to women on the same terms as men, open the higher posts of the Civil Service to women, and enable peeresses in their own right to sit and vote in the House of Lords.

#### WOMEN M.P.s.

The Women's Freedom League is urging the necessity of at least one hundred women candidates standing for Parliament at the next general election, and tried, but without success, to persuade one of its women members to stand as a candidate at the Rusholme by-election. The League's view is that to return women members to Parliament is the shortest way to secure for women equal opportunities, rewards, and responsibilities with men throughout all branches of our national life.

#### PROTECTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS.

At the present time the Women's Freedom League is working strenuously to secure the release of a girl clerk of the Women's Royal Air Force, who was recently sentenced to four months' imprisonment for "attempting to smother" her seven-days-old baby, on the ground that this was a case for a doctor and nurse and not for a judge and jury. The girl was weak and hysterical at the time; she had been deserted by the father of the child, and her own people had refused to allow her to take the baby home. A petition to the Home Secretary for the immediate release of this girl is being extensively signed, as well as a protest against the man's name being suppressed by the Court, coupled with a demand that the law shall be altered so that in similar cases in future the man's name as well as the woman's shall be published, and that both the father and the mother shall be present in Court, both being held equally responsible for the care of the child. Meetings are being organised to bring this case before the public.

FLORENCE A. UNDERWOOD.

### INDIA.

#### Woman Suffrage Deputation to London Appointed. Bombay Suffrage Committee Formed.

The women of Bombay have taken practical action in support of their demand for woman suffrage, in appointing two women delegates to proceed to London to lay before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Government of India Bill the urgency of their demand. The two delegates are Mrs. Hirabai Tata and Miss Ardeshir Tata, the latter a

graduate and Cobden Medallist. The same meeting also appointed a committee to take further steps to promote woman suffrage.

### LUXEMBURG.

#### Women Vote in National Plebiscite.

According to *The Times* the people of Luxembourg were, on September 28, to vote by referendum on the future of their country. Under the Treaty of Peace women over twenty have this right equally with men, and the women of Luxembourg will have cast their first vote in this election.

### NEW ZEALAND.

#### Parliamentary Eligibility: Education and Health Appointments.

Mr. Massey and Sir Joseph Ward were greeted by the National Council of Women in Auckland almost on landing, with the deferred question of women's eligibility. Replies were satisfactory. Large hopes and ideas are forming, of which more later on. The passage of the Women's Restrictions Bill, so suggestive to us, is being eagerly watched by thoughtful women here. Parliament meets on August 28.

The appointment of two women inspectors last month is an earnest of education reform. These inspectors will specially work for the welfare of girls and women teachers in the State schools. With the previous appointment of a Woman Inspector of Child Welfare, put in charge of girls boarded out and in industrial schools, the innovation should mean the securing of several changes long demanded.

The Minister of Health also has granted some measure of a long-promised reform in the appointment of four women Health Patrols to guard the youth of our country. The work of these Patrols, in conjunction with the law regarding social disease, will be keenly watched.

The attention of all intelligent reformers is fixed upon the December elections, when another poll on National Prohibition (this time dangerously weighted with the State Control issue) will be held. The Prohibition Party has gladly welcomed the effective help of the gifted English suffragist, Mrs. Kineton Parkes, whose lecture tours have roused deep interest both this year and last. Mrs. Parkes is now busily launching a large Prohibition movement in the centres—the Women's Efficiency League.

It is felt that, despite the industrial troubles which we share with the world—we, too, have a coal problem under public discussion at the moment,—there is a time of great opportunity and growing just ahead.

JESSIE MACKAY.

August 8, 1919.

### NICARAGUA.

#### Woman Suffrage Society Formed.

Every month brings fresh information of the beginnings of the woman's movement in this Spanish-speaking country. For the first time we have got into touch with a correspondent from Nicaragua, who writes that she shares in the interest in woman suffrage, which inspires the women of the whole world. The writer, Signora Josepha T. de Agueri, is a teacher who not only founded, but for twenty-five years has directed, a normal school. Like so many women pioneers in other countries, she is also a journalist, editing the *Revista Feminina Ilustrada*, a woman's literary and educational review, in which she hopes in future to be able to give some account of the feminist world movement.

Already the working women there have formed a Woman's Club, with woman suffrage as its object. Unfortunately, the middle and upper class women are either hostile or indifferent. She hopes, however, that some day it may be possible to send a representative to an International Women's Suffrage Alliance Convention.

### NORWAY.

#### Children's Laws in Norway.

The series of laws passed on April 10, 1915, which are popularly known as "Children's Laws," are the result of a movement which has of late years made progress in all civilised countries, and which has for its object to protect children,

especially in their early years. Society has had to come forward more and more to protect the child which does not get the necessary care and nurture from its parents. This applies most of all to children born outside wedlock. For the last eighty years there have been many proposals for improving these children's lot, but the movement did not bring about any alterations in the law before 1892, when the father's economic responsibility was increased, and the child's right to its mother's inheritance was established, while the bill as to the father's inheritance did not get as far as a first reading.

