WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Towards a Real League of Nations.

The news that the German Government has unanimously decided "to endeavour to assure the speedy entry of Germany into the League of Nations" is perhaps the best augury for the future of the League of Nations there has ever been. With Germany in the League, and treated as "a great Power with equal privileges and rights," the reproach of its being practically only a League of Allies will for ever be removed. At the time of writing, the note of inquiry as to the reception with which an application for membership would be likely to meet, which is to be sent to the ten Governments whose representatives constitute the present Council of the League, has not been published. But the original Communiqué with regard to the decision is couched in such unprovocative terms that the Note is likely to be equally moderate. It can be regarded as certain that Germany would not have taken this step had she not ascertained by the Prime Minister's Speech, by Dr. Nansen's visit, and by other means that her application would be acceptable.

The League of Nations and Disarmament.

A preliminary draft of the Arbitration of Disarmament Protocol has now been published, though it has still to be considered by the first committee (legal and constitutional) before it can become the basis of debate in the Assembly. It may safely be assumed that this is not the final form in which it will aultimately be submitted to the Assembly, but it is undeniably a step forward. One advantage of the Protocol is that it gives a clear definition of the cases in which a country resorting to force would be regarded as the aggressor, also the obligation would be imposed on the signatories to accept as binding the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Mr. Henderson, speaking at the Committee, gave a careful statement of the attitude of the British delegation. The whole impression one gets from his speech and from the draft of the protocol is that disarmament and arbitration are becoming more and more clearly defined issues of practical politics. There will be a definite and practical scheme to lay before the nations concerned; the non possumus attitude of the Governments and the fear that the matter might go no further than endless talk at Geneva are becoming things of the past.

The Reassembling of Parliament.

Although when Parliament reassembles on the 30th it will be dealing with the Irish Bill only, speculation is already rife as to which subjects will be dealt with during the autumn session proper, which is due to begin on 28th October. There seems to be a general agreement that in addition to the Russian Treaty, and to

the Housing (Prices of Materials) Bill, two Bills of special interest to readers of this paper will be dealt with. One is the Representation of the People Act, 1918, Amendment Bill—to enfranchise women on the same terms as men—which, as our readers will remember, reached its report stage before the adjournment. The large number of amendments already on the order paper in the name chiefly of Conservative members leads us to fear that the demands of the Bill on Parliamentary time will not be modest, but we sincerely hope it will be passed by Christmas. The Factories Bill, long and intricate, with some of its clauses contentious in that it seeks to impose fresh restrictive legislation on women workers will also necessitate protracted discussions

The Financial Times and Widows' Pensions.

The Financial Times has a useful review of the article on Social Insurance Schemes which appeared in the Westminster Bank Review. The Times points out that this subject is likely to be prominently before the electorate in the near future, and that a good deal of ignorance exists on the subject. It concludes with the prediction that a scheme for Widows' Pensions will be introduced "before the end of the present decade." This recognition of the importance of the reform in a financial journal is an encouraging augury, but we are not prepared to wait for six years! In this connexion our readers are reminded of the series of four articles by Miss W. A. Elkin, summing up the various schemes of Social Insurance before the country, which will appear in our columns during the autumn months.

Married Women and Nationality.

We are glad to hear that the question of the Nationality of Married Women was one of the questions discussed at the Congress of the International Law Association at Stockholm, and that the Conference recommended that the woman who married a man not of her own nationality should have the right of choice as to whether or not she should take her husband's nationality. A long article by Lord Phillimore on the Congress appeared in *The Times*. His acceptance of the principle of a woman's choice of nationality is grudging in the extreme. Sensible wives, he says, will accept the husband's nationality, but the right to be foolish is "the right of free people, and therefore the concession was made." We have not seen a report of the debates of the Conference, but we can hardly believe that it was to safeguard the right to be foolish that so responsible an organization as the International Law Association recognized women's right to choose their own nationality. If a woman, for example, marries a foreigner living in her own country, who has not naturalized, does Lord Phillimore regard it as a foolishness that she should not want to be an alien amongst her own people? But apart from any question of one's sympathy with a woman's claim to her own nationality, there is another serious aspect to the present state of affairs, namely, the differences in the laws of different countries. A letter appeared in *The Times* of 23rd September, showing how hardly this can work out in practice. The writer is a British-born woman married to an American living in Austria. According to British law she has lost her British nationality. According to American law she keeps her prenuptial nationality and can only become an American citizen by naturalizing. But naturalization involves a year's residence in the States, and this she is unable to fulfil as her husband's work keeps him in Austria. It is thus impossible for her to remain British or to become American; she can get a passport neither from the British nor American authorities. Were it not that Austria issues a passport for foreigners it would presumably be impossible for her to travel or to go either to her own or her husband's country. The International Law Association added

as a second recommendation that if a married woman decides to adopt her husband's nationality, her claim should be immediately recognized. This would do away with the delays due to the requirements of residence before naturalization, and if adopted would make such a situation as the above impossible.

Miss Susan Lawrence and Russia.

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Much prominence has been given in the Press to Miss Lawrence's experiences in Russia. It would be out of place here to discuss her views on the political situation or the Russian Loan, but we were interested to read her account of the position of women. The women have greater opportunities under the present régime than ever before, and there are three women Ministers in the Soviet Government. Education, too, is forging ahead. Whatever the Bolsheviks have done, or left undone, there seems to be no doubt that education has made enormous strides since the Revolution. Miss Lawrence is submitting a report on the Russian educational system to the President of the Board of Education, and she is reported as saying that she would like to see the Bolshevist propaganda on education, chiefly by means of posters, copied in this country. We seem, as far as the posters go, to be following the Russian example, at least in London, since one of the most effective posters now to be seen on the hoardings is that of the L.C.C. evening classes. It is an interesting sign of the times that the local authorities recognize the value of good publicity work and are prepared to use it for educational purposes. One fact is curious with regard to the Press interviews with Miss Lawrence. Very few papers seem to have mentioned that Miss Lawrence's interest in education is directly official. Fleet Street seems to have forgotten that she is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education. We noticed too a comment in the Queen à propos of the appointment of a woman as Minister for Education in Denmark. It was an interesting paragraph on the need for a differentiation between the curricula of boys and girls, and the writer expressed the wish that we had a woman as second in command at the Board of Education. Is Miss Lawrence really so unknown, or is it merely that the editor of the Queen ought to subscribe to the Woman's Leader?

