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THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS IN 1926.

THE League has issued a summary of its activities in 1926, in which it marks as of far-reaching importance the admission of Germany and the re-organisation of the Council. The next items mentioned are the preparations for the Conferences on the reduction and limitation of armaments, and international economics, both of which were referred to in our Notes last month. The political activities of the League embraced the questions of Mosul, settled by the Turkish and British Governments on the lines of the Council's recommendation, and the Graeco-Bulgarian incident which is now being dealt with similarly.

The Court of International Justice held its ordinary session in June, and an extraordinary session in January to give a decision on matters relating to German interests in Polish Upper Silesia. In the course of the year Germany, Abyssinia and Guatemala acceded to the Statute of the Court, and the two latter at the same time signed the clause regarding the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court. The State Department at Washington sent a communication embodying the decision of the Senate approving the accession of the United States to the Court subject to certain conditions and reservations. The Council of the League invited all Governments signatory to the Protocol of the Court to meet in Conference, and this Conference drew up a Final Act embodying its views on each of the five American reservations. Copies of this Act have been sent to all the Signatory States, and these States have been invited to adopt the conclusions of the Act as the basis of their replies to the United States.

The Committee for the Progressive Codification of International Law studied eleven questions submitted by its sub-committee as ripe for codification, including the question of nationality, diplomatic privileges, procedure of international conferences and procedure for the conclusion and drafting of treaties.

At the request of the Assembly the Council decided that a report should be submitted to it every six months on the position as regards the ratification of agreements and conventions concluded under the auspices of the League. It called the attention of the Governments to the necessity of taking suitable steps to facilitate and expedite these ratifications.

This year the Health Organisation has extended its activity to non-European countries, the Far East and Africa. There is an Epidemiological Intelligence Office at Singapore, and an international commission is studying sleeping sickness in Uganda. The possibility of establishing a centre for Africa on the Singapore lines is being considered. Interchanges of public health officials and enquiries into malaria, cancer, etc., are being continued.

The International Institute on Intellectual Co-operation was officially inaugurated in January. In addition to its other activities the Committee has given special attention to the question of instructing the children in the aims of the League.

In the humanitarian field, the conclusion of the International Slavery Convention (see our issue of December) and the drafting of a scheme for an international union for the relief of peoples stricken by disaster are the two most important achievements. As

regards the second question an international conference has been summoned for July 4th, 1927, in order to consider the draft agreement for setting up an International Relief Union.

Work has proceeded for the relief of Russian, Armenian, Bulgarian and other refugees. The Opium Committee having noted an increase in the traffic in drugs, the Council has urged upon the Governments the urgent need for adherence or ratification to the Geneva Convention of 1925.

Work has also proceeded on questions of Minorities, on administrative questions in the Saar and Danzig, on Mandates, and on economic and financial questions.

The Assembly voted a credit for the purchase of the site and the construction of the necessary buildings for the permanent quarters of the League on the borders of the Lake of Geneva. A Jury of Architects has been appointed by the Council and an international competition has been organised for the best plan for the proposed buildings, to close on January 25th of this year.

REVIEWS.

The Evolution of Woman, by G. W. Johnson, C.M.G., published by Robert Holden and Co., Ltd., 31, Gower Street, London, W.C.1., price 8/6.

This book was the last piece of work which Mr. Johnson did for one of the many good causes he had at heart before his death, and is preceded by a memoir which is a revelation of the greatness of the loss which those causes have suffered. The long list of books consulted for the purpose of this work shows that compact and easily read as it is, it was the fruit of thorough study, as well as profound conviction.

The plan of the book is to trace briefly the position of women from primitive conditions, through the great civilisations of the past until the nineteenth century saw the beginnings of the women's movement properly so-called. Then follows a survey of the effect of that movement on education; the economic status of wives; women in medicine, the public service, and industry; the moral standard; the position of children; marriage and politics. The whole book only runs to 270 pages of pleasantly large easily-read type, so that it is obvious that these matters are not dealt with in detail, but that Mr. Johnson intended to give a survey which would, better than a long and involved history, show just what has happened to make the position of women what it is to-day. What it does not tell us, and what perhaps no studies of man's beginnings will ever reveal, is just how and why it happened so early in those beginnings that man looked upon woman as an inferior animal. That his superiority of physical strength enabled him to put that view into practice is clear, but why did he hold it? There seems no evidence of the beginning of such a standpoint among the beasts. But this is a digression, though it arises from the first chapter of this book which sets down the view that there has never been a primitive stage where women ruled, but that "men have always and everywhere been the ruling sex."

So through the centuries and the civilisations of Egypt, Greece and Rome, we see the woman regarded as property, sometimes allowed a little education and a little say in affairs, but more often simply regarded as a drudge and a machine for producing children. Of course there have been "feminists" in all times, and some of those from whom Mr. Johnson quotes had interesting, touching and comic things to say. Then gradually as education became wider for men, women slipped in until there were enough of them to demand fuller opportunities yet. With wider education, came the demand for better economic conditions and better chances of employment. All this has been a gradual evolution, and the War which at the time seemed to have brought a *revolution* in these matters, is seen after all to have brought only a slightly increased pace in the slower process. The chapter on women in industry is

as sad reading as all references to that vexed question seem to be: women are in industry to stay, and yet how blindly and impotently for the most part they and their male fellow workers have grasped the implications of that fact. Mr. Johnson seems mildly to reprove the feminist struggle against protective legislation for women only, though only because he believes that it may prove the best way to secure it for all workers alike in the end. The chapter on the Moral Standard is as clear and courageous as one would expect from one whose greatest ardour was roused in this cause. The root of the matter is seen to lie—as in the end it must—in the realisation by men of the necessity for self-respect founded on self-control. Is there no sting for men in this fine sentence: "The scourge and the balm alike have always been applied to the woman, hardly ever to the man, who has, forsooth, been thought to be undeserving of restraint and incapable of reclamation"?

The chapter on marriage deals with the necessity for comradeship as a true basis, and gives some thoughtful consideration to the vexed question of divorce. The history of woman franchise is briefly reviewed and an appeal is made for the throwing down of the "Last Barrier"—the ministry of women in the Churches. The concluding chapter is a brief call for full co-operation of both sexes throughout the whole of human activities as the only sure basis of future progress.

The whole book is international, dealing with no one country, and though not of a nature or extent to meet the needs of a profound student, is extraordinarily useful as bringing together the facts and showing the continuity of woman's long struggle towards full realisation of her human destiny.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

The following paragraphs are largely taken from miscellaneous press sources and their accuracy is not vouched for by our National Auxiliaries.

A Woman Communist Leader.

It is interesting to note that a woman has been elected by the Communist International to the *Presidium* of twenty-five persons which constitutes its inner circle. The woman in question is the veteran Clara Zetkin, who has been since 1920 an active member of the German Reichstag.

Australia.

The State Industrial Commission of New South Wales has decided not to recommend a rise in the basic wage for males, which is now four guineas weekly, but advocated a scheme of child endowment probably costing the employers 5 or 6 per cent. on the wages bill. The Commission determined the standard of living of a family of five at 106s. weekly.

Baluchistan.

In "The Times" of December 30th, it is recorded that the abolition of slavery has been decided upon in the State of Kalat, in Baluchistan, a maritime country between India and Persia. The Khan of Kalat, for some time desired to liberate all the slaves in his dominions. Some of the tribal chiefs immediately supported him, but others in the more remote part of the State at first made objections. They soon abandoned their opposition, however, and the Khan issued a proclamation on November 4th, abolishing private property in male and female slaves throughout his State. Slaves who wish to remain with their masters may do so, but on wages. Slavery under which families could be sold apart has existed from very ancient times in Kalat, and its abolition is the culmination of the long-continued efforts of the administration of Baluchistan to soften its rigour.

France.

A Woman Surgeon.