In 1896, in Norway, we passed a law establishing a Council of Children's Guardians, which was intended to help all neglected and abandoned children, whether born in wedlock or no. In 1905 the law was amended with reference to children put out to nurse.

All the laws above named helped the child to get better protection than before, but the task of bringing the child nearer to the father in matters concerning the family property was reserved for the so-called "Children's Laws," the proper title of which is "The Law Concerning a Child Whose Parents Have Not Married." It was the chief of the Home Office, Statsraad Castberg, who brought in the "Children's Laws," which came into force on January 1, 1916, or as to certain provisions on January 1, 1917.

In accordance with these laws children born out of wedlock have—

- (a) Right to inherit property from their father.
- (b) Right to the family name of either father or mother.
- (c) Right to a better organised economic support; and also
- (d) The child's mother is guaranteed monetary assistance by the State, as well as the necessary treatment and care both before and after the child's birth.

Naturally these new "Children's Laws" roused a storm of opposition as to the right of inheritance in the case both of name and property. Meetings of protest and discussion, newspaper campaigns, and enormous lists of names of supporters, filled the minds of the whole population, more especially the women's. People predicted a future full of unpleasant surprises when unmarried mothers, accompanied by larger or smaller flocks of children, should descend on the unsuspecting home, demanding name and inheritance, place and a home. People read themselves to a blind frenzy as to what the law did not say, forgetting altogether to read the law in its entirety and context.

Now the law has been in operation between two and three years and little or nothing is heard of it in public. But the "officer responsible for monetary contributions and care," and his large staff who deal with these matters, report that to-day the whole thing is working very smoothly. The law has produced none of the so much-feared mischances. The children's fathers have willingly paid their contributions. There are no more unwilling fathers now than there were before the law. Mothers do not refuse to enter the maternity homes or the other appointed institutions.

As far as one can see, society can, under these laws, protect the child born outside wedlock as far as may be, and—that is not the least of the changes—we can all, women especially, rejoice that the wrong to the young children, for which we are all more or less responsible, can be put right again.

DOROTHEA SCHJOLDAGER,  
Member of Kristiania Council of Children's Guardians.  
—*Nygaard*, September 1.

#### Liberal Women Support Proportional Representation.

In our last issue was given an account of a deputation from the National Council of Women to the President of the Storting to demand the introduction of proportional representation as a method which should facilitate the election of women to the Legislature.

This has been followed by a deputation from the Liberal Women to the Executive of the Liberals in the Storting. From *Nygaard* we take the following account of the deputation and its reception. Fru Agnes Martens Sparre, the only representative of the Liberal Women on the Landsmot, in supporting the proposal before the Executive, said:—

"Women feel bound to put the following question to the men of the Left: 'Will the Left, on the strength of its traditions and political ideals, work for a new electoral law?' The *Venstiekvinnelag*, which has always kept before itself the aim of helping to uphold the high ideals

and principles of the Left, supports the demand for equal value for each vote, and for electoral justice, which is best promoted by several-member constituencies with proportional representation. Arise all! Down with one-man constituencies! The system has been condemned in principle. The guiding principle for all reform work is the development of all resources without reference to sex, position, or class. Therefore women should not be excluded from taking their share in the work and responsibility for all the subjects of the State. Society demands that the woman element should make itself felt in legislation, and women maintain that no Storting gives a true expression to the claim for electoral justice so long as women have no part in the highest responsibility which is represented in the Storting. The responsibility for the political course for the coming year lies with the Left."

The President, Tveiten, replied as follows:—

"At present, as is well known, there are more bills than parties. If a new electoral system comes into being it will be as the result of compromise. In answer to the strong attack which was made on the present Left for not following ideal principles, women now had the vote, and none could hinder them from getting their representatives into the Storting if they worked hard enough, had personalities endowed with sufficient knowledge, and political insight to make themselves felt politically. As to the position of the Left in regard to the electoral law, he could only say that the Left would work for several-member constituencies with proportional representation."

#### Woman Member of League of Nations Parliament.



FRU BETZY KJELSBERG,  
Factory Inspector, Norway.

It is appropriate that Norway, the first sovereign State to enfranchise its women, should be the first to choose a woman as one of its three representatives to the Assembly of the League of Nations. Betzy Kjelsberg, whose portrait we show, is a factory inspector and a distinguished member of the women's movement. The Assembly of the League of Nations is the governing body to which every State belonging to the League has the right to send their members, although the members have not more than one vote each. It is therefore the most representative body in the world. We congratulate Norway that it should have given the lead to other countries in ensuring that the new body shall recognise from the beginning that the nations of the world should be guided by men and women working in co-operation.