A Woman Minister of Education.

A woman, Fru Bang, has recently been appointed as Minister of Education in Denmark. We are glad to learn that the small number of women ministers has received this notable addition. Fru Bang has taken a prominent part in public affairs in Denmark, and has a wide knowledge of education, with intellectual gifts which make her well suited to the post.

Two Aspects of Glasgow.

Two aspects of the activities—or inactivities—of Glasgow have recently come to our notice. The one is the proposal by the Corporation to produce smokeless fuel. They recently decided to install a five-unit battery of Maclaurin producers for the manufacture of smokeless fuel and the supply of industrial gas. It is claimed that smokeless fuel as easy to kindle and as cheap as coal can be produced, and gas suitable for industrial purposes as a cheaper substitute for raw coal. Apart from the commercial aspect of the question, the benefit of this in an industrial town such as Glasgow, if it really leads to an important decrease in the use of ordinary coal, cannot be over-estimated, and if successful there it would give a great stimulus to the use of smokeless fuel throughout the country. But whilst in this way Glasgow is forging ahead, and trying to make a cleaner town, its record in other directions is far from satisfactory. The Medical Officer, in his annual report, calls attention to the overcrowding in the city. Overcrowding, that is more than three persons to a room, exists in over 40,000 houses, and though 1,200 houses are being built each year the number is less than the requirements. In other words, the shortage is increasing. In spite of this, Glasgow has a healthy year, the death-rate being the lowest on record. But obviously, with this degree of overcrowding, it cannot be as healthy as it ought to be; its record year of health can only mean that medical science and preventive measures are becoming more able to counteract the effects of bad housing; but nothing, not even smokeless fuel, can do so altogether.

Municipal Honours for Miss Margaret McMillan.

We are glad to hear that a proposal is being brought before the Deptford Borough Council to honour Miss Margaret McMillan as a mark of appreciation of her lifework for children. It is a recommendation that her name should be recorded on the Honours Board of the Council Chamber, and that she should be invited to sign the Borough Roll of Honour. At the time of going to press the decision of the Council was not known, but we imagine there can be little doubt of the result, and that Miss McMillan's work will receive the recognition and the public expression of gratitude it so richly deserves.

Two Women Mayors.

Colchester has chosen a woman Mayor for the second year in succession. The present Mayor, Mrs. C. B. Alderton, whose term of office ends on 9th November, will be succeeded by Dame Catherine Hunt, a prominent social worker, and leader of the Women's Conservative League.

Women and the Church Congress.

We have received particulars of the activities of the League of the Church Militant in connexion with the Church Congress Exhibition, which begins at Oxford on 27th September. There will be lectures on Women and the Industrial System, and on the State and the Child on the first day at the L.C.M. Office, 1 Blackhall Road, On 1st October there will be a Public Meeting at the Randolph Hotel, at which the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard will take the chair and Miss Maude Royden will speak on "The Need of Revision in the Marriage Service of the Church of England." The League is aiming at the abolition of the promise to obey in the Marriage Service, the omission of the question "Who giveth this woman to be married?" and the alteration of the last prayer before the final blessing. Tickets can be obtained locally, or at the L.C.M. Headquarters, Church House, Dean's Yard, S.W. 1, with details of the other activities of the League during the Church Congress.

The Marriage Service.

Those of our readers who are interested in the revision of the Church of England Marriage Service will be glad to learn that Mrs. Marston Acres, Church House, Dean's Yard, S.W. 1, is taking a referendum on the subject. Anyone who has views on the question is asked to state whether he or she is in favour of revision; this will give some idea of the feeling about this matter, though correspondents are not asked to state the reasons for their views.

Medical Women's Jubilee.

The jubilee of the foundation of the London School of Medicine, in October, 1874, takes place next month. On Friday, 24th October, a dinner will be held at the Guildhall when Dr. Mary Scharlieb will preside, and the Dean of St. Paul's will speak on the work of women during the past fifty years. The following day there will be a great service of thanksgiving at St. Paul's Cathedral, at which the Bishop of Lichfield will preach. Practically every recognized organization of women in Great Britain and the Dominions Overseas, together with some delegations from foreign countries, will be represented. The day will conclude with an evening party at the school.

A Scholarship for Domestic Science.

We have referred several times recently to the growth of interest in the serious study of Domestic Science. Another sign of this is the scholarship recently founded by Adèle Lady Meyer in memory of the late Sir Carl Meyer, Bart., for the purpose of promoting the study of Household and Social Science. The scholarship is of the value of £80 a year, and tenable for three years at the University of London, King's College for Women, Household and Social Science Department, Campden Hill.

Blind Defectives.

We have received a letter from Miss Ellen Terry asking us to bring to the notice of our readers the work that is being done by the Braille and "Servers of the Blind" League, 3 Upper Woburn Place, W.C. 1, for those who are both blind and defective. No provision at present exists for these unfortunate people, and the Ministry of Health has asked the League to undertake this work. The first home for blind defective children is about to be opened at Reigate, where the children will be given such educational facilities and special treatment as each case needs. Where possible they will be trained for light employment. The League is appealing for financial support for this work.

Next Week.

We regret that Mrs. Taylor's "Memories from 1834 to 1924" has been unavoidably postponed to a later issue, and we remind our readers that the first of Mrs. Fawcett's articles in the series, "Two Spring Visits to Palestine, 1921, 1922," will appear. The series on Pioneer Medical Women will be continued by an article on Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, contributed by the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women.

THE FIFTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

A frequent incident in the League Assembly is the expression of thanks by a delegate for help given by the members to his country over some crisis. This year, Viscount Ishii has recalled with gratitude the assistance given to Japan at the time of the earthquake, which occurred during last Assembly, and during which he went on for some days with his work at Geneva, ignorant of the fate of his family. Count Apponyi has voiced the appreciation felt by Hungary for League help over financial reconstruction; Mr. Politis has expressed thanks for Greece, for the work among refugees. It is such incidents that make members and onlookers realize the progressive solidarity of the League as a world instrument for actions which would have lost half their effectiveness if they had been isolated and piecemeal, in the absence of a centralizing organ.