Mme. Erian Garfield is the first woman surgeon admitted to practice in the hospitals of Paris.

Ban on Women in Paris Theatre Removed.

M. Heriot, Minister of Fine Arts, has decreed that the parterre of the Comédie-Française, from January

15th, must be open to both men and women alike. Thus is abolished the last of the tradition that it was hardly respectable for ladies to be seen in any part of the floor of the house. The parterre corresponds to the pit.

Great Britain. First Woman B.V.Sc.

Miss Edith Gertrude Knight was loudly cheered when she received at Liverpool University her degree of Bachelor of Veterinary Science. She is the first woman in England to have the degree conferred upon her.

Women in Business.

Miss Edith Beesley has just been appointed as West End branch manager of the Southern Life Association. It is the first time a woman has occupied this position.

The London Chamber of Commerce list reveals that there are 110 women directors who are members of the Chamber. A year ago there were between 50 and 60, and two years ago there were only five.

Each of these 110 women is earning between £600 and £6,000 a year. A few of the most successful are earning between £6,000 and £20,000 a year.

Italy.

The exclusion of women teachers is projected from instructing classes in literature, philosophy and history in the higher schools and institutions.

In such higher schools (lyceums) women may continue to teach languages, mathematics, physics, science, and economy, while in the lower grades of schools they may continue to teach all such subjects, including literature, history, and philosophy. They may also teach all these in the girls' higher lyceum schools.

Thus before long women will be excluded from the competitive examination for the higher school posts which cover the subjects mentioned, but as it is not proposed to exercise such exclusion until the end of 1927 it is to be noted that for the present women teachers remain at their posts.

Japan.

Japanese women are reaching out to economic independence. Mme. Suzuki is known as the richest woman in Japan, and is the director of the large Suzuki Company in Kobe. Mme. Nakamura is well known in the steel industry, and Mme. Makino is also a well known industrialist. Mme. Moto Homi is at the head of a large publicity undertaking. Mme. Ume Tsuda is a prominent educationalist, Akiko Yosana a well-known writer, while Mme. Seiko Hyodo is famous as an aviator.

Java.

Women of Java are renewing their activities for the ballot, according to press dispatches from Batavia, Java. Dr. Aletta Jacobs participated in the original organisation of Javanese women for suffrage some fourteen years ago.

Mexico.

A woman, Professor Florida Lazos, has been elected as member of Parliament for the District of Chiapaneco.

Roumania.

The Municipal Council of Bucharest has set a precedent for Eastern Europe by admitting two women members, the Princess Cantacuzene and Mme. Roumiciano, both members of the National Council of Women in Roumania. The women councillors were elected by the 52 men members of the Council, which has the right to name a certain portion of its membership, but they were selected from a list of seven whose election was urged by a group of women's organisations. The result is hailed as a victory for Roumanian Feminism, and a consequence of the campaign for full political rights being waged in Roumania.

Spain.

Mme. Plaminkova, the Czechoslovakian Senator, and a member of the Board of the Alliance, has been invited by the Provincial Deputation of Barcelona to lecture on "Woman: her Importance to the State, the Community and the Family," on "Women's Franchise

and other Rights and their Work in the Parliament of Czechoslovakia," and on the "Woman's Movement throughout the World." These lectures will also be given in other Spanish cities such as Madrid, Seville, Salamanca, etc. It is the first time that a woman has been officially invited by an official body to lecture upon feminism.

Sweden.

A seventh woman has just been elected to the Second Swedish Chamber, namely Mrs. Christina Ekberg, a member of the Social Democratic Party.

Turkey.

Bedrie Hanoum has been appointed to the most important government position yet granted a woman by the Turkish Republic, namely, head of the Bureau of Hygiene.

After graduating from the American College in Constantinople, Bedrie Hanoum studied medicine in Germany and France at the expense of the Turkish Government and returned to Turkey last year as doctor of medicine.

THE MARTHA-ASSOCIATION IN FINLAND.

THE Martha-Association in Finland owes its existence to national distress. The organisation was started in 1899 at a moment when the Russian policy of expansion threatened to annihilate Finland's national existence. Its principal purpose at this time was to maintain and strengthen the national spirit within the homes by raising the moral and intellectual standard of the women, and also inspire them with an interest in practical work. To begin with, many obstacles put in the way by the authorities in power had to be overcome, and the work was carried on in spite of repressive measures. However, the courage and energy of the leaders proved successful and better times came at last.

Things have changed since then, and "Martha's" work has taken a more practical turn, the leaders becoming aware that a certain degree of material ease and security is an essential condition for mental receptivity and progress. Yet the ideal basis has never been forgotten nor the ideal line abandoned.

Nowadays "Martha" numbers 399 branches throughout the country and 31,702 members, a rather considerable number in proportion to a population of only 3,000,000. The branches unite, according to their geographical situation into local unions, an order of things fit to strengthen the organisation and to facilitate administration. The number of the local unions is 20. Branches with an extensive area and a sparse population are generally divided in smaller circles. The Central Board of the Association numbers 15 members and has its seat in Helsingfors.

"Martha" has the following species of practical work on its programme: *gardening, poultry-farming and bee-culture, cooking, preserving of vegetables, more-over domestic industry such as: spinning, weaving, dyeing with vegetable colours prepared at home, needlework, etc., etc.* Some data taken from the annual report for 1922 may illustrate the intensity of the work.

The number of small fruit- and kitchen-gardens laid out during the year with the help of Martha-teachers was 968, the total number of Martha-gardens is at present 9,892. 538 courses in cooking and in the preservation of vegetables were held and attended by 5,264 women; during the same year 1,910 popular lectures were held, treating subjects connected with the purposes of the Association; 262 professionally trained women-teachers were at work. They travel from village to village, from cottage to cottage, over frozen lakes and through snowy woods in winter, in boats and peasant carts in summer, giving advice in the homes, holding courses and lectures, guiding and stimulating.

Due attention is paid to home-hygiene and to the care of children. This side of the work has taken a special importance since "Martha" became entrusted

with the task of organising the distribution of prizes to mothers of healthy and well-bred children. These distributions take place yearly, by turns in different parts of the country; they are started by a society of scientific character and based on eugenic principles.

Doll-manufacture takes a prominent place in "Marthas" industrial program. Started in 1908 in an extremely modest shape in the town of Abo this industry has gradually grown into a profitable business with a turn-over for the year 1922 of about 1,200,910, providing a number of women with the means of earning their living or at least of contributing considerably to the income of their families.

The Association has its own monthly journal, "The Housewife," appearing in the Swedish as well as in the Finnish language. Moreover, the Association has published a great number of various pamphlets, cooking-books, handbooks for poultry-farming, for gardening, etc., forming a considerable library, most of them having already appeared in several editions.

Within the local branches and circles the members gather at weekly or monthly family-meetings. On these occasions sometimes a short lecture is held, followed by a discussion, or a book is read aloud, or some music performed. Needlework and chorus-singing are always on the programme. For women from the isolated country-cottages and for those from miserable dwellings in towns or factory districts these simple gatherings mean bodily repose and mental revival. Here women of different classes and of different life-experience meet on equal ground, as members of the same organisation, a form highly fit to encourage mutual comprehension. The total number of such meetings amounted in 1924 to 5,885. Further greater gatherings, so-called *Martha-days*, take place several times a year, and generally are attended by great numbers of members. These meetings contribute in a high degree to promote public spirit and a feeling of solidarity.

Exhibitions of garden produce and of articles of home industry often take place, arranged by some branch-union. The Association has also with great success taken part in several public industrial and agricultural exhibitions.

Since 1920 "Martha" is affiliated to the great Northern Union of Housewives.

The Martha-Association enjoys great popularity and sympathy not only in the lower as well as in the higher classes of the population, but even in the industrial and commercial world. Its assistance is often sought for by different associations and even by public authorities in order to realise enterprises of a social or practical character.