#### Mothers' Pensions.

The report of the committee set up in Christiania to consider the question of mothers' pensions has just been published. It is there proposed that pensions should be paid to widows,

separated and divorced wives with children, as well as to unmarried mothers, in all cases where their income does not exceed 1,000 kroner a year. It is estimated that the expense will work out at 1,872,300 kroner a year.

—*Nygaard*, September 1.

#### SOUTH AFRICA—Cape Province.

##### Eligibility to Municipal Councils.

Women have obtained the right to be elected to Municipal Councils in the Cape Province.

##### Rhodesia.

##### Woman Suffrage Gained.

By the Women's Enfranchisement Ordinance, 1919, which was assented to by the High Commissioner on July 4th, 1919, women become qualified as electors and to be elected as members of the Legislative Council on the same terms as men. A special provision to meet the case of married women, who might not otherwise be technically qualified, lays it down that a married woman of twenty-one, residing with her husband, unless she is married under some system of polygamy, shall be considered to have the necessary occupation and salary qualifications if her husband has them. To enable the women to vote at the next election a special register is being compiled.

##### SPAIN.

##### Woman Suffrage Proposed.

The Madrid correspondent of the *Daily Express* reports that a Bill which includes the extension of the franchise to all women of more than twenty-three years of age is to be submitted to the Spanish Cabinet by the Minister of the Interior. The other electoral changes included in the Measure are compulsory voting and proportional representation, with one representative for every 50,000 inhabitants.

##### SWITZERLAND.

##### Woman Suffrage Proposed in Bale-Ville.

The Bale-Ville State Council submitted to the Grand Council a Bill modifying the Constitution of the Canton so as to enable women to vote in the business of the Canton, Municipality and the Commune. It was said that the number of the electors would approximately be doubled thereby, and the number of votes in a Cantonal election would be raised from 1,000 to 2,000. It is provided that a husband and wife should not both be able to be members of the State Council at the same time.

—*Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne*.

##### Feminist Summer School.

##### Anti-Suffrage Society.

The holidays are just over. As they are a time for amusements I hope I may be allowed just for once to talk to the readers of *Jus Suffragii* of the lighter rather than the more serious sides of suffrage.

The first "suffrage amusement" of the summer has been our holiday course. The idea is certainly not new for British and American women, but here it was the first time that any such attempt had been made to gather together women and girls, who came from all parts of the country, to a pretty spot in the mountains to hear about a host of questions which in the ordinary overburdened life it is impossible to study properly. They all wanted to get to know each other better, and to discuss problems interesting to women, for which there is little time at meetings in town in the winter. It was an absolute success. We were about thirty women at Chateau d'Oex, a pretty village in Vaud. It is a place well known to British military prisoners of war, as they have spent two years there. It is also a centre for excursions, being surrounded by beautiful forests and verdant pastures. What is more, a great many members of the Chateau d'Oex Union of Women, who had organised everything so well for our reception, did not miss the opportunity of profiting by their

good luck to inform themselves about the suffrage movement. They reinforced their convictions to such good account that a local suffrage group was founded on the spot. The "students" belonged to all classes, and were of all ages and professions. Nothing was more touching than to see the goodwill and simplicity of the oldest among them, or the ardour and enthusiasm of the youngest. Thanks to the cordiality, which did not cease the whole time, some real friendships were made among those who had come from different parts of Switzerland.

The course, which lasted a week, consisted first of a theoretical part, which included conferences on the history of the suffrage movement in the most important countries and on the lives of prominent suffragists; and, secondly, of a practical part, including how to take the chair, the arrangement of debates and public conferences, writing of minutes, the making of reports for the Press, etc. These were very much appreciated, and an opportunity was given for an interesting exchange of ideas, which often produced real outbursts of laughter. In the neighbourhood, every afternoon, there were walks together, tea in the fields, or parties for gathering rhododendrons in the meadows on the sides of the mountains. Every evening we arranged conferences for propaganda purposes, either at Chateau d'Oex itself or in neighbouring villages, which we reached by boat, on foot, or in carriages. In this way we sowed the good seed of votes for women in the whole neighbourhood. In fact, everything was such a great success that when we broke up we already talked of next year's holiday course.