Worth noting, too, is the increasing number of international societies which hold meetings in Geneva during the Assembly. This year the "Féderation universitaire internationale pour Société des Nations" held a Congress of some hundreds of students at the University during the first week. It is a "youth novement" confined to University students, banded in support of the League in most countries of Europe. Its moving spirit and general secretary is a Frenchman; its President this year s an Oxford Undergraduate. Several of the leading Assembly delegates are addressing the group. The "Union des Associations Internationales" has also been holding its Congress here. Although neither of these Societies has official connexion yet with any League body, it seems likely that scope will develop for such unofficial connexions under the Committee for Intellectual Co-operation, part of whose work is the co-ordination of the work of international bodies with objects coming within its range. It may be noted, in passing, that Professor Einstein is now again a member of this permanent Committee. He resigned from doubts as to its utility, but, on becoming convinced that he had been mistaken, was large-minded enough to admit this and to return. His welcome back by M. Bergson, the Chairman of the Committee, was the occasion this year of a pleasing tribute rom the distinguished French philosopher to his German colleague.

By the second week of the Assembly the various Committees are all busy at work in their different departments. Unfortunately, this year the tendency to keep out the general public from the Commissions which they were most anxious to attendnotably that on Disarmament—has increased. Early in the history of the League, Lord Cecil fought for and established the principle that Committees were public unless they were held in

secret for a special reason. This year several have been closed to all but certain Press representatives while there was still room for admission. One heard of serious and well-informed students of international affairs, who had come to Geneva largely to hear these discussions, who were—it seemed needlessly—kept out and their interest checked. If, as appeared on the surface, this was done merely to avoid slight difficulties of organization, it was very regrettable, and it is to be hoped it will not become a practice.

The Fifth Committee has been working on the Refugee question, and it is on this subject, not, as at first reported, on the question of Traffic in Women and Children, that Mrs. Swanwick is "rapporteur," and upon which she may therefore be expected to

address the Assembly.

The close examination of the budget by the Fourth (Financial) Committee is very important. For one thing, on its recommendations depends much of the work of the other Committees. Last year some of the activities of the Fifth (Humanitarian) Committee had to be curtailed, and this year it is feared that it may be impossible to include a grant to Miss Jeppe for her work among Armenian women in Turkish harems; it is, however, much to be hoped that official League backing for the work will be

Every item in the budget is subjected to the closest scrutiny, and accusations of extravagance made against the League can hardly, one feels, be based on knowledge. The *Journal de Genève* for 9th September, is worth quoting on this subject.

continued, or the difficulties of carrying it on will be enormously

"The League of Nations," says the writer of the leading article, "costs Great Britain the ten thousandth part of her budget. . . Her contribution to the League is covered more than a hundred times by the tax on automobiles and more than ten times by the tax on saccharin. Every British subject pays five shillings tax for past wars, five shillings for future wars, and one-tenth of a halfpenny for the League of Nations. The British navy costs the English as much in one year as the League of Nations would cost them in seventeen centuries." Equally striking comparisons are given for other countries. The article closes by a plea against restriction of expenditure through a false economy in response to pressure from a misled and badly informed public opinion. Those who follow the multifarious and valuable activities of the League through an Assembly session must echo this appeal.

K. E. INNES.

THE NEW INSCRIPTION.

Speaking in Manchester on Saturday, the Lord Chancellor said some very polite things about the British public. We ourselves have always held fairly polite views concerning this many-headed monster-qualified, of course, by our abhorrence f its taste in newspapers. We have always held, for instance, that it has a sort of fundamental and inevitable respect for good reasoning which will most probably in the end ensure the success f any reasonably presented reasonable cause. With much of Lord Haldane's eulogy, therefore, we in are full accord. He said, among other things, that the public wanted, and would insist on having the very best in literature, art, education, and music. The answer of a military bandmaster to the question ' is your most popular musical item?" bears this out. "Schubert's Infinished Symphony," was his unhesitating reply. But Lord Haldane said something more polite even than this. He said that in its pursuit of the very best, the public was capable of apprehending and responding to the highest idealism, as witness which he cited the love of this country for that prince of idealists-Mazzini. It was, we believe, some such capacity of apprehension which accounted for the burst of public homage that followed the execution of Edith Cavell. It is difficult to analyse a wave of popular feeling, but clearly there was something about this particular incident of the war which stirred a peculiar intensity of emotion. What was it? Clearly not the judicial injustice of the German sentence. It was a pitiless sentence, but under the strict letter of martial law the flagrancy of its injustice pales before that of a sentence which followed it, Captain Fryatt's. Yet no statue of that faithful seaman adorns a central London site. Nor can the death of Edith Cavell, measured in units of physical agony and prolonged mental strain, take pre-eminence among a multitude of deaths obscurely commemorated upon innumerable war memorials. No-we believe that the real secret of that wave of homage which added to the statuary of our Imperial metropolis was the fact that this unpretentious heroine chanced to illumine her death by the expression of an officially unpopular truth—a truth which the public nevertheless in its heart of hearts believed and wanted to believe: the truth that "patriotism is not enough." And because she happened at the moment to be standing with great dignity in the arena of public attention, because, moreover, her words fell with that peculiar force which words have when spoken consciously on the eve of the great adventure of death, they were heard by everyone.

But unfortunately the prevailing official view—and, we fear, the view of those responsible for the erection of the statue, was not in accordance with this truth. It was very generally asserted at the time, that "patriotism was enough. with some practical justification; for, after all, what kind of an active fighting spirit can you expect from a population which has "no hatred or bitterness for anyone?" Thus, rightly or wrongly (and we have our opinions), those last words of Edith Cavell—the words which in one moment immortalized her and kindled the soul of her public-were omitted from the inscription which adorned her statue. Nevertheless, the public somehow felt itself cheated; and now at last, in response to persistent public agitation," the First Commission of Works has seen fit to make good the omission. There they stand, graven in stone for all to read, overshadowing by their beauty the deplorable artistic shortcomings of the erection upon which they appear. If there are any among the memorial's subscribers who visualized it as a wholesome and lasting reminder of German 'frightfulness' we are sorry for them. That aspect of their work has been wholly destroyed by the inscription which now

(Continued on page 282.)