"Martha" receives a yearly subsidy from the Government, though as yet a rather modest one, compared with the extent of the work. Many of its local branches are in different ways subsidized by local agricultural organisations, which have learned to appreciate the moral influence and the economic significance of their work. Even financial institutions, commercial companies and certain public funds now and then grant more or less considerable sums. Nevertheless it would scarcely be possible to satisfy the claims, of so vast an organisation and so wide a sphere of activity if ideal enthusiasm and unselfish readiness for work did not to a great extent supply the lack of material means.

UNITED STATES BILLS. By EMMA WOLD.

Though the second session of the Sixty-ninth Congress—the Congress now sitting—is limited in time, there is opportunity for action on bills introduced in the first session. Among these are several affecting the interests of women.

1. Two bills that in part modify discriminations against women in the immigration law, have reached the point where word to one's Congressman and Senators may be helpful.

(a) Senate Joint Resolution 82 (Senator Copeland)

would give a non-quota status to the alien husband of an American woman. The alien wife of an American man has now this status. The resolution passed the Senate unanimously, just before adjournment last July. Action in the House was prevented by one member of the House Committee on Immigration and the resolution is still in this House committee.

(b) House Resolution 6238 (Mr. Bacon) would give non-quota status to an American-born woman who lost her United States citizenship by marriage before September 22, 1922, thus giving her a chance to return to her native country without waiting for a place under the quota—in some countries involving a delay of many years. This bill passed the House last April, and was sent to the Senate Committee on Immigration where it was amended to apply only to an American-born woman whose parents were citizens at the time of her birth. On the floor of the Senate it was further amended to give non-quota rank to the alien wives and minor children of aliens who entered before July 1, 1924, with the provision that no more than 35,000 shall be admitted to this status. In this form the bill passed the Senate December 14, after considerable opposition and is now going before the House Committee on Immigration where it will meet much opposition because of the Senate amendment.

2. On the table of the House Committee on Immigration and Nationalisation lies the bill, H. R. 6825 (Mr. Bacon), to amend the Cable Act—the married women's citizenship act. This bill would give an American woman citizen the right to retain her citizenship under every circumstance growing out of marriage—the right now possessed by every American man citizen. On a similar bill introduced in the Senate by Senator La Follette, the Senate Committee accepted an adverse report of the sub-committee before which a hearing was held last March. This leaves the House bill as the only means for securing a change in the Cable Act, since the House committee may be persuaded to remove the bill from the table. The chairman of the committee, Mr. Johnson, of Washington, has promised another hearing when the National Woman's Party is ready with new testimony now being prepared.

3. The Equal Rights Amendment (S. J. Res. 11, 12, and Res. 81) is still in the Judiciary committees of the two houses.

4. The Minimum Wage Amendment (S. J. Res. 14), which would render constitutional the enactment of minimum wage laws for women only, is also still in committee.

5. The Uniform Marriage and Divorce Amendment (S. J. Res. 31, H. J. Res. 58, 110), to authorise Congress to enact uniform laws remains in committee.

—Equal Rights.

REPORT OF THE LAWS COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN ON THE DIVORCE LAW OF THE COMMON- WEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

This Paper was prepared by Mrs. Sybil Morrison, Barrister, New South Wales, and read at the Federal Convention held in Brisbane, July, 1926.

Editor's Note.—The Alliance does not as a rule discuss questions relating to divorce since this matter touches closely the question of religious convictions. It is considered, however, that this clear statement of the laws existing in Australia which has been sent to us through a branch of our Australian Auxiliary may prove of interest to women in other countries where divorce reform is under discussion, and where they may feel it essential in the interests of justice that women's opinion on these matters should be heard.

THE Committee has to report that the Divorce Law of New South Wales is on the whole in advance of the divorce laws of all the other states except Western Australia. That is to say, divorce can be

obtained in N.S.W. upon a greater number of grounds and upon approximately the same grounds for husband and wife.

For this reason the Committee is strongly of the opinion that the laws of the more backward states should be liberalised, so as to bring them into line with the law of New South Wales before any steps whatever are taken to bring about the unification of the divorce laws of the Commonwealth. Otherwise the compromise which would be necessary would almost inevitably act to the detriment of N.S.W., so that she would lose the advantages she has gained.

The N.S.W. law has, however, one serious defect, inasmuch as incurable insanity is not in this state a ground for divorce, as it is in Victoria, Queensland, West Australia and Tasmania. South Australia is the only other state lacking this ground of divorce. The last Nationalist Government of N.S.W. introduced a bill, which made provision for this new ground, but the clauses in the bill dealing with insanity as a ground of divorce met with strong opposition, and for this among other reasons the bill was dropped.

It is to be noted that South Australia has only one ground of divorce for the man, namely adultery, and two grounds of divorce for the woman, namely adultery and sexual offences.

Queensland is in a little better position, and has three grounds for divorce, which are available to either party, i.e., adultery, insanity and desertion for five years, while the wife has a further ground, namely, sexual offences.

The Victorian law, though providing for grounds approximately equal in number to those given by N.S.W. law, has what seems to be grave defects in that (1) a distinction is made between husband and wife where adultery is concerned, and (2) no provision is made for restitution of conjugal rights, nor, for a decree for dissolution upon failure to comply with a decree for restitution.

Tasmania, like Victoria, makes no provision for divorce by reason of non-compliance with a decree for restitution of conjugal rights, but apart from this there are approximately the same grounds for divorce in Tasmania as there are in New South Wales.

Take the chief grounds for divorce for N.S.W., and notice how far they are grounds in the other states also.

Adultery.—It was formerly a principle that while a husband had a right to demand absolute chastity of his wife, a wife had not a similar right against her husband. She had no right to complain and obtain relief for mere adultery committed by her husband. All that she could expect was that her husband's unfaithfulness to her should not amount to incestuous or bigamous adultery, or adultery coupled with other aggravating circumstances, or should not consist of certain grave sexual offences. This distinction has now been abolished in every state except Victoria, so that simple adultery is now equally a ground of divorce for wife as for husband.

Desertion.—Desertion is a ground for divorce in all states except South Australia. The period of time, however, differs from two to five years.

Desertion assumed from Non-compliance with a Decree for Restitution of Conjugal Rights.—In N.S. Wales and Western Australia, desertion is assumed by reason of the fact that the respondent refuses to come back to the matrimonial home when ordered to do so by the Court. In N.S.W. the petitioner may at once institute a suit and obtain a decree for divorce. In Western Australia also the petitioner may obtain a decree, but has to wait three years as in ordinary desertion. The other states have not this ground for a divorce—a ground which often enables people who cannot live together to find what has been termed "a decent way out," i.e., a divorce without a parade of the matrimonial life before the public eye; and also a ground which may be the only means of putting an end to a state of separation where the parties are neither

truly married nor divorced. In Queensland and Tasmania a decree for restitution may be granted, but the matter ends there and non-compliance with the decree is not a ground either for judicial separation or dissolution. In South Australia the decree for restitution, if not complied with, gives a right to a judicial separation for desertion, but not to dissolution of the marriage.

Drunkenness, Cruelty and the Committal of Crime.—These are with some variations grounds for divorce in all the states except Queensland and South Australia.

Western Australia has in addition to the above grounds two others: (1) A wife may obtain a divorce on the ground that the parties have been separated for a period of three years and upwards, under an order of the court, or under a deed of separation, and the husband has failed during that period to make payments for the support of wife or children as provided in the order of the Court or the deed of separation; and (2) Either husband or wife may obtain a divorce on the ground of the incontinence in certain circumstances of either party before marriage, provided the suit is brought within a very limited time after the marriage.