##### ANTI-SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

The second amusing event of our summer was an unhappy attempt to create an anti-suffrage league in the Canton of Vaud. At the end of June announcements appeared in all the Vaud press appealing for members for this new movement founded for the purpose of attacking suffrage as being a hot-house plant which would be unable to take root in our country. They asserted that it was woman's duty to stay at home and limit her action to the influence she had over her husband and sons . . . etc. : in short, all the stupid old anti arguments. On August 31 last a big meeting was organised in Lausanne definitely to constitute this anti-suffrage league. According to the figures acknowledged by the initiators themselves, 198 persons were present, of whom about a hundred were suffragists. The latter found that they were most rudely treated. They were not allowed to finish speaking when they tried to ask innocent questions, and to find out how these ladies proposed to obtain the social reforms that they had on their programme without the official vote! One also heard very inaccurate statements from a certain Miss Bessen, who was the soul of this movement. For instance, she said that in the countries where women have the vote the great majority of them are hostile to this right; or, again, that the suffrage leads directly to Bolshevism. In the end the outraged suffragists retired, and the others proceeded with the constitution of an "Anti-Suffrage Feminist League for Social Reforms." This title even indicates the inconsistency of the movement. The Vaud paper, *Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne*, expresses it very well when it says: "This resolution is the formal condemnation of the whole anti-suffrage movement. . . . After having declared that women ought to stay at home, the meeting created a new League; . . . and, what is even more amusing, it created it for social reforms, but prohibited its members from demanding the right of voting. The League in question, therefore, stamps itself with a certificate of incapacity from the beginning. . . . and its authors have received no serious response from the people. They were even in the minority at the conference which they had convoked. . . ."

This movement, which, we think, may possibly be started for some secret political manoeuvre, cannot, however, be anything but excellent for the progress of suffrage in the Canton Vaud, which is always rather slow to take up new ideas, on account of its being largely agricultural. All the papers discussed the question on this occasion, and the local suffrage societies received a whip-up for their autumn activities. So we have some good campaigns in view.

EMILIE GOULD,

President of the Swiss Association for Woman Suffrage.

### First Discussion on Women Suffrage in the Nationalrat.

For the first time the question of woman suffrage has been debated in the First Chamber of the Swiss Federal Legislature, the Nationalrat. The *Frauenbestrebungen* writes that while not much enthusiasm was shown, this first discussion in the Federal Legislature is a fact of great historic importance in the Swiss women's movement.

The proposal, introduced by M. Gotteshein and supported by several other members of the Nationalrat, urged the Bundesrat, when they are bringing the question of the revision of the Constitution before the Nationalrat, to include in their proposals the same political rights for women as for men.

The motion had evidently been put in this form because it is only the Bundesrat, the elected executive of seven, which can bring legislative proposals before the Legislature.

His proposal included the admission of women to political rights in election of the Nationalrat, the Bundesrat, the Law Courts, Insurance Courts, and as witnesses—that is, political rights in Federal but not in Cantonal matters. His speech may be summarised as follows: The meaning of political or citizen rights is that women, as members of the nation, are part of the State organism, and as such have law-making and political rights of voting and making laws. They have equally the right to vote, and the right to be elected. M. Gotteshein touched on a few of the objections to woman suffrage. If women take part in public affairs the home would be destroyed, the family demoralised, and the husband would require to do the housekeeping, while the women would do the business of the country. The charming feminine woman would turn into the domineering suffragette. The power of voting, however, he pointed out, would not deprive woman of her function as wife and mother. There are few elections. No active member of the State had neglected his business because of his election or voting duties. Even if women were eligible they were unlikely thereby to be taken from their household duties. Youths of 20 were eligible for election. None that he knew of had been elected. Only a woman of exceptional abilities would be elected, and she would be an acquisition. The vote would not break up the family. Women would mostly vote like their husbands. The doubts and fears of opponents were groundless, as was shown by countries where women already have voted for many years. Before the war women voted for communal elections in thirty-seven countries. They also vote for the legislatures in nineteen countries. Since the war women had secured voting rights in Canada, Britain, Germany, Hungary, etc. Only in Britain have suffragettes made their appearance. Their existence cannot be used as a decisive argument against the vote. Not many women had been elected to legislatures. In Britain none had been elected. It was wrong to ask whether women desired political rights. It should be asked, is it in the interest of the State to admit them? Where would the country be if only those especially concerned were consulted, for example, about taxes, conscription, school attendance? The State had an interest in inducing women to take part in public business. Those who stood aloof were they whose domestic or social position deprived them of experiencing every-day life. The democratic Republic depended for its success on the co-operation of all. Women were called to take part in the modern State.

This conclusion was not come to at once in the history of modern democracy. It lies in the path of its necessary development, so that it had to force its way in every modern democracy. This the history of the women's question and women's voting rights showed, more especially in the unexpected quick development which the thoughts in regard to the taking part of women in State government had made since the war.

The position which the woman had been forced to accept in the countries at war had finally done away with the superstition amongst those of understanding that man was the lord of creation, and that the woman was intellectually and morally below him. It had been proved that if one gave to woman the position to which she was entitled she could fill it. That was what has been lacking up till now. The woman was judged not as co-operating in man's work, especially in the so-called upper-class families, but as an ornament in the home, as a plaything for the husband, a "Nora" in Ibsen's "Doll's House." Against the political equality between

woman and man the objection was continually raised that such an equality could only be justified if the woman accepted the same duties as the man. That, however, was not and never would be the case, because the most important duty of a citizen, the duty of defence, could not be placed upon women. This objection, which in itself is groundless, is more so at the present time. Some day Peace must come, and the League of Nations, and with it the curtailing of the duty of bearing arms. There were duties and problems in the public life of the people which were just as important for the welfare of the State and its members as bearing arms, problems in the solving of which women were willing to take their share. These were the social and domestic questions of the present and the future. The co-operation of women in the important work of social and domestic life led to the collapse of the above-named objection, so that also in this respect there was no reason why women should be excluded from taking part in the active rights of citizens or placed in a worse position than men.