HUSBAND AND WIFE BEFORE THE LAW.

CONSENT IN MARRIAGE.

The essence of marriage is the free consent of the parties to it. In the classical period of Roman law the marriage relation depended entirely on the free will of the man and woman entering into it. Their mere consent made the marriage. This remained what might be called the common law of Christendom down till the Council of Trent, in the middle of the sixteenth century, for though only marriages "in the face of the church" were deemed regular, "irregular" marriages were perfectly valid; the difficulty, when any arose, was one of proof.

The Council of Trent declared that for the future all marriages

The Council of Trent declared that for the future all marriages which took place otherwise than in the presence of a priest and of two or three witnesses should be invalid; and this eventually became and remained the law of England until, in recent times, marriage before the registrar was permitted as an alternative, and the nonconformist minister was allowed, subject to certain restrictions, to be substituted for the priest. The essence of the contract in England is still the giving of consent, but to be effective it must be given in a particular place, between certain hours, in the presence of a particular person and witnesses.

The over-riding importance of the consent of the parties is manifest in that a marriage of minors, once it has taken place, is valid, although the pre-requisite consent of the parents or guardians has not been given; even if a boy and girl under the legal age for marriage (fourteen and twelve years respectively) go through the ceremony, the marriage is only voidable; they can, after reaching that age, convert it into a binding marriage by affirming it, either expressly or by living together as husband and wife. On the other hand, where there is a mistake in the person with whom the contract is made—Henry say marrying Elizabeth, thinking he is marrying Anne—there is in law no marriage. This has a practical importance where dozens of couples are marshalled for marriage before one clergyman at a special reduced fee for Easter morning.

Consent exacted by violence or threats is not, in law, cosnent at all.

In Scotland, marriage can be contracted by the mere verbal exchange of consent, without forms, and even without witnesses. Whatever proves serious, deliberate, and unconditional consent of both parties to a present marriage is sufficient proof of a marriage. This is carried so far that if a man promise to marry a woman, and on the faith of that promise she permit sexual intercourse, a valid marriage is then and there constituted, such permission being justly regarded as an emphatic consent. The wife, however, obtains her legal status as such only when she gets a decree from a Court declaring her marriage. The case of Mackie v. Mackie, heard by the Court of Session in Edinburgh, in 1917, is instructive. A soldier was engaged to a girl, the engagement being known to the relations and friends of both. He was killed in the war; and later she gave birth to a child. The court made a declaration that she was married; and it followed that the child was legitimate. Needless to say, very strict proof is in such cases required of the promise to marry

The English law does not go so far as this, but where a man and woman have cohabited for such a length of time, and in such circumstances as to have acquired the reputation of man and wife, a lawful marriage between them will be presumed, though there may be no positive evidence of any marriage having taken place; and the presumption can be displaced only by strong and weighty evidence to the contrary.

The Scottish law may be compared with the English as exemplified in some recent happenings.

In July last, in Hartlepool, a young woman, moved by a very understandable sentiment, desired to be married to her sweetheart who was dying in hospital. A religious ceremony was performed, and was thought by the parties and the officiating clergyman to be in order. The "marriage" was invalid, not having been entered into in an authorized place; only one person in England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, can licence a marriage at any convenient time or place.

At Potters Bar a week later a vicar forgot a marriage he had arranged to solemnize. The legal hour of three o'clock passed, and the ceremony was performed at 3.45. Authorities differ whether the couple are married or not. The Secretary of State can under an Act of Parliament of 1905 remove the doubt by a Provisional Order. The Order must be confirmed by Parliament; but confirmation is never withheld. By an Act of this year, 1924, the clergyman or other person acting in the matter

can in the same manner be relieved of any penalty he has inadvertently incurred in such a case.

The irregularity in marriages performed by an alleged bogus curate who officiated at Queensberry, near Bradford, a few weeks ago, and there married two couples, does not seem much to have disturbed them; they are reported to have accepted the assurance of the Bishop that their marriages are valid. The Bishop has been correctly advised on the law, for to make the marriage invalid in such a case both parties must be aware that the officiating clergyman is, in fact, not in holy orders.

ALBERT LIECK.

A CHOICE OF BOOKS.

GARDEN GRACE. By LOUISE DRISCOLL. (Macmillan, 6s.)

Miss Driscoll's garden is a "pleasant place." Hers is not the conventional treatment of a pretty theme. Her thought blossoms into verse from the deep soil of her love and knowledge of her subject, and is joyful with the content that is given to workers of the soil.

AMERICAN SOCIAL HISTORY AS RECORDED BY BRITISH TRAVEL-LERS. Compiled and edited by Allan Nevins. (Allen and Unwin, 18s.)

The editor of this interesting book has as his object "to give a view of the development of American Society from Washington's day to Harding's " from the writings of British travellers in the United States. In this he has been eminently successful. and the result is an amusing and valuable book. He gives us concise notes about his travellers, and tells us of the circumstances in which they visited America. The earliest group wrote between 1789 and 1825, and several of them described meetings with Washington himself. There are excerpts from Mrs. Frances Trollope, whose unmeasured criticism of American "Domestic Manners" provoked a storm, and there are the milder comments of Miss Harriet Martineau. A later period is described by Mathew Arnold and G. W. Steevens, and the collection is brought to a close with a passage from the American Commonwealth, and H. W. Nevinson's lyric farewell to America. These names gathered at random give little idea of the variety and weight of the writers, and the excellent judgment shown by Mr. Nevins in his selection from an enormous mass of material.

THE WOMEN IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS. By AGNES MURE MACKENZIE. (Heinemann, 15s.)

Miss Mure Mackenzie begins with a frank acknowledgment of the work of her two predecessors, Mrs. Jameson and Helen Faucit, pointing out at the same time the disadvantages which they, in their Victorian darkness, had to struggle with in dealing with such a subject. Before the age of Shakespearean criticism, and feminine emancipation, the plays were regarded as having the same value, while the characters of Shakespeare's women were held to have an equal interest, and were one and all appraised from a male point of view. Miss Mure Mackenzie has left all this far behind. She is an up-to-date feminist, has read and digested Freud and Jung as well as the plays and uses her material in a clear-eyed balanced way, giving to old ideals of art their value while using modern methods and handling the whole question with humorous good sense.