It is considered by the Committee that N.S. Wales should not take any lead in obtaining the unification of the divorce law of Australia until the laws of South Australia and Queensland and to a lesser extent the laws of Tasmania and Victoria have been brought into line with the laws of N.S. Wales and Western Australia. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that Queensland and South Australia have divorce laws which are several decades behind those of the other states.

When the time comes for the unification of the divorce laws of the Commonwealth three things should be considered:—

(1) *The law of other countries.* For example some countries provide that divorce may be obtained after judicial separation for three years, or, a deed of separation of the same period with certain restrictions in the case of a party guilty of the conduct which caused the separation. It should be noted that Western Australia has a somewhat similar provision to this. The object of this is to do away with the very unsatisfactory state of judicial separation when the parties are neither living together as married persons nor divorced.

(2) *The desirability of the assumption on which the divorce laws of all states are based,* namely, that a divorce is only to be allowed when the one who is wronged of the two parties wants it.

It is always refused if both parties mutually agree to separate. In point of fact it is almost universally acknowledged that divorces often take place when both parties are desirous of separation, but when this is done one of the parties has committed perjury, or, the Court has been misled.

(3) *The question of a woman's domicile depending on her husband's domicile.* Jurisdiction of the courts in divorce matters depends on the parties being domiciled (that is, having their home) in the state or country where the suit is brought. Under the existing Common Law of both England and all the Australian States a wife's domicile depends on that of her husband. It will readily be seen that injustice often results to the wife in a divorce suit from this fact. For example a woman living in N.S.W. marries a Scotchman who is here on a visit. He returns home intending that his wife shall follow. He commits adultery, but the N.S.W. courts have no jurisdiction to grant the wife a divorce on the ground of either adultery or desertion, and her remedy (if any) is in the Scottish courts, to which she probably cannot afford to go. The injustice of this rule has to some extent been done away with in certain of the states where provision has been made that in suits on the ground of desertion, a wife's domicile shall be deemed to be that of her husband at the time when the desertion took place, although he may have changed it since.

REPORTS FROM AUXILIARIES

AUSTRALIA.

Leaders of Australian Equal Citizenship Federation Confer.

Leaving Perth towards the end of September, Mrs. Rischbieth, President of the Australian Equal Citizenship Federation, has made a successful tour through Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, for the particular purpose of conferring with the officers of the above Federation, and with the social-political societies affiliated thereto. Realising that isolated bodies in each State are of little use to-day, the Women's Service Guild of Western Australia (representing the Federation in this State) has long felt the growing need for correlation of social laws between the various Australian States, and what is even more important, that the social-political work in which the Guilds are engaged can only be strengthened by a strong forward movement which will bring closer contact with sister social-political bodies in each of the other States—in fact, the importance of such work cannot be too strongly emphasised.

The Australian Equal Citizenship Federation, which exists for this purpose, should be an "on the wing" organisation, as it were, for obtaining concerted views on many questions of national moment, in order to approach the Federal Parliament with the least possible delay.

Position of Women Js.P.

New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania have granted women the commission of justices of the peace. Yet in each State the honour carries with it varying powers. In New South Wales, though there are 300 women Js.P., they are empowered to do little beyond witnessing the signing of documents. Tasmania and South Australia have acknowledged women's capacity to serve under this commission.

Victoria.

At the recent municipal elections Mrs. Angela Booth achieved a double distinction. She was the only woman candidate returned, and her victory makes her the third woman to gain a municipal council seat in Victoria. Mrs. Mary Rogers, elected to Richmond Council in 1920, but defeated last year, was the first woman municipal councillor in Australia. The second, Mrs. Ross-Watts, was last year elected to the Gisborne Council, and is still sitting.

New South Wales.

Miss Preston Stanley, M.P., president of the Feminist Club, headed a large deputation recently to the Attorney-General of N.S.W. (Mr. McTiernan), and requested certain amendments on the question of Equal Guardianship, Maintenance, and the Crimes Act. Miss Preston Stanley, Miss Rich, and other speakers are to be congratulated on the very able presentation of their case.

It was asked: (1) That a mother, if of good moral character, should be given recognition as the natural guardian of her child up to the age of five years, and, further, that absolute equality of sexes be recognised in regard to infant custody; (2) that the Crimes Act should be amended in regard to clauses governing sexual offences against children, with the object of rendering such offences absolute without recognition of any plea of consent; and (3) that a wife should be granted the right to apply for increased alimony consequent upon an increase in the husband's income.

Mr. McTiernan expressed sympathy with the requests, and promised to pay due regard to the sentiments expressed by the deputation. While it might not be possible to embody in legislation all that was asked, he was of opinion that certain reforms of an ameliorative nature could be expected.

Tasmania.

Miss Lillian Overell and Mrs. L. F. Giblin, who have just returned from Europe, were invited by the

Women's Non-Party League to afternoon tea at the Imperial.

Mrs. T. Murdoch, president of the league, who welcomed the returned ladies, stated that Miss Overell was the only representative of Tasmania at the International Women's Suffrage Conference in Paris, and expressed gratitude also to Mrs. Giblin on behalf of the league for her ever-ready assistance.

Mrs. E. Waterworth spoke at length on the objects of the league, and the application of these objects throughout the world. "We are the free lances of women's work," she said, "and we do not keep to the beaten track. We do what needs doing. We are not in advance of public opinion, but are generally ahead of official opinion, which is why we are so often in hot water. One of our objects at present is to amend the criminal law, under which women and children do not get fair play at all. Again, we wish to have every girl in the State trained to be a home builder, and to improve the living conditions of the very poor throughout the State, throughout the Commonwealth, throughout the world. We have plenty of work before us."

Miss Overell, after thanking the league for its welcome, endorsed Mrs. Waterworth's statements as to the widespread influence of the International Alliance. It was probably the greatest association in the world, numbering millions of women in every country. Included among the guests invited to meet Miss Overell and Mrs. Giblin were the presidents and secretaries of the following societies: National Council of Women, Victoria League, Lyceum Club, League of Nations Union, Peace Society, Free Kindergarten, Child Welfare, W.C.T.U., Young Women's Christian Association, and Literary Society.

DENMARK.

General Elections to the Folketing (Lower House).

The Socialdemocratic Ministry, *Stauning*, which had been in charge for a couple of years, appealed to the electors on December 2nd.

The system of parliamentary elections in this country (proportional representation) and the fact that we have a rather large number of political parties do not permit any party to obtain an absolute majority in the Lower House. The Cabinet *Stauning* had had to count upon the support of the Radical party, in addition to the Socialdemocratic party, and as this support failed for some measures regarding the economic crisis and the unemployment problem following the deflation (the Danish crown having risen to par rather too quickly), the Ministry preferred to call for a new general election to the Folketing.

The three woman-members of the Folketing, Mrs. *Helga Larsen*, Mrs. *Elna Munch* and Mrs. *Malling Hauschultz* were re-elected, but women obtained no augmentation of their seats in Parliament. It will, however, be of interest to the readers of "Jus" that Mrs. *Julie Arenholt* was only short of 62 votes to obtain a mandate, and that she got 500 personal votes (we vote on the system of party-lists with right to cast personal votes on candidates on the list). The three woman-members are returned from Copenhagen, and it must be said that outside of Copenhagen and its suburbs no woman was put up as candidate.

A New Cabinet Without any Woman Member.

As the result of the election was a loss to the Socialdemocratic and Radical parties, the Cabinet *Stauning* handed in its resignation to the King, who then tried in vain to get a Cabinet of all political parties to sit during the present economic crisis. However, the Socialdemocratic party refused to co-operate, and on the 13th December a new Cabinet, *Madsen-Mygdal*, composed only of members of the "Left" party (an agricultural-liberal party), took charge.

The first woman Cabinet-Minister in the world, Mrs. *Nina Bang*, who held the portfolio of Public Instructions in the *Stauning* Cabinet, of course resigned with her colleagues, and in the new Ministry no woman has a seat. Mrs. *Bang* had proved a very capable minister, of much initiative and a considerable influence in the Ministry.