M. Gotteshein concluded his speech by moving that the proposal in favour of Woman Suffrage should be placed before the Joint State Assembly.

### THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

#### Political Situation on Suffrage and Prohibition.

##### FURTHER STATES RATIFY FEDERAL AMENDMENT.

If this letter could be deferred even another day it would undoubtedly tell of the ratification of the Federal Suffrage Amendment by two more States, Minnesota and New Hampshire. The former ratified the amendment at a special session, September 8, by a vote in the Lower House of 120 to 9, and in the Senate of 60 to 5. At a special session of the New Hampshire Legislature, September 9 (to-day), the Lower House ratified by 212 to 143, and the Senate will vote to-morrow. This brings the number to sixteen. Utah has called a special session for September 29, and is sure to ratify, as it is an equal-suffrage State. If one more can be secured during September, eighteen, or one-half, of the required number of ratifications will have been obtained. The Governor of Colorado has called a special session, but has not fixed the date, and this may be the eighteenth State; or it may be Oklahoma, as it. Republican State organisation has offered to pay all expenses of the Republican members at a special session of the Legislature, declaring that "the ratification of the Federal Suffrage Amendment is of great national importance." A number of other Governors have announced that they will call a special session for this purpose by the first of January. There are various reasons for their wanting to delay. In some instances they fear that if the Legislature meets it will take some action on other measures which the Governor does not want considered at present, and, therefore, they feel safer when it is not in session!

When this Federal Amendment was finally submitted the opponents declared that it would not be ratified by any of the Southern States, and that they would have no difficulty in holding thirteen in line against it, which are all that would be necessary to prevent its adoption as part of the National Constitution. If that were the case we naturally ask why they had made a life or death struggle to prevent it from being submitted. When Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri ratified, the opponents said that they were so strongly influenced by the equal-suffrage States which adjoined them on the West, that they had become really more Western than Southern. They will find it difficult to make an excuse for the action that was taken by the State Democratic Convention of Kentucky, on September 5, which put a plank in its platform reading as follows: "We favour the ratification by the Legislature of Kentucky at its next session of the Amendment to the Constitution of the United States extending to women the right of suffrage, and we urge our representatives in the Legislature, and all executive or other officers, to use their votes and influence in every legitimate way to bring about the ratification of same."

The platform did not stop with this declaration, but said: "We pledge ourselves to support in the next General Assembly, if the Federal Amendment has not become operative by that time, the submission of an amendment to the State Constitu-

tion granting suffrage to women on the same terms as to men, and, when the amendment is submitted, to support it at the polls as a party measure." Although Kentucky is a Democratic State, it is by no means certain that the party leaders could control a majority of the individual men when it came to casting a secret ballot on woman suffrage, as they would do if the State Constitution were amended. The suffragists, therefore, would regret having to go to the labour and expense of a State campaign, and they have worked very hard to secure the ratification of the Federal Amendment, which would make this unnecessary. It must be clearly understood, however, that when a State ratifies, this does not give the suffrage to the women of that State, but they must wait until thirty-six have ratified and the amendment has been declared a part of the Federal or National Constitution.

Kentucky is a thoroughly Southern State, and is not bordered by any State where equal suffrage exists. Its action represents the wishes of the Democratic party of the State, which is always in control. It was taken at the urgent wish of President Wilson and the Democratic National Committee, who are sufficiently wise and far-sighted to see that twelve of the fifteen States which have already ratified are normally Republican, and that unless more Democratic States are put on the list, the Republicans, in the Presidential campaign of 1920, can claim nearly all of the credit for the Federal Amendment.

If the reader will turn to the "suffrage map" published in the June number of the *International News*, showing the States that had given the Presidential vote to women, she will notice that all of the South-eastern States are black. They will continue to remain black, as those who control their politics are absolutely opposed to woman suffrage in any form. They say that they fear the coloured women's vote, but this is mere camouflage, as each State could give it to white women only if it wished to do so. There is no hope of ratification in the States beginning with Louisiana and ending with Virginia—eight of them. Tennessee would ratify, but a State law forbids any action on a Federal Amendment by a Legislature that has not been elected on this issue, and this will not be possible in that State until 1921, so it must be eliminated. Therefore nine States must be conceded to the opposition. This leaves it only four more to hold in order to prevent the Federal Suffrage Amendment from becoming a part of the National Constitution.