THE GOLDEN LADDER. By RUPERT HUGHES. (Hurst and Blackett, 7s. 6d.)

Mr. Hughes has for his heroine a lady whose career has not, we believe, been hitherto chronicled, though it provides an excellent subject for romance. Born in Providence, U.S.A., Betty Bowen grew up in New York, which city she besieged and conquered in the seventeen-eighties. After an escapade to Paris whence an indignant husband packed her back to America she led a life there more adventurous than decorous, till her marriage, at the age of sixty to the aged politician and lawyer Aaron Burr. Mr. Hughes has made the most of his opportunities. He draws careful portraits of the various historical personages who cross his heroine's stormy path, and he deals faithfully and well with her brilliant and sordid self.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL STUDY AND TRAINING, Glasgow.

Autumn Term begins 6th October. Two years' course of study and practical work qualifying for a Diploma, suitable for those interested in social conditions, or undertaking different branches of public and social service: Hospital Almoners, Welfare Supervisors, Health Visitors, Teachers, and others.

For further information, apply to MISS HELEN STORY, Hon. Sec., Royston, Crown Circus Road.

MICHAEL FIELD. By M. CARTA STURGE, M.A.

SEPTEMBER 26, 1924.

It may not be inappropriate that the short notice of Michael Field which appeared in The Woman's Leader on 8th August should be followed up by some further account of the two remarkable women who together wrote under this name. Some of the readers of the notice may have also seen a very humorous article contributed by Mr. Logan Pearsal Smith to The New Statesman of 12th April, in which he describes their somewhat quaint personality, as known to him in their later life, and which is well worth reading, because in a sense it is true though very much a burlesque of the truth, and therefore misleading.

To some of us who had the good fortune to know Michael Field at a much earlier age it seems only due that a more serious portrait should be given to the public and one representing their brilliant youth. Also it needs to be stressed that, although various notices appearing in the papers lately have been called out by the publication of their lyrics, it was as Playwrights that they first came before the world and won appreciation.

Some of these plays, although now so little known, are truly remarkable and prove richly rewarding to any who take the trouble to find them and to read them.

These two striking personalities dawned upon the horizon in the neighbourhood of Bristol nearly half a century ago, their brilliant mental powers giving almost an electric shock to the happy few who at that time made their acquaintance. The niece, Edith Cooper, perhaps the more gifted of the two, was just sixteen, the aunt, Katharine Bradley, some fifteen years older.

At this time some of their finest work was already in the making, the play "Callirrhoe," which almost stormed the literary world—now so long ago that few remember it—and a still earlier play, "Bellerophôn," published under another name than that of Michael Field, and containing passages almost as fine as any in "Callirrhoe." No one can read it without being struck with it as marvellous work to have been much of it produced by a girl of sixteen. And if it be argued that probably the finer passages were the work of the more mature aunt, the argument will not hold, for it was not so.

The niece, who was a still and mystical personality, had the appearance of one who had strayed by mischance into a hard and solid world not meant for her. Indeed, the French description of Shelley as an "Ariel" admirably applies to Edith Cooper. But it is unnecessary for us to try to draw her portrait, seeing that her aunt, the other Michael Field, has done it so perfectly in the following lines:—

A girl,
Her soul, a deep-wave pearl,
Dim, lucent of all lovely mysteries;
A face flowered for all heart's ease,
A brow's grace soft as seas
Seen through faint forest trees:
A mouth, the lips apart,
Like aspen-leaflets trembling in the breeze
From her temptuous heart.

These lines have admirably caught the strange mixture in her character of quiet mysticism and of a latent tempestuousness, each of which was so marked that a photograph representing the former and a miniature by Mr. Charles Ricketts (now in the Fitzwilliam at Cambridge) in which she is rendered as a distracted Maenad, are equally good and characteristic portraits. It was, however, the still side that one generally saw. Her speech was slow and low and scarce, and had just that suggestion of chant which Mr. Pearsall Smith exaggeratedly attributes to both. She had, too, a slight lisp which the irreverent were tempted to mimic a little, but it was with what one might call a very affectionate irreverence.

The elder of the two poets was a much more robust personality, "vivacious and ruddy," as Mr. Pearsall Smith truly says, with, at that time, very good looks and rich wavy hair in which the lights were chestnut. It is to be regretted that the younger did not write a poem on her aunt corresponding to the one already quoted written upon herself, one which would convey her glowing and inspiring and breezy influence. Katharine Bradley's breeziness was such that their beautiful lyric addressed to the Summer Wind might metaphorically be applied to her. As one of their most beautiful short poems it may be quoted here.

O Wind, thou hast thy kingdom in the trees, And all thy royalties
Sweep through the land to-day.
It is mid-June,
And thou, with all thine instruments in tune,
Thine orchestra
Of heaving fields, and heavy, swinging fir,
Strikest a lay
That doth rehearse
Her ancient freedom to the universe.
All other sound in awe
Repeals its law;
The bird is mute, the sea
Sucks up its waves, from rain
The burdened clouds refrain,
To listen to thee in thy leafery,
Thou unconfined,
Lavish, large, soothing, refluent, summer-wind.

"Lavish, large," and one should add, glowing and stimulating, was the personality of Katharine Bradley, the elder poet.

In contrast with the always slightly parted lips of Edith, which seemed to express her never-ending wonder at the magic of the Universe, Katharine's mouth often shut after speaking with a peculiar firmness, and when shut with this emphasis there was no gainsaying her. What she had said was final. Her nature was imperious, and she could be relentlessly angry, and yet without giving offence, for even her anger had a sort of humour about it which was irresistible.

To give an adequate account of her is difficult, but Miss Sturgeon, in her book upon Michael Field, gathering up and unifying the impressions given her by many intimate friends (for she herself had never known them), gives a singularly good and characteristic delineation of her.