The Cabinet *Madsen-Mygdal*, instead of a woman-member, introduced an innovation in creating a Ministry of Health, which we have not had before, and of which Dr. *Rubow* is in charge. Minister *Rubow* has already established two new posts of interest to women. He has appointed Professor *Monrad* Adviser to the Government in matters regarding hospital nurses and Professor *Fredericia* Adviser in matters regarding household and nutrition. Both men are perfectly qualified for their posts, but many women are of the opinion that women ought to have been appointed, so much the more as qualified women were available.

LOUISE NEERGAARD,

Corresponding Secretary of Dansk Kvindesamfund. Copenhagen, 10th January, 1927.

FINLAND.

This time I am glad to be able to report from our country some great feminist gains. On the accession on Monday, December 13th, of the new Government (composed solely of social-democrats) a woman, Miss *Miina Sillanpää*, M.P., became a member of the Government. Miss *Sillanpää* has been in Parliament since 1907, when women got the franchise, re-elected every time by the women of her party. She is their recognised leader, both within and outside Parliament. She is a self-made woman, beginning her career as a domestic assistant; she then proceeded to organise the domestic workers, and has recently been inspector of one of our biggest Co-operative bodies—*Elanto*. She is a keen prohibitionist, and takes a great interest in labour legislation, of which she has a thorough knowledge. Miss *Sillanpää's* new post is that of Assistant Minister in the Department of Labour (*Social Ministeriet*).

Also for the very first time a woman, Miss *Hanna Parviainen*, manager of a big business of her own, has received from the President of the Republic the title of *Kommerciénrath* (I give it in German, as such titles being non-existent in Great Britain, are untranslatable into English). This distinction conferred on a very able and public-spirited woman, has given great satisfaction to the feminists of this country. The Government that preceded the present one appointed a Committee composed of women only to draw up the programme of the curriculum for all schools of domestic economy, Mrs. *Hedvig Gebhard*, M.P., being Chairman, and Mrs. *H. Jahnsen*, a barrister, Secretary.

Another piece of news is that in the re-organisation of pensions for government employees in the Civil Service quite a new principle has been introduced in that the widower of a woman employee with pension rights gets a pension in consideration of that right of hers just as a widow would on the death of her husband. This new pension law is based on absolute equality. Sons and daughter will in future enjoy pensions up to the age of 18; up to now unmarried daughters got pensions as long as they remain unmarried.

Parliamentary elections will take place next year in July. The nomination of women candidates will soon take place, and at the beginning of spring the election campaign will be in full swing.

On the 15th of March big women's meetings will take place in commemoration of the day twenty years ago when the women of this country cast their votes for the first time.

ANNIE FURUHJELM.

GERMANY.

Prolongation of Public House Hours.

By decree of the Prussian Home Minister published on October 15th which came into force on October 30th the licensed hours for public houses in Prussia have

been extended up to 1 o'clock in the morning for smaller places, 2 o'clock for cities with over 300,000 inhabitants, and 3 o'clock for Berlin. This questionable "reform" aroused of course a storm of indignation in all circles working for the people's welfare, not only in Prussia, but all over the Reich, as most probably the example of the largest and leading German State will be followed by others. Preliminary steps for instance have already been taken by the Saxon Home Ministry, in the form of an official enquiry into such prolongation sent out to the city authorities. Further the representatives of the liquor trade will everywhere claim unified hours for large and small places, and even the abolition of all legal restrictions on retailing hours or public houses and bars. It was therefore evident that strong protests would be raised by the temperance organisations and the employees' trade unions, as well as from all quarters of the women's movement against this measure which, for the sole benefit of the alcohol capitalists, means a new danger for the young, for family life and happiness, and for public health and morality. Fortunately there are some weighty practical objections to the carrying out of the decree; first the objection of the majority of publicans and bar-keepers themselves to making use of the permission; and further the difficulty in large cities of arranging the time-tables of electric trams and trains to suit the special wants of incorrigible drinkers and dissolute persons. So it may be hoped that these practical difficulties will act as a better preventative of the evil consequences of the decree than all theoretical protests by means of meetings, resolutions, petitions and pamphlets.

An Important Women's Conference.

The public conference on "Women and Housing" called by the National Council of Women (see report in October issue) which took place in the beautiful Hall of the Reichs Economic Council in Berlin in October, was a great success in every way. Representatives of many affiliated and friendly societies were present together with welfare and housing-centre officials, women City Councillors and Members of Parliament, women in state and communal services, and others specially interested from all parts of the Reich. The complicated problem was treated by expert speakers both from the general national point of view and also from that of a vital women's question. Dr. *Erna Corte* gave a lively picture of the professional woman's housing difficulties, while the paper of *Studienrat Gertrud Simroth* on the housing needs of the elderly single woman formed an effective rounding off of this question. Both speakers came to the same conclusion: to recommend an improved system under which a certain number of people should combine to provide for themselves a form of communal board and lodging without sacrificing their domestic privacy. During the thorough and interesting discussion reference was made to many kinds of such common homes in the middle ages as well as at the present time, the latter being considered as promising steps towards new forms of domestic life.

The report of Government Councillor Dr. *Marie Baum* on "Present Needs and Tasks in Housing" gave an excellent survey of the whole problem, which she referred to as the fundamental basis of all social-political reforms and charitable measures. The object of all economic and technical gains, of all public and private institutions is the welfare of the individual, but all efforts for a better standard of life and a higher moral and intellectual level cannot be effective unless a higher standard for the individual is guaranteed by really humane housing conditions. Herr Ministry Councillor *Lehmann* effectively brought home to the audience the highly important financial side of the question—how to provide sufficient and decent lodging for the penniless population. He pointed out the various possibilities and methods of Reich, State, provincial, communal and private measures. "From the Standpoint of the Housewife and the Family," Frau *Colden Jaenicke* claimed the co-operation of women in matters connected with the practical arrangement of new buildings. In about

60 German cities expert housewives are already members of the building boards and committees, and their judgment and advice as to sanitary fittings and time and labour saving devices is everywhere welcomed by architects, contractors, building societies and city authorities. Finally Dr. Charlotte Dietrich referred to the necessity of "Additions to the Home" to supply its greatest deficiencies, remoteness from the country and want of space. To meet the want of exercise for the young as well as rest for old people, she claimed more play-grounds, public baths, family and roof gardens, etc.

The discussions demonstrated the thorough knowledge and understanding of the audience by the high standard maintained, and other valuable suggestions were made and considered in the final resolution which emphasised all the claims which should be made by women as mothers and citizens. It is to be hoped that the strong impression made by this conference will not die away, but will contribute to a satisfactory solution of the burning question of housing, being continued and strengthened by the work of the newly established Housing Committee of the National Council.

MARIE STRITT.

GREAT BRITAIN.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Next Parliamentary Session.

The great note for this year is undoubtedly the Equal Franchise campaign. The N.U.S.E.C. in common with other women's organisations is devoting its chief energies to this most important of all the points on its Programme. It has itself been bringing pressure to bear on the Government, and inviting the help of other Societies, to include in the King's Speech for this session its intentions with regard to legislation giving the franchise to women on the same terms as to men.

On March 3rd the N.U. has planned a big mass meeting in the Central Hall, Westminster, to be addressed by prominent members of every political party, and which will have the support of over 100 organisations both men's and women's.

The N.U.S.E.C. is also asking the co-operation of other Societies in a united effort in the summer. As we explained last month the matter is extremely urgent if there is to be any certainty of women voting at the next election. The matter is being complicated—perhaps intentionally complicated—by the question of what is the best voting age for both men and women, and there is a fear that the Government may put forward a proposal that the voting age for both men and women should be 25. As in any constitutional country it is virtually impossible to set the franchise clock back, there would be no chance of such a proposal being accepted. This proposal would in fact only be put forward if the Government did not mean seriously to carry out its pledge to give Equal Franchise.

