

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### RETROSPECT, 1926.

Last year our stocktaking was an unusually fruitful one—in the political field at any rate, and a whole forest of legislative milestones remained to mark the progress of the women's movement in 1925. But 1926 has left less indelible finger-prints on the page of Time, and its passing leaves us only with a heightened expectancy and a germinating seed of disillusionment concerning the Government's declared belief in the political equality of men and women. But within our own ranks there has been movement (whether of progress or retrogression we dare not surmise) and a new expression has crept into our vocabulary, *The New Feminism*. We have always known that there were two distinct—shall we say, *emphases* in the interpretation of feminism. Now at last, thanks to the proceedings of the N.U.S.E.C. Council meeting last spring, and the subsequent criticism of its proceedings by our contemporary *Time and Tide*, we know where we stand. We stand between two distinct interpretations of feminism. There is the feminism of pure equality, and the feminism of equivalent opportunity. There is the feminism which says: lo here, and lo there is a concrete inequality of law or social practice as between men and women. Let us smite it on the head. And there is the feminism which says: women have a certain specialized part to play in the world, let us see that they play it with the same measure of consideration which men regard as necessary when they have a specialized part to play. The programmes are not mutually exclusive. They are not necessarily antagonistic. But they do involve their advocates in a difference of emphasis so marked as to permit the adherents of the *new feminism* to accuse the adherents of the *old feminism* of a slavish acceptance of masculine standards, while the *old feminists* cherish the conviction that the *new feminists* are at heart mere "social reformers." Meanwhile, though the cleavage has shown itself more clearly during 1926 than ever before, its implications remain somewhat academic. Old and new feminists are still constrained to fight as a united army for the equal citizenship which both regard as the essential weapon of their armoury. We trust that 1927 will remove this cause of constraint, and we await with considerable interest the internal results of its removal.

### THE POLITICAL YEAR.

By E. M. HUBBACK.

1926 cannot, alas! boast of so fine a record of legislative sheaves as could 1925. It must, however, be remembered that last year's harvest was an exceptionally rich one owing to the valiant efforts of a new Government to introduce popular measures of social reform, such as the Contributory Pensions Act, and partly because of the accumulation of measures such as the Guardianship of Infants Act and the Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act, which several successive general elections had prevented from reaching the Statute Book in earlier years. This year the Government has certainly not sought to acquire fresh laurels in the realm of social reform, while a large slice of parliamentary time has been spent in barren discussions arising out of the coal crisis.

It is unfortunate that what we feel bound to record first is not our successes—these will be mentioned in due course—but a long and dreary series of failures with respect to the achievement of equal franchise. We look back among our own columns and find week after week paragraphs dealing with Equal Franchise, with titles such as "Hope Deferred," "Dilly Dally," "No Progress," etc. We started the year full of hope—of hope, that is, not so much that an Equal Franchise Bill would reach the Statute Book this year—the parliamentary prospects never indicated that—but at least that the conference foreshadowed by the Home Secretary in February, 1925, would be set up, and unnecessary though we conceived it, would come to grips with the problem. In spite of the Home Secretary's pledge—because pledge it was, if not in the letter, then at least in the spirit; in spite of the great campaigns which have been waged all through the year by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, and other women's organizations, culminating in the great processions and demonstration in Hyde Park on 3rd July; in spite of meetings being arranged all over the country; in spite of countless questions in the House of Commons, we have been faced the whole time with a policy of complete negation on the part of the Government with regard to their intentions.

It is true that two or three weeks ago the Prime Minister twice stated that the Government was considering the matter,

'Keep fit on  
cocoa'

**BOURNVILLE**  
SEE THE "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE  
OF CHOCOLATE

Write  
Cadbury, Bournville  
about Gift Scheme

According to the Attorney General, in a none too guarded speech, however, the Cabinet Committee has made no progress, and it is likely that the matter would "be referred to a Speaker's Conference, or to a Royal Commission—probably the latter." He further stated that in his opinion the Government would give more pleasure to its supporters by leaving this question in the background, and concentrating on the improvement of the general prosperity of the people!

As the year passed with no indications of the Conference being set up, it became increasingly clear that the chances of women voting on equal terms at the next election were becoming smaller. The provision in the new Economy Act, by which the Parliamentary Register is only made up once a year, complicates the situation, as it will be necessary, in order that women may vote before October, 1928, that an Equal Franchise measure should reach the Statute Book before next June.