Mr. Pearsall Smith's quite deliciously amusing account of the "Court" over which they presided, and its "courtiers' which is, of course, intentionally exaggerated, has nevertheless an element of truth in it, and it was the outcome of a "court' which grew up quite unconsciously and spontaneously in their youth. It was not their fault; it was ours, if fault it was, of us, the youthful enthusiasts who made a little circle of admirers and danced attendance upon them. There were about a dozen of us, some of us perhaps just gifted enough, and no more, to appreciate these two very out-standing young women. They made a tremendous impression upon us, and we certainly thought of them in superlatives." And we think, those of us who are still living, in this way still. Half a century has only confirmed our first impressions. And when any of us, their earlier, their original, but much humbler "courtiers" as to attainments and importance than many of their later admirers, meet each other now, we still speak of them with bated breath, and our eyes take on an unusual glow of light. Light! the very recollection of them is that of light, of splendour. And surely any who will take the trouble to hunt out the volumes of their work will find splendour one of its essential qualities.

So much for their personality and the way it struck their contemporaries in youth. In later life the impression they made may have been different, but it cannot have been less when we find so laughing a critic as Mr. Pearsall Smith regretting that he had not proved himself "a more obsequious courtier to these bewitched princesses, these inspired autocratic, incredible old maids." And this regret became more poignant still, he says, when at last, too late as far as their living selves were concerned, he took down "their unopened books of verse on his shelves and rubbed his eyes at the beauty of their lyrics."

And this brings us to speaking of their works.

When "Callirrhoe" was published in 1884, it met immediately with a quite extraordinary success. There was much discussion as to who Michael Field could be, but no one suspected that he was not a man. The secret was kept even from us, the little band of admirers of the two ladies who had written it. What fun it was as one after another of us found it out, and, keeping the secret well, with what amusement we joined in the speculations of those who did not know.

The Spectator was enthusiastic much beyond its wont in its praises of this play, and all the other literary papers were equally eulogistic. By and by of course it came out, and we, the little circle of youthful admirers, had the joy of seeing Browning, Meredith, and others of the "great ones" appreciating and making much of those who had been hitherto, as it were, our own private Princesses!

But not very long after this brilliant reception in the world of letters came the collapse, and the fall into ultimate obscurity. What was the reason of this? It has always been a puzzle. Browning, to the end of his life, neither withdrew his friendship

¹ To be had at the "Poetry Bookshop," 35 Devoushire Street, Theobalds Road, W.C. 1.

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nor his appreciation. Nor did others. It was certainly not a case of a genius who could produce only one great poem and then was worked out. They produced much afterwards which anyone who took the trouble to read them must see to be the work of genius, and that of a fine order. There are certainly inequalities, but no one could write twenty-eight plays and keep always at the same level, and there can be no doubt that they are full of most powerful passages and are the product of fine imagina-

The plays that followed this first success, though much looked forward to, were felt to be disappointing, owing largely to an unfortunate choice of subject. "Callirrhoe" had handled the eternities, things of living interest for all time, but the public could not be much interested in the character, for instance, of William Rufus or in a somewhat obscure piece of Scotch History, and by the time the poets had again returned to themes of higher interest they had been, sad to say, almost forgotten, though many of these later plays were of out-standing worth. Another thing that told against them at that time was their out-spoken way of "calling a spade a spade," which in those days, nearly half a century ago, gave offence to many people, and did undoubtedly cut off a large section of the reading public. So very slight, however, was their allusion to what were then considered forbidden subjects as compared with the present time, that one has almost to use a microscope to discover anything of the sort in their work. But the thing that told most strongly against their success was their unwise habit of publishing their volumes themselves without any advertisement whatever, and every one of experience knows what that means, no matter what the merit of the work.

There is not space here to discuss the literary value of their poetry. This has been ably done by Miss Sturgeon in her little study entitled "Michael Field," which is a sort of rediscovery of these two authors. How far their unshakable conviction that posterity would ultimately give them a favourable verdict was right remains to be seen, but there can be no doubt that 'Callirrhoe' should take its place as a classic in the English language, whatever may befall the other plays, and that some of the lyrics should do so too. Already one of these, the song of a faun and his shadow, has found its place in a children's Anthology, which shall be quoted here to show that, although most of their poetry was serious and even tragic, they could be gracefully playful at times :-

I dance and dance! Another faun, A black one dances on the lawn. He moves with me, and when I lift My heels his feet directly shift: I can't outdance him, though I try: He dances nimbler than I. He dances nimbler than I.
I toss my head, and so does he;
What tricks he dares to play on me!
I touch the ivy in my hair;
Ivy he has and finger there.
The spiteful thing to mock me so!
I will outdance him! Ho, ho, ho!

The weaving in of this lightsome faun with the terrible incidents of the play and the delicately told story of his tragic end, as he falls upon his own shadow and dies, is one of the beautiful features of "Callirrhoe."

OFFENCES AGAINST WOMEN AND

By MAUD I. CROFTS, M.A., LL.B., Solicitor.

The principal Acts which deal with sexual offences against Women and Girls are the Offences Against the Person Act, 1861, and the Criminal Law Amendment Acts of 1885, 1912, and 1922 (commonly cited together as "The Criminal Law Amendment Acts, 1885 to 1922 "). The Children Act, 1908. contains provisions dealing with similar offences against children under 14, and young persons under 16. Some of the chief offences of this nature against women and girls are as follows:

- 1. Procuration.—This is a misdemeanour and is punished by imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour, and any male person convicted of this offence, may in addition be sentenced to a whipping.
- 2. Procuring defilement by threats, frauds, or drugs.—This offence is a misdemeanour, and the punishment is identical with that for procuration, except that no whipping can be
- 3. Defilement of girl under 13.—This is a felony, and the punishment is penal servitude for life, or for not less than five years, or imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without

hard labour. Any person guilty of an attempt to have carnal knowledge of any girl under 13 years of age commits a misdemeanour punishable by imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour. There is a proviso that in the case of an offender whose age does not exceed 16 years the Court may substitute an order for whipping for the sentence of imprisonment.

