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 THE INTERNATIONAL

WOMEN'S NEWS

JUS SUFFRAGII

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FRANCE.

In our last issue we mentioned the rumour that there would be a woman in the new French Cabinet. Well, no woman is exactly a full Minister, but, as all the world knows, there are three women Under Secretaries of State, one of them being so well known a member of the Alliance as Madame Brunschvicg, since 1924 President of the Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes. The name of Madame Joliot-Curie is familiar to everyone, not only because of her distinguished mother, but as being herself one of the foremost scientists of France. Her post of Under Secretary for Scientific Research is a new one, and she will have to build up a whole department, so that we can believe that her acceptance of the post means a real sacrifice. Madame Brunschvicg, also with her manifold activities, will have to call upon all her great powers of organisation



MME. BRUNSCHVICG,
*Présidente de l'Union Française
pour le Suffrage des Femmes.*

to take in this great new job of National Education. The new Under Secretary for Child Welfare, Madame Suzanne Lacore, is less known outside her own country,

where she has for many years been a valuable member of the Socialist Party.

Is it really true, as is stated not without malice by a British paper, that legally even an Under Secretary of State, if married, must add her husband's signature to any document she signs? Even if the incapacity of the married woman does not go quite to that length, it must be admitted that there is something gloriously illogical in these appointments in a country where the legal status of women is in some ways curiously backward. It is stated that a woman suffrage bill will be introduced immediately in both Houses, and we must hope that the Chamber will find means to put pressure on the Senate which

has for so long flouted the opinion of the Chamber on this question.

Meanwhile French suffragists are by no means silent. Following various demonstrations at the first meeting of the new Chamber, a big meeting is being organised under the following slogan: Three women in the Government? Good, but better still to give political rights to all women. "French logic" is a cliché, so it is surely reasonable to suppose that M. Blum, in making these appointments, had both the intention and the conviction of power to put through a woman suffrage bill at the earliest possible moment and the victory of French women will be acclaimed as a good omen by women in many other countries where such an example would have special weight.

We cannot refrain from quoting the remark made by Madame Odette Simon-Bidaux, one of our well-known suffrage colleagues in France, when asked what she would do if she were an M.P.: "Well, I should do as others do. I should try to become a Minister, and when I had become a Minister, I should try to be Prime Minister." Let us hope that women will shortly become Members of Parliament, and full Cabinet Ministers, and finally Prime Ministers!!

INTERNATIONAL PEACE CAMPAIGN.

GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 3-6, 1936.

At its recent meeting the Board expressed the view that the Alliance ought to support this big effort to mobilise and render effective public opinion in all countries in support of peace and justice through the League of Nations, thus strengthening the League in the work entrusted to it and saving the Peace of the world. The members of the international body are:

Lord Cecil of Chelwood and Pierre Cot, Presidents.
Rosa Manus, Secretary and Organiser of the Congress.
Fatio, Treasurer.

The Campaign has four immediate objectives:

- (1) Restoration of the sanctity of Treaty obligations.
- (2) Reduction and limitation of armaments by international agreement.
- (3) The strengthening of the all-important activities of the League for the prevention and stopping of war, carried out under Article XI. of the Covenant, with at the same time clear recognition that, should these means fail, collective action—economic and in the last resort military—must be taken by the League, (a) to prevent an outbreak of war, and/or (b) to put an end to a war which has actually occurred.
- (4) Perfection of machinery for the redress of national grievances by pacific means.

These four points form the basis of the Campaign, although full acceptance of all of them is not necessary. It is hoped, however, that there will be no discussion of these principles, as the aim of the Conference is to voice the people's demand for peace. This Congress is the first main objective and it will be held in Geneva on the eve of the next Assembly of the League of Nations (September 3-6, 1936). The chief purpose will not be to discuss policy—though the Congress will be an important political demonstration—but rather to secure effective consultation between accredited representatives of the many national and international societies as to the general lines for further propaganda in the different countries and the methods by which adequate co-ordination of effort may be assured.

The Congress will open on Thursday, September 3rd, with an evening plenary session. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday (4th, 5th, 6th) the Congress will be working in Committees, with another plenary session on Sunday night. The speakers will be people of international

reputation who will state the problem, and the final plenary session will adopt reports presented by the Committees and a statement on future policy.

It is hoped that the Congress will be representative of every interest and the Board and Peace Committee of the Alliance sincerely hope that all its members will co-operate and send delegations so that women are adequately represented. Over 30 countries have already joined. Miss Rosa Manus has been appointed Secretary and Organiser and is already in Geneva. Her address is: Hôtel La Résidence, and please write to her there for any further details you may require.

HOLLAND.