Four of the States which are now black on the map—Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire—have already ratified. New Mexico, Kentucky, West Virginia, and probably Maryland will ratify. Maine and Rhode Island will do so. The struggle will be narrowed down, therefore, to the four States of Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Vermont. All of them are controlled to a large extent by the liquor interests, who are making their last stand. The Legislatures of Delaware, Connecticut, and Vermont do not meet until 1921, and thus far the Governors, who are anti-suffragists, have refused to call a special session. The last two may be forced to do so by the leaders of the Republican party. That of New Jersey meets annually, and ratification there depends on whether the "drys" or the "wets" gain control of the next Legislature. Delaware is a "boss"-controlled State, but its newly elected United States Senator voted for the suffrage amendment. Of course the suffragists expect to carry two of these four States, but at the present moment it is impossible to predict which two it will be.

It is, of course, a great handicap to be obliged to concede to the opposition nine States. The Legislatures of Georgia, Alabama, and Virginia have defeated the ratification of the amendment in one house. Its friends in the Georgia and Virginia Legislatures tried very hard to prevent a vote, but the opposition was determined to go on record. It was voted on in the Alabama Senate, reconsidered and voted on a second time, and on both occasions a change of three votes would have carried it. It did not come to a vote in the Lower House, and the Legislature will not meet again for four years. Those of Virginia and Georgia will meet again next year. To each of these three States President Wilson sent a written appeal for ratification, and the Democratic National Committee and prominent members of the party made every possible effort to secure it, but nothing could move the non-progressive reactionary haters of equal suffrage.

#### FINAL ACTION ON PROHIBITION.

Important action on National Prohibition of the Liquor Traffic has recently been taken, which makes doubly effective the Federal Amendment that has been adopted. Only the Lower House had acted when last month's letter was written, and I thought the Senate would act before the letter was published, but it didn't do so until the first week in September. There had been no adequate legislation for enforcement, and the liquor interests were taking advantage of this fact to defy and discredit the law in countless places throughout the country. A Bill has now passed both houses of Congress for a drastic enforcement of the law. This is placed under Federal control instead of that of the States, which the opponents worked hard to secure, as they would have found it easier and safer to break State than Federal laws. The control is placed entirely in the hands of the United States Commissioner of Internal Revenue, backed by the Federal Department of Justice and the Federal Courts. Violations of the law will be punished by fines of from \$100 to \$1,000, and to imprisonment from thirty days to one year. The Bill is divided into three sections. The first deals with the enforcement of the Prohibition Law which was passed by Congress to last until the end of the demobilisation of the army; the second deals with the Federal Amendment, which goes into effect January 16 and is permanent; the third deals with the production and distribution of alcohol for industrial purposes.

Medicinal, antiseptic, and toilet preparations and flavouring extracts must be manufactured by the formulas of the United States Pharmacopoeia, which make them impossible as beverages. Physicians are permitted to prescribe liquor as a medicine by obtaining an official permit. Special permission is given for the manufacture and distribution of wines for the Sacrament. Home-made cider is permitted, but as soon as it becomes strong it cannot be sold or distributed, but can only be used in the home. Places where alcohol for industrial purposes is manufactured or stored must be put under bond by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue. Any building, boat, or other place where liquor is sold, is declared a "nuisance," and its keeper is subject to fine and imprisonment. Search or seizure of liquor on private premises is forbidden unless it can be shown that it is being sold. A family may keep it for its own consumption and to offer to friends in hospitality.

The most important provision of this law is the definition of what constitutes "intoxicating" liquor. This has been the great bone of contention ever since the War-time Law and the Federal Amendment were passed. There has been no question about the prohibition of whisky and brandy, but the contest has raged around the so-called light wines and beer. The anti-Prohibitionists have fought to have beer which contains 2.75 per cent. of alcohol declared non-intoxicating, and the same with wines. The Prohibitionists have insisted that such liquors were intoxicating. The matter has gone into the courts in many States, with various decisions on this point. This law now passed by Congress declares that any liquor containing more than one and a half per cent. of alcohol is intoxicating and comes under the provisions of the law. This will probably close every saloon in the United States, as a very large proportion of them have already found it impossible to keep open by selling the 2.75 per cent. liquors. Another important provision is the establishment of absolute prohibition in the Canal Zone—that is, the zone through which the Panama Canal passes.

There are some slight differences between the Bill which went through the Lower House of Congress and the one which has passed the Senate, and the two will go to a conference; but it is expected that an agreement will be easily reached, and as soon as this is done the Prohibition law of the land will be promulgated. It is clearly evident that the Prohibition movement is not entirely a moral one, but that it is largely economic. Business men throughout the country favour it, and the sentiment for it constantly grows stronger, as even the two months since the War-time Prohibition Act went into operation on July 1 have demonstrated its value from a business point of view. The savings' banks, the manufacturers, the courts, and those in charge of charitable and penal institutions, all testify to its advantageous effect even in this brief space of time. Its opponents have not yet entirely given up the fight, but the great distillers' and brewers' associations are spending millions of dollars to employ legal

counsel, to subsidise the Press and to influence public sentiment against these laws. They are going to carry the fight into the elections this fall, and as far as possible defeat every legislator, both State and National, who is in favour of them. It is the general opinion that they will meet with very little success.