4. Defilement of, or attempt to defile, girl between 13 and 16.— Either of these offences is a misdemeanour, and the punishment is imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour. Since the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1922, reasonable cause to believe the girl was of or above the age of 16, is no longer a defence, provided that in the case of a man of 23 years of age or under the presence of reasonable cause to believe that the girl was over 16 shall be a valid defence on the first occasion on which he is charged with this offence. but the burden of proving bona fides or reasonable grounds for belief is thrown on the accused.

No prosecution for such offences can be begun more than nine months after their alleged commission.

5. Rape.—This is a felony and the punishment is penal servitude for life, or for not less than three years or imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour.

6. Defilement of, or attempt to defile, idiot or imbecile woman. This offence is a misdemeanour, if it occurs in circumstances which do not amount to rape, but which prove that the offender knew at the time of its commission that the woman or girl was an idiot or imbecile. The punishment is imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour.

7. Householder, etc., permitting defilement of young girl on his premises.—If the girl be under 13, any owner or occupier committing this offence is guilty of a felony, and the punishment is penal servitude for life, or for not less than five years or imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour. If the girl be of or above the age of thirteen and under the age of sixteen years, the offence is a misdemeanour, and the punishment is imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour. The accused must "induce or knowingly suffer" the defilement, in order to be convicted. In the case of a man of 23 years or under, the presence of reasonable cause to believe that the girl was over 16 shall be a valid defence on the first occasion on which he is charged with this offence, but the burden of proving this defence is thrown on the accused.

8. Abduction of girl under 18 with intent to have carnal knowledge from the care of her parents or lawful guardian. This offence is a misdemeanour, and the punishment is imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard labour. It is, however, a sufficient defence if it is made to appear to the Court or jury that the accused had reasonable cause to believe that the girl was of or above the age of 18 years.

9. Unlawful detention of any woman or girl with intent to have carnal knowledge is a misdemeanour, and the punishment is imprisonment for not exceeding two years with or without hard

None of the foregoing offences is triable at Sessions, but must go to Assizes for trial.

10. Indecent assault on any female is a misdemeanour, and the punishment is imprisonment for not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour. As a rule the case is not triable at Sessions, but if the indecent assault is committed upon a person, male or female, who, in the opinion of the Court, is under 16, the offence, with the consent of the accused and at the discretion of the Court, may be dealt with summarily, i.e. at Petty Sessions, and in this event the punishment may not exceed six months' imprisonment, and the child's or young person's consent is no defence.

THE NEW INSCRIPTION.

(Continued from page 279.) appears upon it; and such persons may justly feel that their money has been grossly misapplied. But the vast majority of us are well satisfied with the change. In times to come we shall no doubt be temporarily of the opinion that patriotism is enough-or class consciousness, or feminism. But in our heart of hearts we shall not be sorry, as we were not sorry in the heat of the war, for a permanent expression of opinion that it is not. And what better place could there be for such an expression of opinion? Everybody in the country must pass by that spot sometime or other—on their way to the National Gallery, or St. Martin's Church, or the Coliseum, or the 1917 Club, as the case may be.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRTH CONTROL-AGAINST.

MADAM,—I felt I must write in support of Mrs. Margery Smith's letter. It is an immense subject, but I hope I have kept to your limit. Of course, "appetite having become master in the house" is at the root of all the miseries at present existing, as anyone may know who gives it serious thought. But birth control, and its demoralizing methods, is no cure. We try to remedy all the effects—bad housing, unemployment, expenditure on war, shortage of every useful commodity, low wages, etc.—and spend vast sums of money in trying to combat these, yet we omit to cleanse the spring from which all these incompetencies flow, viz., want of self-control in marriage. It says in Ephesians iv, 20: "but ye have not learned Christ." The primitive Church must have given better instruction in these matters than present-day Churches; for the most part these latter are silent on these vital questions, except in the most art these latter are silent on these vital questions, except in the most eneral and discursive way. Hoping they may be drawn, through your aper, to regard them with more importance. (Mrs.) E. A. RENNY.

BIRTH CONTROL-FOR.

MADAM,—Mrs. Sanderson Furniss's article on birth control is full of nisconceptions. Many who are extremist supporters of the Labour ause are none the less strongly in favour of birth control. They do not dvocate it, as do some Conservatives, as a palliative to workers on tarvation wages, but as fundamental to a healthy and intelligent nunity and essential to truly creative motherhood.

(1) The well-to-do mother's health is not affected by very rapid childearing. (I take this to be the meaning of a somewhat obscure first aragraph.) Very few well-to-do families go beyond five or six nowadays d nobody suggests that that number, or even eight, at suitable intervals ad even this involves birth control) would be too much for a woman and even this involves birth control) would be too much for a woman, who need do nothing during pregnancy and nursing beyond taking the xercise necessary to her health. But a community in which all the nothers do next to no work is not likely to be achieved, even under ocialism. Nor is such a community, for many reasons, desirable. The transens" of exhausted mothers among the well-to-do is due just as much to birth control as to good food and freedom from hard work, speaking as a woman who has suffered no lack of necessities, who has speaking as a woman who has suffered no lack of necessities, who has orne, so far, two children at a two-year interval, and who would receive certificate of health above the average, may I say that, but for birth ontrol, I stood a very good chance of being crippled for life?

(2) No supporter of Libour would dream of suggesting to the working nother that her "relations with her husband" and large family are the ole cause of her difficulties. What we do say is that the working mother than the theory which family the that the theory which families have achieved for middle.

sole cause of her difficulties. What we do say is that the working mother has a right to that liberty which feminists have achieved for middle-class women, namely that of being treated as a responsible person with a point of view of her own. As such, she has also a right to any scientific information affecting her welfare, and it is a piece of elementary justice to place it within her reach, whether it be proper medical care, birth control information, or the best advice on infant feeding. We blame conditions and society perhaps more vehemently than does Mrs. Furniss; and will fight for the honourable recognition and endowment of motherhood, higher wages, good houses and, above all, medical care. But we say that birth control is an important part of maternity care, and that without

fight for the honourable recognition and endowment of motherhood, higher wages, good houses and, above all, medical care. But we say that birth control is an important part of maternity care, and that without it, the ante-natal and welfare centres are fighting a losing battle. For any woman, however perfect her conditions, to bear a child every year is a mistake from the point of view of mother, child, and society.