Readers of our last issue may remember that one of the very pleasant features of the hospitality shown to the Alliance Board in Holland was the active participation of the younger women. We thought that other countries would be interested in hearing how this Young Women's Working Committee came into being, and its President, Miss Corry Tendeloo, who is a practising lawyer, has kindly given us the following information.

Our Committee was born spontaneously, when in October, 1934, the Holland Branch of the Alliance organised a week-end conference on the burning question of women's work, then being attacked by two new laws. During dinner on the Saturday someone circulated a note asking all those present under 40 to come to a private meeting the next morning. About 40 came and sat round the fire and decided to ask for a special conference solely for members under 40, so that those not so well versed in the discussions and arguments as those who had been in the women's movement for years should learn about women's work in its various aspects and decide whether the young women of Holland wanted to take up the question. The Headquarters consented to this young members' conference, which was held in January, 1935. So many young women booked places that we had hard work to find bedrooms for them all in Bilthoven, where the conference was held. The only young member of Headquarters was in the Chair and some 120 young women were present.

The Conference was a great success and at the last session we discussed how to make the Dutch Branch of the Alliance strong again and how to put new life into the old arguments, so that they shall appeal to our generation, and then and there our Committee was born. After some initial difficulties, Headquarters has made us into its Propaganda Committee. We try to get at those who are not members, for the time is ripe and girls do not want to lose their freedom.

We make propaganda in indirect ways. We organise "Three-women Evenings," where we invite three well-known working women, not necessarily members of the Alliance, to tell about their work. We try to stimulate curiosity by contrast: an Inspector of Houses—a peasant woman—a famous actress; a woman doctor—a social worker—a well-known author; etc., etc. We invite about 20 guests, half of them housewives and half of them feminists, to these social occasions, and people are glad to come.

For other than guest-occasions we organise very simple meals once a month, so cheaply that every one can take part, and we collect all sorts of working women: typists, nurses, lawyers, doctors and all sorts of free professions. With a sly hint at the cooking, we call this company the "Hot-pot." The conversation is directed by a ten-minute speech on some important subject. Before the visit of the International Board we chose: "What can an ordinary human being do for peace?"

Then we organised the week-end conference, at which Mrs. Corbett Ashby spoke and which had the International Alliance Board for its guests. Next Autumn

and Winter we are going to take the women's vote as the central subject for discussion in connection with the Parliamentary elections in the spring of 1937. The programme is not yet definitely fixed, but we are working hard to fire the younger generation with enthusiasm.

THE ARGENTINE.

We are very glad to announce that the Asociación Argentina del Sufragio Femenino has applied for affiliation to the Alliance, through its President Carmela Horne de Burmeister, and that its constitution being in perfect agreement with the rules of the Alliance, this application has been accepted subject to the formal vote of ratification by the next Congress. We warmly welcome this new member and the opportunity of closer contact with the South American Continent.

At the moment the Association is working hard to get a Woman Suffrage Bill passed by the present session of Parliament. We learn from "Equal Rights" that 100 women, representing the leading organisations of women in the United States, have signed a petition to the President of the Argentine Congress.

PEACE AND DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.

6 rue Adhémar Fabri 6, GENEVA.

ATTRACTIONS IN GENEVA

AUGUST 16TH—SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1936.

- A. GENEVA INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, organised by the British and American League of Nations Societies.

August 16th—21st.

An Anglo-Saxon Group—Lectures in English.
Subject—The Future of Collective Study.
Fee: 30 Swiss Francs.

- B. GENEVA INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL—organised by the World League of Nations Union.

August 24th—28th.

Subjects: The League of Nations, World Affairs, and Training in World Citizenship.
Three parallel courses in English, French and German. Fee: 20 Swiss Francs.

- C. WORLD YOUTH CONGRESS, organised by the World League of Nations Union.

August 31st—September 7th.

Subjects:—(1) The Nations and the League of Nations.
(2) The Economic and Social Organisation of the World.
(3) The Moral, Religious, and Philosophical basis of Peace.

Delegations of youth representing various points of view from many countries are assured. The general public will be admitted to the most important addresses but *not* to the discussions.
Fee: 5 Swiss francs.

- D. UNIVERSAL CONGRESS FOR PEACE—organised by the International Peace Campaign (Rassemblement Universel pour la Paix). Lord Cecil, President, supported by eminent Peace Leaders in many countries.

September 4th—6th.

4-point policy—

- (1) The sanctity of treaty obligations.
- (2) The reduction and limitation of armaments by international agreement and the suppression of profit from the manufacture of arms.
- (3) The strengthening of the League of Nations for the prevention and stopping of war by the most

effective organisation of collective security and mutual assistance.

- (4) The establishment within the framework of the League of Nations, of effective machinery for the remedying of international conditions which might lead to war.

E. THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Opens September 7th and continues for two or three weeks.

During this period there are many representatives of the Women's International Organisations in Geneva, when interesting meetings and social events are arranged.