Women's organisations are everywhere occupied in planning their bills for the coming session. The N.U.S.E.C. is seeking a place in the ballot for a bill on women jurors, which would prevent the exclusion of women either by the judge or magistrate responsible for the case, or by being challenged by the accused. This bill has been warmly approved by very eminent lawyers. If it does not succeed in getting a place in the House of Commons, we hope to have it introduced in the House of Lords.

Under the Ten Minutes Rule a short bill will be introduced by Mr. Harney on behalf of the N.U.S.E.C. to amend the Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Act so as to forbid the exclusion of women from the painting industry on the ground of sex. Resolutions will also be moved on behalf of the N.U.S.E.C. in the House of Commons on the compulsory appointment of women police, and on the need for making testamentary provision for wives, husbands and children, and in the House of Lords on the employment of married

women. If well enough Lord Buckmaster will introduce the Coverture Disabilities (Abolition) Bill.

Scottish Societies of the N.U.S.E.C. are making themselves responsible for a Child Adoption Bill to apply to Scotland, and for a bill on the status of the illegitimate child, and also for one dealing with the intestacy of husbands and wives. Lady Astor, on behalf of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, will be trying to re-introduce her Public Places (Order) Bill, and a new Bastardy Bill is to be introduced on behalf of the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child.

In addition very serious attention is being paid to the proposals of the Government with regard to the Poor Law. The Boards of Guardians which are elected *ad hoc* to administer the Poor Law in Great Britain have many thousands of women on them. The new proposal is that the County and Borough Councils should take over much of their work. It is far more difficult for women to be elected on County or Borough Councils than on Boards of Guardians, and it appears, therefore, that unless some special provision is made, women will play a far smaller part in the administration of relief than heretofore. Women's organisations will probably press for the statutory co-optation of women on to the County and Borough Committees which deal with relief, and are meeting in Conference to consider the matter in February.

National Health Insurance.

The Government will also be introducing new legislation dealing with health insurance. The N.U.S.E.C. is putting forward a policy on the more important aspects of the problem, more especially with regard to improved maternity benefit, so that it may include medical and nursing attendance, and with regard to pooling the receipts from men and women contributors so that contributions and benefits may be equal.

Woman's Leader.

Readers of "Jus" may care to see the New Year Number of the "Woman's Leader," which gives a record of the women in politics, industry, medicine, social service, etc., in 1926. This can be ordered from 15, Dean's Yard, S.W., price 2d.

Annual Council Meeting.

The Annual Council Meetings have been fixed for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 2nd—5th, and will be held at King George's Hall, Caroline Street, Great Russell Street. The public luncheon will be held at the Criterion Restaurant on Friday, March 4th, at 1 o'clock. We should be glad to hear from readers of "Jus," who will be in London at that time in order that we may invite them as visitors. At the Council there will probably be considerable discussion as to the relative amount of time and energy which the N.U. should devote to Equality Reforms from the narrower and wider points of view respectively.

E. M. HUBBACK.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

On the eve of the opening of Parliament we are having an Equal Franchise Demonstration at our Minerva Club in London, when one of the speakers will be the woman prospective parliamentary Liberal candidate in that constituency. On February 11th we are giving an informal dinner and reception to our President, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, to welcome her home on her return from a visit to India. Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence will then throw all her energies into our Equal Franchise campaign. She is already booked to speak at meetings demanding the equal enfranchisement of women with men which are being held in London, Bexhill, Hastings, Southsea, Glasgow and Dunoon during February and March. Wherever a meeting is held the organisers get into touch with the local Member of Parliament, invite him to attend the meeting, and ask him to receive a deputation from his constituents on the subject of equal franchise who will try to secure from him a promise to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to bring in and

pass into law at an early date a measure granting the parliamentary vote to women at the age of 21 and on the same terms as men.

We are pressing forward with the subject of Women Police, and are urging upon the Government to pass legislation making their appointment compulsory by Borough Councils and Standing Joint Committees.

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

The annual meeting of the Liverpool Branch of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance was held on January 3rd. A resolution, "demanding an immediate government measure giving votes to women at 21 and on the same terms as to men" was passed and also other resolutions on Equal Pay and Opportunities, Women in the House of Lords, and the repeal of the present Solicitation Laws. All members of the Alliance who were present at the meeting pledged themselves to write a personal letter to their Member of Parliament, demanding Equal Franchise between men and women.

All work of St. Joan's Alliance will be concentrated during the present year upon the Equal Franchise Campaign, and several more meetings will be organised by us in various constituencies, the next being in East Fulham. We are also co-operating wholeheartedly in joint efforts with other Societies in connection with the Equal Political Rights Campaign.

INDIA.

Srimati Muthulakshmi Aammal, M.L.C.

The Madras Government is to be congratulated on nominating a lady to its new Legislative Council. The great honour has been conferred on Srimati Muthulakshmi Aammal, M.B., C.M., and all the women are proud of her. Her career has throughout been very significant of the new spirit of Indian Womanhood. A busy private medical practitioner, her interest is equally active in all spheres of public work, especially where the welfare of women and children is concerned. She is, of course, a prominent member of the W.I.A. and was on the deputations to Lord Willingdon and the Law Member asking the Legislative Council to be thrown open to women. She ably represented the W. I. A. at the Paris International Congress of Women, and since her return has been constantly speaking and writing upon its lessons to India in various directions. Hers was one of the names that were suggested, along with three others, by the Ladies' Deputation to H. E. Lord Goschen for nomination to the Legislative Council. We hope in other Provinces also lady members will be nominated to the legislatures and notably to the Assembly where important measures affecting the welfare of women and children are to be considered.

Heroic Defeats.

Mrs. Hannen Angelo knew her chances were very slight, but to show that Anglo-Indian women were as ready as men to throw themselves into the work of the country she came forward and is no way daunted by her failure. Mrs. Kamaladevi's power to secure 4,461 votes, only 500 less than the successful rival, by a month's work is an immense victory in face of her opponent's organisation and nursing of the constituency for six months previously and is a matter of pride to all who support the progress of women. Dr. Parvati Devi in the Punjab also did not succeed at the polls.

An Indian State's Lead in Social Reform.

As part of the celebration of the birthday of the Maharani of Bharatpur, an important Act called the Social Reforms Act was promulgated by the Maharajah on November 16 to be in force from January 1, 1927. The Act enables widows to contract a second valid marriage and their children to inherit property. Another noble clause lays down that all marriages or re-marriages contracted between persons who have not attained the age of 14 in the case of women and

16 in the case of men may be declared void in a court of law, and all persons, knowingly abetting marriages contrary to the above age limit shall be liable to imprisonment and fine. Where an Indian State leads, British India can surely follow!

The Children's Protection Bill.

The humanitarian measure for the protection of children, which Sir Hari Singh Gour has championed in the Assembly, will once more come up for discussion in that august body. It will be remembered that some three years ago, he introduced a series of Bills on: (a) the protection of unmarried girls below the age of 18; (b) seduction of such girls; (c) the consignment of them to pagodas and temples for the purpose of prostitution. Most of these measures have now been enacted into law with the result that so far as legislative sanction is concerned, prostitution and seduction is severely punishable in the case of minor girls below the age of 18. His Children's Protection Bill, to raise the age of consent within and outside marital relations, has been the subject of keen controversy and was thrown out at the Assembly at the instance of the Government, supported by the Swaraj party. He, however, returned to the attack as soon as his Bill was thrown out, and succeeded in persuading the Government to accept it, even in a modified form, leaving his own Bill free for further consideration. He brought to bear upon the task a prodigious energy with the result that even the Government had to yield and agreed to raise the age from 12 to 13 and 14 inside and outside the marital relations. But Sir Hari Singh Gour's point has not been met. He argues that as three-fourths of the girls in this country attain maturity in their 14th year, and as the attainment of puberty is no sign of their fitness for motherhood, which requires further physical development, the age of consent should at least be 14 and 16 inside and outside the marital relations.