Probably complete demobilisation of the army will be declared by the first of October, and in that case the War-time Prohibition Law will be repealed. This will allow an interim of three and a half months before the Federal Prohibition Amendment goes into effect (January 16, 1920), and the vast amounts of liquor now on hand will be brought forth and sold in those States that have not their own Prohibition laws. The result is likely to be an orgy of drunkenness that will make the whole country glad to welcome the Prohibition Amendment.

IDA HUSTED HARPER.

The news from New Hampshire came in while I was revising this letter.

New York, September 9, 1919.

URUGUAY.

First Woman Suffrage Society Formed.

From South America has come the first application for affiliation to the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, from a new society formed at Montevideo on August 4 of this year, by Dr. Luisi, under the title Uruguayan Alliance for Woman Suffrage. The Society has for its object the obtaining for women of the right of the suffrage on the same terms as men. A special provision in the rules lays it down that men are to be eligible as members on the same terms as women. Below follows the first official account of the work of the Society:—

The activity of our Council (i.e., National Council of Women) was kept up with enthusiasm throughout the year. Our Association had advanced steadily under the leadership of Mme. Carrio de Polleri on account of the long illness of our President, Dr. Paulina Luisi. The temporary President, Mme. Polleri, called a great suffrage convention in June to prepare our minds for the formation of a new suffrage grouping in accordance with Dr. Luisi's plan to establish a new suffrage society.

The President said in her speech it was necessary—

1. To unite the Press in favour of the evolution of women, and to guide woman in the vindication of her full emancipation.
2. To instruct the mass of women on their domestic duties, and the necessity of organisations for guiding women's opinion.
3. To prepare women to fill with dignity their future position in political society; and
4. To bring to the notice of the public authorities the feeling of the whole sex with a view to obtaining the right to work.

In the first days of August, on again taking up the Presidency of the Committee of the Council, Dr. Paulina Luisi proposed to the Executive that a new society should be formed having woman suffrage as sole object, which would make it possible for Uruguay to affiliate with the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, "with which we are in such cordial relations that its organ, *Jus Suffragii*, publishes from time to time news of our work." The President's proposal met with the greatest sympathy, and on August 4 the Uruguayan Alliance for Woman Suffrage was formed, with the following executive committee: President, Mme. Carmen Cuestas de Nery; 1er Vice-Présidente, Mme. Lira Brum de Delgado; 2me Vice-Présidente, Mme. Adela Rodriguez de Morato; Tresoriere, Mme. Cata Castro de Quintela; Secrétaire-Generale, Mme. Dr. Paulina Luisi; Secrétaire Adjointe, Mme. Fanny Carrio de Polleri; Conseilleres, Mme. Herminia Mojana de Brito Foresti, Mme. Haydée Bourdillon de Brignole, Mlle. Angela A. Pérez, Mme. Emilia Echavarría de Gallardo.

We already have a great number of members, having constituted the Association out of all the women who adhered to the work of the suffrage section of the National Council. The rules were adopted with slight modifications, and it was resolved to ask Mrs. Chapman Catt to accept the Association as an auxiliary of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

Besides this work in Uruguay, Dr. Paulina Luisi, while absent from the Council, taking advantage of her journey and of the rest ordered by her doctors, held a series of suffrage

meetings in different towns in the Argentine, in support of the propaganda of a new feminist association recently formed in that country—the National Feminist Union. These meetings were a very great success, and had begun to rouse public opinion on the question of woman suffrage in that country.

In another line of ideas we shall send you shortly an account of the campaign made by our President, Dr. Luisi, together with the Socialist Deputy, Dr. Angel M. Gimenez, on the subject of the traffic in women and the Abolition of the State Regulation of Vice.

We add also the petition which the Equal Moral Standard Committee has addressed to the President of the Republic, asking that Uruguay be included in the International Convention Against the Traffic in Women, signed in Paris in 1910.

ANGELA H. PEREZ, Secretary.

International Appreciation of Miss Sheepshanks.

Many letters expressing warm appreciation of the splendid services rendered by Miss Sheepshanks to the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, and conveying to her their warmest wishes for any future undertaking, have been received at headquarters. These include letters from Miss Holmgren, Sweden; Mrs. Husted Harper, Miss Schlingheyde, U.S.A.; Mrs. Dobelli Zampetti and Dr. Ancona, Italy; Frau Stritt and *Die Gleichheit*, Germany; Mrs. Ruxton, South Africa; Mrs. Munch, Denmark; Frau Fürth and Frau Hainisch, Austria; and the Women's Freedom League, Great Britain.