MUI TSAI.

Miss Picton Turbervill, who as our readers know is a Member of the Government Committee to enquire into the question of child adoption in Hong Kong, has sent us the following address from the Board of the Chinese Young Women's Christian Association which it should be noted was not made as an official communication to the Committee.

Miss Picton Turbervill, friends and members of the Association, it is a great privilege and pleasure to us that Miss Picton Turbervill has honoured us with her presence to-day. As you all know she is one of the Mui Tsai Commissioners who come from England with the purpose of investigating the true conditions of Mui Tsai in the colony and of finding out ways and means of ending this infamous and inhuman system from the colony, so that the fair name of the British Empire will be vindicated among the nations and the suffering of the poor Chinese girls sold as Mui Tsai will be for ever relieved. We are indeed grateful that the British Government in England is so concerned of the poor and helpless Mui Tsai in the colony and send the Commission out here. We are equally grateful to Miss Picton Turbervill to take such a trouble and come in such a long way to help the helpless. We know that it is not an easy thing for the Commission to find out the true conditions of the Mui Tsai, for to what extent the unscrupulous, rich and cunning traffickers of Mui Tsai would go when they consider their lordly convenience and their evil gains will soon be taken from them. They will certainly do what they can with the money and influence at their command to mislead the Commission and to blot out the track and to make the Commission believe everything is well and that their Commission is a matter of wasting of money and time. But we also know no truth could for ever be hidden and that since the Commission consists of such distinguished persons no truth could possibly be hidden from them.

Miss Picton-Turbervill on behalf of the staff and the members of the Board, I welcome you.

THE WELFARE OF THE MOTHER.

The National Baby Week Council has assumed responsibility for a piece of propaganda of extraordinary delicacy. It has set itself to persuade women of the extreme importance of accepting skilled supervision during pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period, and at the same time to establish in the popular mind the idea that pregnancy is a normal physiological process, that it is not a pathological state, that it does not involve undue risk if sensibly safeguarded. In short, it is trying to counteract the effect of the scare publicity on maternal mortality in which an irresponsible but voluble section of the popular press has been indulging for the last few years.

The element of risk in pregnancy is not undue, if the expectant mother has been intelligently cared for, and if proper arrangements have been made for her care during confinement. No-one would suggest that the

maternal mortality statistics are satisfactory, but too much attention has been paid to the variation of this rate in recent years. The rate does not afford a just standard of comparison, either with the figures for this country in years gone by, or with rates in other countries where classification is on a different basis. We have become slightly obsessed with maternal mortality tables. They require the interpretation of an expert, or they will betray the enquirer into fallacies.

This obsession with the maternal mortality rate has introduced a new and unfortunate element into the whole situation—the element of fear. The effect of this fear is evident to obstetricians. They know that fear can transform normal childbirth into a complicated and dangerous adventure. When a woman filled with anxieties and fears begins the process of labour, we can expect that nervous reactions inhibiting normal function will result. Where there is fear in labour there is tension. Tension of mind means tension of body, and the normal neuromuscular harmony of labour demands the complete relaxation of certain muscles. These muscles remain in a state of tension under the influence of anxiety and fear, and where there is tension there is pain.

Dr. G. Dick Read, in initiating the 1936 campaign of the National Baby Week Council, asserted that at least half of the present-day complications of labour in normal women would not arise if mothers could go through the process of labour with confident and relaxed minds. Unfortunately a great many influences, including that of the Anglican Prayer Book, combine to suggest danger and death to the woman who is about to bear a child. "For as much as it has pleased Almighty God of His goodness to give you safe deliverance, and hath preserved you in the great dangers of childbirth," reads the Prayer Book; and again: "That Thou has vouchsafed to deliver this woman from the great pain and peril of childbirth." The responsible authorities might well think it advisable to incorporate some slight change in wording when the opportunity arises, perhaps on the lines of Dr. Dick Read's suggested "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of His goodness to entrust to you this manifestation of His love, and to have raised you to the holy estate of motherhood."

The National Baby Week Council appeals to those in touch with expectant mothers to discuss the joys of motherhood rather than the distresses women may have suffered in other days, under less enlightened care than is available nowadays; it urges the need for excluding from the lay press all terrifying subject-matter dealing with maternal mortality and morbidity. This would do much towards encouraging that natural, fearless attitude which is the right attitude towards pregnancy and child-bearing.

CANADA.

For the eleventh time the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec voted against giving women the provincial franchise. The account of the debate given in the "Montreal Gazette" sent us by our old friend Mrs. John Scott, makes depressing reading, not only because of the incredibly antiquated "arguments" used, but because it appears that many former supporters, including the member who actually introduced a similar bill last year, voted against it. This was apparently for party reasons, and as since this debate the Government of Mr. Taschereau has had to resign for reasons which do not reflect credit on his party, there may be some faint hope that the persistence of the women of Quebec may at length be crowned with success and Mrs. Scott may live to see the triumph of the cause for which she has worked so long together with many other valiant fighters.