—Stri Dharna.

THE NETHERLANDS.

The League of Women Citizens held a general meeting on the 11th December, specially called with regard to the forthcoming elections to Town Councils and Provincial States. Several women who are members of the League, and also members of different Town Councils or Provincial States gave accounts of their work among the magistrates of their town or province. Women's work in the Provincial States has been principally concentrated on the local work for lunatics, tuberculous children, sanatoria and hospitals, but they have also taken an interest in the question of the best way to build the roads. One of these ladies has a special interest in the poor neglected pedestrian, and takes up his cause whenever better roads come into question, and the interests of the motorist are well provided for, but those of the foot-passenger are likely to be forgotten.

In many of the Town Councils in Holland women have seats, but in comparison with men their number is far too small still. All the women had very interesting details of their work to give, and all the reports proved that women have obtained a special place of their own in the government of towns as well as villages. Co-operation with the members of the other sex is generally on very friendly terms.

Above all, women members have pleaded for the freedom to work for women and they have tried to prevent the dismissal of women officials or women teachers on marriage. Supported by the petitions addressed to the Councils by the Headquarters and sections of the League of Women Citizens, they have sometimes been able to convince their colleagues of the unrighteousness of such a decree. Everywhere when the instruction of girls lags behind that of boys, the women members of the Council make efforts to get it improved, and often with success.

But still only the fringe of the work has been touched and much remains to be done, so that every one was convinced that here lies a fine field of work for a clever

woman with independent opinions and liberal views. The League of Women Citizens has therefore resolved upon an active share in the next elections, so that more women of feminist principles and with a belief in the woman's right to self-management may be chosen.

S. vd. H. B.

SOUTH AFRICA.

The 19th annual meeting of the Women's Enfranchisement League of Port Elizabeth, was held on December 6th at the Athenaeum. Mrs. Way was in the chair, and before commencing the usual business, said that she much regretted that owing to a serious accident, the President, Mrs. FitzSimons, was unable to attend the meeting.

After the reading of the minutes, Miss Dorman gave a report of the recent meeting of the Executive of the W.E.A.U., held in Bloemfontein, at which she had represented the Vice-President of the Eastern Province of the Cape, Mrs. FitzSimons. The outstanding feature, said Miss Dorman, was the spirit of hopefulness; the Executive seemed full of an alert keenness, while one Province vied with the other in determination for an intensive campaign in 1927. A new Bill would be introduced by Mr. Mullineux early in the year, the Association having agreed to accept the wording proposed: "For European Women," as being more acceptable to the Union in general. Mr. Mullineux has always been a staunch champion for the cause of women's enfranchisement and it is hoped that the introduction of the word "European" will strengthen his hand. The much regretted resignation of Miss Johnstone-Scott made it necessary to elect a new Parliamentary Secretary, and the unanimous vote for Mrs. Lyon showed that she has the confidence of the Executive. A special vote of thanks was passed to Miss Johnstone-Scott for her most valuable work as Parliamentary Secretary of the W.E.A.U. for many years.

The Secretary (Miss A. L. P. Dorman) read her report, in part as follows:

Annual Report.

Our work during the past year has been in close co-operation with that of the Executive of the Women's Enfranchisement Association of the Union.

Your President has addressed well attended women's meetings at the request of Mrs. Clapp and other societies, and at these meetings she was struck by the enthusiasm shown to sign the petitions, and in the cause of women's rights and interests. On a recent visit to Cape Town she also took advantage of the opportunity of meeting members of the Legislative Assembly and to enlist their sympathy with our cause. Your Secretary addressed a meeting at Cradock arranged by the "Women's Civic Association" of that town in October. This it will be remembered was an association started by her two years ago. Your Secretary has the great pleasure of notifying you that in October she had the satisfaction of addressing a well-attended drawing-room meeting of the ladies of Golden Valley, and that as a result a new W.E.L. has been formed from this parent League.

UNITED STATES.

American Women Seek Way to Peace.

By OLIVE A. COLTON, of Toledo, Ohio.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, the second conference on the Cause and Cure of War was held in Washington in December to learn the next step which nine national organisations could take together toward permanent peace. These were the American Association of University Women, the Council of Women for Home Missions, the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions of America, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations, the National Council of Jewish Women, the National League of Women Voters, the National Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the National Women's Trade Union League.

Only old warriors could have listened to thirty experts through three sessions a day for a week, but the Conference was glorious beyond the telling, as the women learned about the complex causes of war, the need of security, disarmament, arbitration, of law and court, and an association of nations to bring us out of international chaos. Then the foreign policy of the United States toward Europe, Latin America and in the Far East was discussed, and the analysis of the war debts revealed that the women, no less than some bankers, were grasping that cancellation in some degree far from being international benevolence might merely be sound economics.

General Tasker Bliss pointed out that the primary causes of war will always exist, and that if warfare can be averted, there must be certain checks of international law, and international disarmament, a court, and an association of nations, wherein each one can develop individually. Mr. Alfred Zimmern, of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation at Paris, declared there could not be internationalism without democracy, that the world movement was against a superstate, co-operation not dictation being now the policy. He reminded the women what the British commonwealth had contributed to turn the tide toward peace, but America being the most international of the nations, could do the most of all. Then Mr. Jackh, Vice-President of the German League of Nations Union, asserted that the new German Republic was the highway to peace, because the spirit of democracy had come as a blessing of defeat. He praised the Dawes plan as life insurance, said President Wilson had given historic utterance to old German ideals, and declaring that country was the geographic heart of Europe, he felt its political philosophy might help the world toward peace, whereby the stone which the builders rejected would become the head of the corner.

Professor Shotwell, of Columbia University, held the next step for the United States was a conference to revise its laws of neutrality, as to-day this country might be a potential accomplice of the breaker of the Locarno pact. Professor Earle, of Columbia, made clear the pivotal relation between government and business, and that trade need not mean war if governments were arbiters and not protectors of business. Representative Burton reviewed the Government policy on disarmament, and Mr. James MacDonald what had been done in arbitration. The evils of self-sufficiency, the economic rivalries, the lust for raw materials, the work of the League of Nations, and the fact that America is no longer leading the world in arbitration or helping to set up the machinery for permanent peace, were stressed by more than one speaker.

The Chinese Minister explained the justice of his people's longing for freedom from foreign domination in Chinese affairs. The advisability of independence for the Philippines was carefully considered. The mistaken application of the Monroe Doctrine toward the Latin countries which has made dark pages in American history, received the same consideration. The exploitation of Mexican resources by outside interests as the cause of the present situation there, was discussed. Mr. H. Duncan Hall told how Australia had given no racial offence in her immigration policy and others showed the need of dealing with Japan with justice and courtesy.

Leading newspaper men spoke of the War Machine, the Hate Machine and the Peace Machine, and the Conference ended by taking to the White House, where the six hundred delegates were received by the President and Mrs. Coolidge, the resolution appealing to him to keep the door open for further negotiations for the entry of this country into the World Court. An appeal was also made to the Senate to ratify the treaty against the use of poison gas in warfare, and a resolution on Mexico requested those in authority to settle the existing differences by arbitration if necessary

and without the withdrawal of recognition. The findings from the Conference have been referred to an editing committee. When published they will go before the included organisations for the consideration of their members, and such parts as may be approved will form the basis for a common programme to abolish war, the concerted action of several million organised women.