The following appreciation of Miss Sheepshanks' work appeared in the September number of our French edition:—

"We very much regret to inform our readers that Miss Mary Sheepshanks, who has edited our paper since 1913, has resigned her position. All those who appreciated her capability, and had the privilege of coming into personal contact with her, will be particularly sorry.

"It was certainly under most difficult circumstances that Miss Sheepshanks so ably directed *Jus Suffragii* during the war. When communications were more or less cut, when suffragists of various countries were necessarily employed in activities other than woman suffrage, and when the international reports were 'burning' on several points, Miss Sheepshanks, with marvellous generosity and tact, to which everyone pays homage, knew how to maintain the only possible link between the countries affiliated to our Alliance; how to give the news of each country to the other feminists who were working with the same object in view, and in this way to throw a ray of light into the darkness of even the darkest days. There are many to whom the arrival of *Jus* has always been a joy and comfort, and who would like to be associated with the sentiments expressed in the letter from Miss H. C. Newcomb, published in last month's paper.

"As editor of the French edition, I hope I may be allowed to join most sincerely in this appreciation. We have so often admired the tact with which Miss Sheepshanks edited our journal, and her talent for getting information and turning it to such good use. Thanks to her, *Jus* has become a publication whose authority and usefulness are brought home to all who want to keep in touch not only with the suffrage, but with the feminist movement all over the world.

"We hope she will find great scope for her capabilities as secretary of the Fight the Famine Council. In the name of the French Edition readers we also extend a warm welcome to the new Editor, Mrs. Abbott, who is well known as a suffrage speaker, and who represented the celebrated Scottish Women's Hospitals in her recent tours on their behalf in India, Australia, and New Zealand."

EMILIE GOURD.

Yugoslav Women in Council.

A Serbian correspondent sends us news of the first Congress of South Slav women ever held. It took place at Belgrade in the last days of September. Representatives of all the women's organisations in Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia journeyed from various and distant regions of the newly freed lands to take part in this historic gathering of the wives, mothers, and daughters of Yugoslavia. Madame Danitsa Hristitch, president of the Serbian Women's Council, whose unselfish devotion and prodigious activity before and during the war have won for her

a foremost place among the women workers of Serbia, welcomed the delegates in a striking address. "Now that the war is over, the great task begins for the Yugoslav woman. Throughout the darkest days of our history we, each and all, had ever before us the ideal of reunion. To-day it is an accomplished fact, and on us women devolves the establishment of perfect harmony, the dispelling of misunderstanding, and the preparation of a safe and golden future for that generation whose fathers have shed their blood to secure freedom and unity. Not one of us but can contribute her part towards the construction of our new kingdom. There are moral and physical evils to be remedied—all the terrible effects of the war to be dealt with and healed—but we can, and we shall, succeed in our endeavours, and thus attain for ourselves a position of equality with our brave men, equality in rights and duties of citizenship."—*Common Cause*, October 10, 1919.

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ADELA COIT, Hon. Treasurer.

Conference on India.

The conference on India at the Steinway Hall on October 4, arranged by the Britain and India Association, was full of interest. A large number of Indian men and women were present, and English delegates from the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, the Women's International League, the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, the Actresses' Franchise League, the National Council of Women, the Federation of Women Workers, as well as several branches of the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Workers' Educational Association, and many other organisations. It was agreed that in order to make the discussions perfectly free no resolution should be voted upon, but among those which were printed upon the programme was one of special interest to readers, in the following terms: "That this Conference requests the Secretary of State for India to remove the disqualification imposed by the Reform Bill on women, in common with lunatics and criminals, as regards the franchise, and trusts that the Parliament, which only enfranchised British women after forty years of bitter struggle, leading to the imprisonment and torture of many noble women, will not introduce this new cause of unrest and disturbance into India."

Position of Indian Women.

The discussion on the position of Indian women was opened by one Indian lady, Mrs. N. C. Sen, and continued by another, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Mrs. Sen referred to India's great past, in which Indian women had played their part, and asked: "Shall the great future now arising on India's horizon be for her men alone?" Mrs. Naidu spoke with passionate confidence of the certain victory of the women's cause. Several Indian men members of the Conference supported the women's claim, and one declared that all the educated Indian men, without exception, desired to see the enfranchisement of the women.—*Common Cause*, October 10, 1919.



## TUNIS.

## Electoral Rights for Tunisian Women.

The Resident-General, prompted by the French law of February 19, 1908, has issued a decree ordering that the names of women shall be inscribed on the electoral lists of the Consultative Chamber of Agriculture of North Tunis, the Chambers of Commerce of Tunis and Bizerte, and the mixed Chambers of Central and Southern Tunis.

—*Depêche Coloniale*, September 12, 1919.

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