(3) May I explode, in passing, the so much repeated error about France? The French birth-rate (see The Times, 30th June, 1924) is, relative to the population, higher than ours; but their death-rate, infant and adult, is far heavier. It is this death-rate, not birth control, which so limits the increase of the French people. Our increase during 1923, on a lower birth-rate, was three times theirs.

(4) When wages reach the point suggested by Mrs. Furniss, of allowing of luxury and leisure, there still remains a choice to be made by parents. To many on the fringe of the middle class that choice has already presented itself. Shall they, by birth control, rear four children to whom they will give every opportunity through thorough medical care and education, or shall they "just manage" to bring up eight citizens? Each couple surely have a right to decide this for themselves.

(5) Mrs. Furniss's views about self-control and separate rooms, together with the attitude expressed by your Anglo-Catholic correspondent, would require lengthy treatment. May I say only that I believe it to be a fundamental error of our social life to regard sex love as sinful indulgence only permissible that children may be brought into the world. It goes with the old-fashioned theory that only disagreeable actions are virtuous. To my mind this outlook is responsible for the greater part of our misery whether social or individual, and it is one of the most important tasks of women in our generation to replace it by an attitude of greater knowledge and dignity.

Dora Russell. women in our generation to replace it by an attitude of greater knowledge dignity.

Dora Russell.

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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON BY-ELECTION.

A deputation of constituents in the above by-election who are members of the N.U.S.E.C. is being organized by Headquarters and by the London Society for Women's Service, and will be received by Sir John Rose Bradford. Dr. Graham Little states that he is receiving no deputations, as he is standing only on the University issue. He has, however, answered the questions in writing, and they will be published in these columns and in the general Press next week. The Parliamentary Questionnaire will be put to him, and his answer made known in the Press. Professor Pollard, the Liberal candidate, will be out of England until after polling day, but the Questionnaire has been forwarded to him, and any answers he may send will

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOK LIST.—EDWARD WRIGHT AND CAVENDISH-BENTINCK LIBRARY.

A list of new books added to the above Library since the publication of A List of Books for Women Citizens has now been issued (price 3d.) and should be ordered by all those who are anxious to know of the new volumes in our shelves. The two lists together (price 1s.) form an admirable bibliography on subjects of interest to Women as Citizens.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE. (British Section: 55 Gower Street, W.C. 1.)

Women" (Professor Gilbert Murray's translation) to be given on behalf of the Women's International League last June had to be abandoned by Miss Thorndike, owing to the illness of Mr. Lewis Casson. The performance will be given on Friday, 3rd October, instead, and Miss Thorndike will appear as Hecuba with the support of a strong caste.

The New Theatre is being lent for the purpose and the Matinée will begin at 2.30, preceded by an introductory speech from Lady Mary Murray. Tickets can be obtained from the Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, and the Box Office of the Theatre. The performance comes at an opportune moment when the issues of peace League, 55 Gower Street, and the Box Office of the Theatre. The performance comes at an opportune moment when the issues of peace and war hang in the balance. No finer presentation of the theme could be imagined, especially in relation to the tragedy of war and its effect on the lives of women and children.

It is to be hoped that every effort will be made to make known this great opportunity as widely as possible, not only among pacifists, but among those who are outside the Pacifist movement.

New Theatre, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.

MISS SYBIL THORNDIKE

TWO Special MATINÉE PERFORMANCES of

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(1) FRIDAY, 3rd OCTOBER, to help the work of

The Women's International League.

Introductory Speech by LADY MARY MURRAY.

(2) FRIDAY, 10th OCTOBER,

The Appeal Fund of the Four Women's Colleges in Oxford.

Tickets for 3rd October from the Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, London, W.C. 1, or from Box Office; and for 10th October from Miss G. Cooke, 2 George Street, Portman Square, London, W. 1, or from Box Office.

Stalls 12/- (including tax), Diess Circle 10/6 and 8/6 (including tax), Upper Circle 5/9 (including tax), Pit 3/6 (including tax), Gallery 1/6 (including tax).

COMING EVENTS.

BRIDPORT WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

SEPT. 20. 3 p.m. Town Hall, Bridport. Mrs. F. W. Hubback on "Legislation Affecting Women and Children."

DORCHESTER WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

7 p.m. Mrs. F. W. Hubback on "Legislation Affecting Women and Children."

GUILDHOUSE W.C.S.

SEPT. 29, $_3$ p.m. The Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. Dr. Sybil Pratt on "Hospitals from Within."

LEAGUE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

SEPT. 27 to OCT. 4. Church Congress Campaign, Oxford.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN TEACHERS.

OCT. 3. 6.30 p.m. Australia House, Strand, W.C. Mass Meeting to Demand Equal Pay for Men and Women Teachers of the same Professional Status. Chair: Miss M. Conway, Bradford (President, N.U.W.T.). Speakers: Well-known M.P.s and leading women teachers.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

GLASGOW S.E.C. and W.C.A., Waverley Hydropathie, Melrose. OCT. 9-OCT. 13. Autumn School. Inclusive terms for Board-residence (single room): Registration and Lecture Fees, £3; for part-time attendance, 15s. per day. Applications for membership of the School to be made to Hon. Secretaries, 172 Bath Street, Glasgow.

CHINGFORD W.C.A. SEPT. 22. 3 p.m. St. Edmund's Hall, Chingford Mount Road, Mrs. Ayrton Gould on "Family Endowment."

PRESTON W.C.A. OCT. 2. 7.30 p.m. Miss E. Rathbone on "Family Endowment,"

ROCHDALE W.C.A. OCT. 1. 7.30 p.m. Theosophical Rooms, Vorkshire Street. -Miss Rathbone on "Bills of the N.U.S.F.C.

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TWO sisters (gentlewomen) seek posts together, or any position of trust; particular, methodical, thoroughly domesticated; housekeeping, plain cooking; could take entire charge of house and anyone needing care.—Box 1,092, Woman's Leader, 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.

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THE PIONEER CLUB has reopened at 12 Cavendish Place, Town Members £5.5s.; Country and Professional Members £4.4s. Entrance fee in abeyance (\$\rho ro. tem.).

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