Mrs. Catt reminded the women of the moral courage needed to work for peace, and Mr. Norman Angell insisted we ask peace at too cheap a price if we are not willing to assume obligations. As he warned that all preparation is thought to be for defence, and that too late we realise in the meaning of war that Satan sometimes comes in the guise of God, for good is put into the service of evil, the applause indicated this body had set itself against the old cruel way of settling international differences. Let the women of Europe take heart. There is a large group in the United States working to have this country cast off its outgrown tradition of isolation, and assume its responsibility for permanent peace among the nations of the world.

WOMEN ASTRONOMERS.

The first great woman astronomer in Great Britain was Caroline Herschell who acted as assistant to her famous brother, Sir William Herschell, and discovered eight comets. The "Liverpool Post and Mercury" tells us that there are at present seventy women members of the British Astronomical Association, and among them is Mrs. Grace Cook, who is an authority on meteors, and one of the first to discover the new star, when it appeared in 1918. Dr. Stevenson, the President of this Association, states that one of the most remarkable women to-day in astronomy is Dr. Annie Cannon, an American, whose monumental work on stellar spectra is unique. She has classified 700,000 stars and can tell their distances in the spectrum at a glance. Other young women astronomers in this country to-day are Miss Gertrude Bacon, a well-known lecturer, Miss Mary Proctor, who lectures and writes on this subject, Miss Cecilia Payne, who has specialised in Spectroscopy, and Miss Blagg, who has achieved a reputation on the mathematical side of the science. The Royal Astronomical Society has now fifty women members. By a supplementary charter in 1915 women were admitted to membership of this Society, and Mrs. Charles Ratcliffe has recently been elected to its Fellowship. There is now no branch in astronomy which women have not taken up, both in professional and in amateur circles. Women find it a fascinating science. Miss Periam Hawkins has written an A.B.C. of Astronomy, and Miss Gibberne has written several books on astronomical subjects. Mrs. Maunders is a recognised authority on solar matters, and Miss C. Furness is an authority on variable stars. It cannot be claimed that astronomy opens up a new career for women, because women have for so long been connected with this science, but it certainly offers a wide scope for the best-trained minds among women. —The Vote.

NEWS FROM SOME LATIN COUNTRIES.

The "Acción Católica de la Mujer" (Madrid) announces that the Women's School of Sociology in Madrid, founded by the Association of which that paper is the organ, was opened on the 15th of November. Its object is to provide for Spanish women "the social culture demanded by the present age, to enable them to fill posts in the public service and in private businesses, and, above all, to direct social and charitable work." The course includes religion and ethics, social economy, and law as it affects women and labour.

The same paper gives interesting figures regarding women in Spanish universities. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, only eleven licentiates and doctorates were granted to women in Madrid university, six of them in Philosophy, three in Pharmacy and two in

Medicine. In the year 1913-14 there were still only 36 women students in the Central University of Madrid, but in 1924-5 this number had increased to 533. In all the Spanish universities, taken together, there were 746 women students in 1922-3, Madrid having the majority of them, and Barcelona, Granada and Santiago, most of the others. The faculty which women prefer is that of Pharmacy, and next to it Letters in which their favourite subject is History. In the Faculty of Science they show a preference for Natural over Exact and Physical Sciences. In Medicine they still constitute only two per cent. of the whole number of students. Two women have been admitted to be advocates by the Faculty of Law of Madrid.

—The Catholic Citizen.

NOUVELLES INTERNATIONALES.

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promulgué le 6 novembre. Cet acte permet aux veuves de se remarier et à leurs enfants d'hériter de leurs biens. Une autre clause établit que tous les mariages ou remariages entre personnes au dessous de 14 ans pour les femmes et de 16 pour les hommes seront annulés par le tribunal et les responsables emprisonnés.

Bill de protection des enfants.—Sir Hari Singh Gour a présenté, il y a 5 ans, un bill de protection pour les enfants qui est devenu loi. (a) Protection des jeunes filles au dessous de 18 ans. (b) contre la séduction des jeunes filles. (c) contre leur consignement dans des pagodes ou temples en vue de leur prostitution. Ces actes seront sévèrement punis. Le bill de protection des enfants, pour élever l'âge de consentement, a été l'objet d'une longue controverse: le gouvernement a élevé l'âge de 12 à 13 ans (dans le mariage) et à 14 ans (hors du mariage); mais il réclame que l'âge soit élevé à 14 et 16 ans, attendu qu'au dessous, le développement physique de la jeune fille la rend impropre à la maternité.

BELOUCHISTAN.

Le Khan a lancé une proclamation, le 4 novembre, supprimant la propriété des esclaves mâles et femelles dans tout l'état de Kalat.

LA LIGUE DES NATIONS EN 1926.

La Ligue a publié le sommaire de 1926 dans lequel elle souligne l'importance de l'admission de l'Allemagne et de la réorganisation du Conseil.

Les autres articles mentionnés sont le règlement de la question de Mossoul; l'incident gréco-bulgare sera réglé par les mêmes principes.

La Cour de justice internationale a tenu session en juin et une en janvier pour régler la question des intérêts allemands en Silésie. Dans le courant de l'année, l'Allemagne, l'Abyssinie et le Guatemala ont adhéré aux statuts de la Cour; ces deux derniers pays ont signé la clause relative à la juridiction obligatoire. Le département d'Etat de Washington a envoyé une communication annonçant que le Sénat a approuvé l'adhésion des Etats-Unis à la Cour sous certaines réserves et conditions.

Cette année, le Bureau d'hygiène a étendu son activité à l'Extrême-Orient et à l'Afrique. Il y a un office de renseignements pour les épidémies à Singapour et une commission internationale étudie la maladie du sommeil en Ouganda. L'Institut international de coopération intellectuelle a été inauguré en janvier. Il a été décidé qu'un enseignement sur les buts de la Ligue sera donné aux enfants. L'organisation des secours aux réfugiés russes, arméniens, bulgares, etc., marche régulièrement. Le Comité contre l'opium ayant noté un accroissement du trafic des stupéfiants, le Conseil a exercé une pression sur les gouvernements pour qu'ils ratifient la convention de Genève de 1925. L'Assemblée a voté un crédit pour l'achat d'un terrain et la construction d'un bâtiment permanent de la Ligue au bord du lac de Genève.

MADELEINE RUDLER.

cipal de Bukarest, à l'unanimité des membres du Conseil qui les a choisis sur une liste de 7 noms présentés par l'ensemble des sociétés féministes.

ESPAGNE.

Mme. Plaminkova, sénateur tchécoslovaque, a été invitée par la députation provinciale de Barcelone à faire une série de conférences sur la femme, son importance dans l'état, la communauté et la famille, sur l'affranchissement des femmes et leur oeuvre dans le Parlement et sur le mouvement féministe dans le monde, Elle parlera aussi à Madrid, Séville, et Salamanque.

AUSTRALIE.

Mme. Rischbieth, présidente de la Fédération australienne pour l'égalité civique, a fait une tournée à Sydney, Melbourne, Adélaïde, etc., pour conférer avec les Sociétés féministes, afin d'assurer une entente générale et présenter les desiderata des femmes au gouvernement fédéral.

Femmes juges de paix.—La Nouvelle-Galles du Sud, l'Australie du Sud et de l'Ouest et la Tasmanie ont accordé aux femmes le droit d'être juges de paix.

Nouvelle Galles du Sud.—La commission industrielle a décidé de ne pas demander l'augmentation du salaire des hommes qui est de 4 guinées par semaine, mais d'établir, grâce à un pourcentage, une dotation pour les enfants.

Victoria.—Aux récentes élections municipales Mrs. A. Booth a été élue.

INDES.

Le gouvernement de Madras a nommé une femme dans son nouveau conseil législatif. Mme. I. Muthulakshmi Ammal. C'est une femme médecin qui a représenté l'Union hindoue au Congrès de Paris.

Une réforme sociale.—Pour l'anniversaire du Maharani de Bharatpur, un "social Reform Act" a été (Suite : p. 59.)

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