BRAZIL.

On April 24th the Brazilian Federation for the Advancement of Women and the Confederated Association of Women of Brazil held a luncheon to commemorate Pan-American Day and to offer the collaboration of women in the Peace Conference which will shortly be held in Buenos Aires. Mrs. Jeronyma Mesquita, Director of the Federation's Department for Peace and Foreign Relations, presided, and speeches were made by Dr. Bertha Lutz, the President, in English; Dr. Carmen Portinho, civil engineer and President of the Union of University Women, in Spanish, and Mrs. Anna Amelia Carneiro de Mendonça, President of the House of Students, and Vice-President of the Federation, in Portuguese. They all asked that an instrument of Non-Aggression, Mutual Assistance and Amity, providing for collective action against aggressor nations, be drawn up at Buenos Aires and that women be included among the plenipotentiary delegates of all the member nations. A man, Dr. Carlos Cavaca, also spoke on behalf of the Film Industry of Brazil and expressed the opinion that the only way to impose peace between nations is to appoint women delegates.

The Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs was represented by Miss Odette Carvalho e Souza, who is herself a Consul, and the Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro was also represented as well as most of the American Embassies and Legations at Rio. The most important women's associations, the Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, the Syndicate of Brazilian Film Producers, the Radio Confederation, were represented and many important people were present.

Messages were sent to the President of Brazil and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, urging the appointment of women delegates and similar messages to the English-speaking democracies and the Spanish Republics of the New World were included in the speeches, which were broadcast. Films were taken for the news reels, and the whole function was a great success.

AUSTRALIA.

Pursued inveterately by an old warrior of her tribe to whom she had been promised in marriage, at birth, a 12-year-old lubra took her chance of death or freedom in an unusual tribal ceremony at the Port Keats Mission Station recently. The story was told on the return of the mission lugger, St. Francis, to Darwin:

"At a gathering of natives and while white priests watched helpless against their numbers, the warrior armed himself with 10 killing spears. He paced 30 yards from where the girl stood, then turned and threw each of the spears at her. The girl remained standing in one place, but as the spears hurtled about her head or close to her body, she swerved and swayed so that all 10 spears missed their mark. Thus, escaping death at the warrior's hands, she had wiped out his claim on her.

"The warrior had pursued the lubra for months and always she had raced to the newly-erected mission station for protection. The warrior claimed that the girl had been promised to him in marriage when she was born. On the last occasion he chased the girl into the mission house and sought to force his way in. Further trouble followed and eventually the tribal ceremony was arranged. Although the warrior recognises that he has lost his claim to the girl, her troubles are not over yet, for he is extremely jealous and will not permit her to approach any young buck who wants her in marriage."

It may be remembered that at the Conference convened by the Women's Freedom League last October, to which many women's societies sent representatives, the following resolution was passed with enthusiasm:—

"This Conference calls upon whatever Government is in power to take steps to ensure that in all territories under British jurisdiction it should be definitely laid down (1) that a woman, whatever her race, is not a

chattel to be sold by her father or alleged proprietor to a polygamist or anyone else; (2) that every woman must be a free agent to choose her own partner in life despite any contract entered into in her name by any other person; and that widows shall not be inherited by their husband's heirs."

Women who believe in Freedom and who enjoy the inestimable benefits of freedom have a special duty in regard to girls and women of other races who live under the protection of the British flag, but who have no personal freedom at all. We cannot believe that our fellow women workers in Australia can be indifferent to the plight of girls like the one mentioned above.

—The W.F.L. Bulletin.

GREAT BRITAIN.

On June 8th a Garden Party for the Emperor of Ethiopia and his daughter, Princess Tsahai, was given jointly by Mrs. Richard Seligman and Mrs. Corbett Ashby, in the beautiful grounds of the former's house at Wimbledon, just outside London. Although the party was organised in a few days, some 32 women's organisations were represented, and their representatives were presented to the Emperor and the Princess. The weather was brilliant and a very large gathering listened to the following Address of Welcome spoken by Mrs. Corbett Ashby:

"Your Imperial Majesty, with your gracious permission I have the honour to present on behalf of 32 women's organisations our heartfelt welcome to your Majesty and to express our deep admiration for Your Majesty's immense courage and tenacity of purpose in times of peace and the magnificent heroism Your Majesty has shared with your people in their gallant stand for freedom.

"Hearing of your sailing to our shores, we longed to show you some sign of our sympathy for the events of the last few months, which we have followed throughout with intense sympathy."

"As women deeply concerned with the welfare and education of our race, we pay you homage for Your Majesty's efforts to improve the welfare, hygiene and education of your own people. Believing as we do that the civilisation of a people can be fairly tested by the freedom given to its women to take their share in building up the nation, we respectfully thank you for the encouragement you have given to the education and training of girls and women in Ethiopia.

To the Princess.

"Your Royal Highness, we thank you warmly for the example of courage and devotion which you have set to all of us which will be eternally remembered. Your eloquent appeal for your countrymen went straight to our hearts. We are indeed proud to have you as our guest and pray that long life and happiness may still be yours."

SPINSTERS' PENSIONS.

A new movement has, we understand, grown apace in England for the granting of pensions to spinsters at the age of 55, on the analogy of pensions granted to widows. The Press describes this as "Britain's fastest-growing feminist movement," but we take exception to the use of the word "feminist" in this connection. Why should a spinster, as such, have a special claim to a pension, except on the grounds that it is a special tragedy for a woman to fail to get hold of a "man to keep her?" But that attitude seems quite definitely anti-feminist. If it is unfortunately true that women, whether married or single, are in the mass underpaid and must find it difficult to make provision for old age, surely the feminist should rather concentrate all her efforts on combating that state of things and securing "equal pay for equal work." To ask for a special privilege for any class of women is to deny the gospel of

sex equality. And lastly, if it is even now difficult for the middle-aged woman to keep her job, it will be almost impossible if employers can say "Now you've got your pension, out you go." And so, at the age of 55, all unmarried women except those with private means, will be condemned to spend the rest of their lives with an income of—ten shillings a week?

We have never been able to agree to the idea of a young woman who happens to become a widow, and who has no children, getting a pension from the State, because it is based on the idea of a woman's economic dependence on a husband. Pensions for children would be a different matter. Neither widowhood nor spinsterhood can in itself give anyone a valid claim to State support: need alone, regardless of sex or condition, should be the basis on which such help is asked and granted. We do not know whether the contemplated scheme is a contributory one, but fundamentally that makes no difference to the wrong basis on which it is to be built up, though it may confuse the moral issue by seeming to save the self-respect of the prospective recipients.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

Australia. Mrs. Amy Wheaton, who was one of the Australian delegates to the Alliance Congress in Istanbul, has been appointed Director of Social Science at Adelaide University, this being a new course instituted in connection with the Centenary of the State of South Australia. Our congratulations and good wishes to Mrs. Wheaton.

China. It is rumoured that the Chinese Government is going to close all public offices to women, which is an unexpectedly reactionary attitude as so far it has been claimed that equality of the sexes was an integral part of the policy of the Chinese Republic.

Cuba. Seven women were elected to the Cuban Congress recently, when elections were held in which women for the first time exercised their new franchise.

Egypt. From "L'Egyptienne" we learn that our member, Mlle. Céza Nabaraouy, won the first prize in a competition organised by the Government to stimulate interest in literature, for her essay on Women's Evolution. We congratulate her and wish we had space to quote her essay.

We also congratulate Mme. Hoda Charaoui Pacha, our Board Member and President of the Egyptian Society, on being awarded several medals and diplomas by the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition for pottery, carpets, etc., made by the undertakings she directs, and also for corn from her own estates.

Great Britain. On June 9th the centenary was celebrated of the birth of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, one of the pioneers in opening the medical profession to women in Great Britain. Dr. Garrett Anderson founded the first Hospital run by women and did much work in many directions for women's emancipation. She was an elder sister of Dame Millicent Fawcett.

The King has announced his decision to admit women to the Royal Victorian Order, and since one woman, Queen Mary, is already a member of the premier Order, the Garter, perhaps some day that also will be opened to other women who deserve signal honour.

Since on June 22nd we helped to celebrate the ninety-second birthday of Mrs. Despard, the Founder and Honorary President of the Women's Freedom League, with the heroine of the day present with us, we shall hope that her rooth birthday may be similarly celebrated. Of all the receipts for long life none seems so efficacious as hard and continuous work in a good cause.

Norway. Referring to the article in the May number, we have to announce with the deepest regret that the Bill to open all offices in the State to women was lost by two votes in the Upper House.

ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

The President of the A.I.W.C., H.H. the Maharani Setu Parvati Bai of Travancore is desirous that during the period of her Presidentship "this premier Women's Association should be completely overhauled and put on a basis of greater practical efficiency." She has written to members of the Standing Committee to this effect, and urges that the greatest effort should be made to carry out the resolutions passed at the Conference, so that at the next annual session it may be possible to look back on some definite work achieved. Her Highness asks that a quarterly report may be sent to her of the progress of rural reconstruction work, as this is in the forefront of their programme, and an intensive campaign must be carried on in the villages. She urges each Committee member to keep in close touch with the work in her constituency, and see that the Conference does something more than pass academic resolutions at their sessions.

BULGARIA.

The Union des Femmes Bulgares celebrated its 35th birthday this year with a big meeting on the 29th May instead of the actual date, the 31st, which co-incided with a public holiday. On the previous day the President, Mme. Ivanova, has broadcast a talk on the work of the Union.

On the 5th July the Union will hold its 30th Congress in Pleven and we congratulate it on its long history of work for women. If as yet there has been no outstanding victory, when one considers the history of these years that is not perhaps matter for surprise. Let us hope that when Europe emerges from the dark clouds which hang over us all, the women of Bulgaria will read the reward of their years of patient work.

RUSSIA.

It is believed that the new Constitution for the U.S.S.R. is now ready, and that sometime this summer national elections will be held for an extraordinary Congress of Soviets to annul the present constitution and adopt the newly-drafted one. This embodies a return to a Parliamentary régime and therefore of a democratic form of Government. There will be two Houses, a Chamber elected by popular vote. Every citizen over the age of 18 will have a vote, and the ballot will be secret. The Senate will be elected on some less direct system, with a view to securing adequate representation of different ethnic groups.

Parliament will elect the President of the U.S.S.R., and it is stated that elections will also be held in some form to elect judges.

If this forecast is correct—and we do not know on what precise information the articles appearing in the Press are based—it will be extremely interesting to see to what extent the equality of the sexes has really been accepted and assimilated by the Russian people. Shall we at last see a Parliament where men and women members are more or less equally balanced?

POUR L'EGALITE DES SALAIRES.

Un certain nombre de nos amis se sont émus d'apprendre que lors des contrats collectifs passés au moment des grèves, le minimum de salaire établi n'était pas le même pour les hommes et pour les femmes. C'est ainsi que pour les employés de banque le minimum fixé a été de 12,000 francs par an pour les hommes et de 10,000 francs pour les femmes.

Cette violation des principes affirmés dans les congrès ouvriers et dans les assemblées féministes provoqua

une démarche féminine auprès du Ministre des finances qui avait présidé à la signature de ce contrat. Or à la grande stupéfaction des requérantes le Ministre des finances déclara qu'il n'avait pas eu à fixer lui-même de chiffres de base; qu'il avait purement et simplement accepté de soutenir les propositions des délégués des syndicats d'employés de banques parmi lesquels se trouvaient des femmes!

Ainsi donc ce sont des femmes elles-mêmes qui n'ont pas hésité à faire établir légalement un précédent d'inégalité.

Femmes, entrez nombreuses dans les syndicats et obtenez que partout le salaire de base soit le même pour les deux sexes. La justice le veut, votre dignité l'exige et l'intérêt de l'homme, comme le vôtre, en dépend.

Travailleuses, ne perdez jamais de vue votre droit et votre devoir d'avoir le même statut que votre compagnon Féministes, syndiquez-vous, et soyez vigilantes!

—La Française.

RASSEMBLEMENT UNIVERSEL POUR LA PAIX: GENEVE, SEPTEMBRE 3—6.

Lors de sa récente séance, le Comité Exécutif de l'Alliance a décidé que l'Alliance doit appuyer ce grand effort à mobiliser et à rendre effective l'opinion publique dans tous les pays pour le maintien de la paix et de la justice par la S.d.N., la fortifiant ainsi dans la tâche qu'elle assume. Les membres du comité international sont:

Lord Cecil of Chelwood et Pierre Cot, Présidents.
Rosa Manus, Secrétaire et organisatrice du Congrès.
Fatio, Trésorier.

Il y a quatre objectifs immédiats:

- (1) La restauration de l'inviolabilité des obligations des traités.
- (2) La réduction et limitation des armements par un accord international.
- (3) Le renforcement des activités primordiales de la S.d.N. pour prévenir et arrêter la guerre, ce qui est prévu par l'Article XI du Pacte, faisant cependant en même temps clairement ressortir, que dans le cas où ces moyens échoueraient, une action collective économique et—en dernier lieu militaire—devrait être entreprise par la S.d.N. (a) afin de prévenir le déclenchement d'une guerre, et/ou, (b) afin de mettre fin à une guerre qui aurait déjà éclaté.
- (4) Le perfectionnement du mécanisme pour la solution des griefs nationaux par des moyens pacifiques.

Ces 4 points sont à la base du mouvement, bien qu'il ne soit pas nécessaire de les accepter sans réserve. On espère toutefois éviter une discussion sur ces principes parce que le but du Congrès est d'exprimer la volonté des peuples en faveur de la paix. La première activité du Rassemblement Universel est l'organisation de ce Congrès à Genève, à la veille de l'Assemblée de la S.d.N. (le 3—6 Septembre 1936), dont le but principal n'est pas de discuter des principes—bien que ce soit là une manifestation politique importante—mais plutôt d'assurer une collaboration effective entre les représentants des sociétés nationales et internationales quant aux lignes générales d'une propagande dans les divers pays ainsi que des méthodes pour assurer la coordination des efforts.

Le Congrès s'ouvrira en séance plénière jeudi soir, le 3 Septembre. Vendredi, samedi et dimanche (les 4, 5, 6) le Congrès travaillera en commissions, pour se réunir encore en séance plénière, dimanche soir. Les problèmes seront présentés par des gens connus, et la séance plénière finale aura à adopter les rapports des commissions et un programme d'activité future.

On espère que le Congrès représentera tous les

milieux, et le Comité et la Commission de la Paix de l'Alliance invitent la coopération de tous leurs membres pour envoyer des délégations, assurant ainsi une représentation effective des femmes. Plus de 30 pays ont annoncé leur adhésion jusqu'ici.

Mlle. Rosa Manus a été nommée secrétaire et organisatrice du Congrès. Elle est actuellement à Genève, à l'Hôtel La Résidence. Prière de lui écrire pour tous renseignements supplémentaires.

CANADA.

Pour la onzième fois l'Assemblée législative de la Province de Québec a repoussé le droit de suffrage féminin. Mrs. John Scott nous envoie un extrait de la Gazette de Montréal qui n'est guère encourageant. Des députés autrefois suffragistes ont cette fois repoussé le projet pour des raisons de parti et tous les vieux arguments ont été ressassés encore une fois. Depuis ce débat le gouvernement de Mr. Taschereau a dû démissionner. Peut être y-a-t-il une lueur d'espoir et peut-être la persistance des femmes de Québec arrivera-t-elle à triompher.

MUI TSAI.

Miss Picton-Turbervill, membre de la Commission gouvernementale qui enquête à Honk-Kong sur la coutume Mui Tsai nous envoie le texte du Compliment de Bienvenue qui lui a été adressé par le Comité de l'Union chrétienne des jeunes filles chinoises. Ces dernières se félicitent qu'une femme ait été incluse dans la Commission et elles l'adjurent de ne pas se laisser intimider par les manœuvres sans scrupules des trafiquants qui peuvent influencer bien des milieux et bien des idées.

NOUVELLES BREVES.

France. Dans notre dernier numéro nous avons signalé la rumeur qui attribuait à une femme un poste ministériel dans le Cabinet de Mr. Blum. La vérité est que trois femmes sont désormais, non pas ministres, mais sous-secrétaires d'Etats—et nous nous réjouissons que l'une d'elles soit Madame Léon Brunschvicg, Présidente de l'Union française pour le Suffrage des Femmes. Madame Joliot-Curie est connue de tous, autant par son propre travail scientifique, que par celui de sa mère. Son poste de secrétaire d'Etat à la Recherche scientifique est une innovation qui exigera toutes ses qualités d'activité méthodique. La nouvelle sous-secrétaire pour l'Assistance Publique Madame Suzanne Lacore est moins connue internationalement que ses deux collègues mais elle est depuis des années appréciée pour son travail et son dévouement par les autres membres du parti socialiste.

On se demande quel effet ces nominations auront sur la Commission du Sénat qui se refuse toujours à examiner la question du Suffrage féminin. Nous espérons que le Cabinet ou la Chambre trouveront un moyen de faire pression sur le Sénat afin d'en finir avec une telle intransigeance.

Argentine. L'Asociacion Argentina del Sufragio Femenino a demandé son affiliation à l'Alliance—Sa constitution présentée par Madame Carmela Horne de Burmeister étant en accord avec les règles de l'Alliance la demande a été agréée sous réserve de l'approbation du prochain Congrès.

Australia. Mrs. Amy Wheaton, une des déléguées Australiennes de l'Alliance à Istamboul vient d'être nommée Directeur des Etudes Sociales à l'Université d'Adelaide. Nos félicitations.

Hollande. Nos lectrices du No. de Mai ont pu remarquer qu'un des traits les plus intéressants de la réception du Board en Hollande a été la participation des jeunes femmes. Au sujet de leurs activités, la présidente Miss Corry Tendeloo, elle-même avocate, nous a donné les informations suivantes:

"Notre Comité est né spontanément en Octobre 1934, au moment où le travail des femmes était attaqué par de nouveaux projets de loi. La Section hollandaise de l'Alliance organisa une conférence de fin de semaine sur cette question, invitant la coopération des femmes de moins de quarante ans. Une conférence de Jeunes fut organisée en Janvier 1935 à Bilthoven avec 120 personnes présentes. L'effet éducatif de cette réunion fut immense, les vieux arguments en sortirent revivifiés. Un Comité de propagande fut formé. Cette propagande est toujours active, souvent indirecte; ainsi nous organisons des soirées où trois femmes viennent prendre la parole sur des sujets très différents. Nous invitons par exemple une inspectrice du travail, une fermière, une actrice, une doctoresse, un auteur etc. Une fois par mois nous organisons un repas très simple, que tout le monde peut payer; nous y réunissons toutes sortes de travailleuses: dactylographes, infirmières, avocates, toutes celles qui gagnent librement leur vie. Nous appelons ce repas: La Fortune du Pot—et la conversation est dirigée par une petite allocution de 10 minutes sur un sujet donné. Le mois dernier Mrs. Corbett Ashby est venue parler à notre groupe de Jeunes. L'hiver prochain nous allons organiser des discussions sur le vote en vue des élections parlementaires de 1937.

Chine. Une rumeur assure que le gouvernement de la République chinoise va supprimer les emplois d'administration jusque là ouverts aux femmes, bien que ce soit une flagrante contradiction à la Constitution.

Norvège. Nous regrettons d'annoncer que le Projet de loi qui devait ouvrir toutes les fonctions de l'Etat aux femmes a été repoussé à deux voix de majorité.

Bulgarie. L'Union des femmes Bulgares a célébré son 35ème anniversaire par une grande réunion le 29 Mai dernier—La veille, Madame Ivanova avait parlé au microphone sur le travail de l'Union—Hélas! on ne peut signaler aucune victoire sensationnelle—mais quand on considère les temps troublés qu'a traversés la Bulgarie, on ne peut en être surpris.

Russie. On nous dit que la nouvelle Constitution de l'Union Soviétique est maintenant prête et que, à une date prochaine, des élections nationales auront lieu pour un Congrès extraordinaire des Soviets, qui annulera la présente constitution pour en adopter une nouvelle.

Ce serait là un retour vers le Régime parlementaire et par conséquent une forme de gouvernement démocratique. Il y aura deux Chambres; l'une élue au vote populaire; l'autre, le Sénat élu probablement par un suffrage indirect, qui assurerait la représentation des divers groupes ethniques. Les élections se feront au scrutin secret; tout citoyen homme ou femme âgé de 18 ans et plus est électeur. Si ces prévisions sont correctes il sera intéressant de constater l'influence que l'égalité des sexes pourra avoir sur le régime parlementaire.

Grande-Bretagne. Le 8 juin Mrs. Corbett-Ashby et Mrs. Seligman ont donné à

Wimbledon, dans la propriété de Mrs. Seligman, un garden-party pour l'empereur d'Abyssinie et sa fille la princesse Tsahai. Organisé d'une façon tout à fait impromptue le Garden-party réunit 300 personnes, représentant 32 organisations féministes. Mrs. Corbett-Ashby exprima à Haile Selassie l'admiration de ses hôtes pour sa ténacité et son courage et lui dit l'appréciation des féministes pour l'effort accompli par lui en Abyssinie en ce qui concerne l'éducation et l'hygiène du peuple.

Le 9 juin fut célébré le centenaire d'Elizabeth Garrett Anderson une des pionnières de la profession médicale en Grande-Bretagne—Elle était sœur aimée de Dame

Millicent Fawcett. Le roi a annoncé son intention d'admettre des femmes à l'Ordre Royal de Victoria.

Le 22 juin vit la célébration du quatre-vingt dixième anniversaire de Mrs. Despard la Fondatrice et Présidente honoraire de la Women's Freedom League.

Egypte. "L'Egyptienne" nous apprend que notre associée Melle Céza Nabaraouy a gagné le 1er prix dans un concours littéraire organisé par le Gouvernement pour son mémoire sur l'Evolution des Femmes. Nous félicitons également Mme. Hoda Charaoui Pacha, membre de notre Board et Présidente de l'Auxiliaire égyptienne pour les médailles et prix qui lui ont été décernés par l'Exposition d'Industrie et d'agriculture pour les poteries, tapis, etc., fabriqués sous sa direction et aussi pour le blé de ses domaines.

Brésil. Le 24 avril, la Fédération brésilienne pour le Progrès féminin et les Associations féminines confédérées se réunirent à un lunch pour commémorer l'anniversaire pan-américain et offrir la coopération des femmes pour la Conférence de la Paix qui aura lieu bientôt à Buenos-Ayres—Mrs. Jeronyma Mesquita, prit la Présidence et les autres oratrices, Dr. Bertha Lutz, Dr. Carmen Portinho et Mrs. Carneiro de Mendonça demandèrent toutes qu'un pacte d'Assistance mutuelle et de non-agression entre nations fut préparé à Buenos-Ayres et que des femmes fussent nommées membres des délégations. Le ministre brésilien des Affaires étrangères était représenté par Miss Odette Carvalho e Souza, elle-même Consul, et le Gouvernement de Rio de Janeiro ainsi que la plupart des Ambassades et Légations américaines avaient aussi leurs représentations.

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