To turn from disappointing failures to actual achievements, the greatest triumph of the year was perhaps the passing of Lord Buckmaster's resolution on *information on methods of birth control*, in the House of Lords on 28th April. The resolution read as follows:—

"That His Majesty's Government be requested to withdraw all instructions given to, or conditions imposed on, welfare committees for the purpose of causing such committees to withhold from married women in their district information when sought by such women as to the best means of limiting their families."

In spite of speeches in opposition from the front bench, and by the Archbishop, and thanks partly to Lord Buckmaster's marvellous oratory, and partly to the undoubted reasonableness of the demand, the resolution was carried by a majority of thirteen. Unfortunately, although the value of this victory as propaganda is immense, its immediate practical value was nil, as a Government Department does not consider itself bound by a resolution passed in the Upper Chamber. It was unfortunate that a private Member of Parliament, Mr. Thurtle, had thought fit, in defiance of all organizations interested in the subject, to bring in a Bill early in the Session in the Lower House at three days' notice, and therefore without time for outside preparation. This Bill met with a bad defeat. It is interesting to note that, during the year, an increasing number of Maternity and Child Welfare Committees have asked for permission to give the required information.

Of the Bills that reached the Statute Book, those of special interest to women are:—

1. *Midwives and Maternity Homes Act*.—This act provides for skilled attention at childbirth, and the registration of maternity homes, and should contribute to the reduction of the high rate of maternal mortality, which is one of the scandals of the country. We only regret that homes under the charge of a doctor were not included within the scope of the Act.

2. *Adoption of Children Act*, which should prove a valuable measure in safeguarding the interests of the three parties concerned in an adoption—the child, the real parents, and the adopting parents. The court will now have to sanction adoptions, and to satisfy itself that the real parents understand what is implied in the total surrender of their child, and that the adopters provide a suitable home and are prepared to assume the rights and responsibilities of parenthood. (Much depends on the rules of court, which will define how cases are to be conducted. We hope that these will be of such a nature that the secrecy which is so necessary to maintain as to the destination of the adopted child, will be assured.)

3. *Legitimacy Act*.—We are particularly glad that this hoary old chestnut, which has been before the House for successive years, has at last become law. It will be remembered that this Act provides for the legitimation of a child on the marriage of its parents, unless at the time of its birth one or both of its parents were married to someone else.

4. *Public Health (Smoke Abatement) Act*.—This Act, timid and restricted in its scope as it is, should do something toward clearing the atmosphere in a very literal manner. It is true that smoke will in future be able to be attacked, not only if it is black, but whatever hue it chooses to favour, and that increased penalties are laid upon smoke producers. Unfortunately, however, far too much power is given to the Minister of Health to exclude certain processes of industry, and no attempt is made to include dwelling-houses or sea-going ships.

5. *The Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Act* represents a nearly complete defeat of the policy for which this paper stands. The Act provides for increased regulations for men engaged in painting buildings with paint made with white lead. The Home Secretary admitted that it was experimental in the

sense that if the new regulations prove insufficient to diminish the evil of lead poisoning, the prohibition of the use of lead paint would have to be considered later. Women were, however, differentiated against in the Bill, and were to be excluded from the industry altogether. Valiant attempts were made by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship in both Houses to prevent this exclusion of women. The demand for an impartial inquiry into the effects of lead on men and women respectively was put forward by Lord Dawson of Penn, Lord Haldane, and others. All that emerged, however, was a useful little amendment to the effect that the women now engaged in the industry should remain.

It now remains to deal with other matters which have been before the country during the year as Parliamentary Bills, as subjects under consideration by Royal Commissions, or as questions of general political interest.

The *Parliament (Qualification of Peersesses) Bill*, introduced again this session by Lord Astor, was unfortunately defeated by a very considerable majority. The debate was marked by speeches from Lord Birkenhead and others more suitable for the tavern than for the House of Lords.

The *Public Places (Order) Bill*, which provides that there should be no special legislation against prostitutes, but that laws relating to order and decency in the streets should be applied to men and women equally, and further that police evidence only should not be considered sufficient proof of annoyance, was introduced into both Houses in order that a Joint Select Committee might be set up to consider it. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, who handled the subject admirably in the House of Lords last month, elicited from the Government the statement that the Home Secretary was considering setting up a committee, though it would probably be a departmental one.

The *Factories Bill*. In February, Miss Ellen Wilkinson introduced a Factories No. 1 Bill, based on the Labour Party's Bill of 1924. This was defeated on its second reading. At the beginning of August the Home Secretary introduced the Government's Factories Bill for discussion by the public. It was withdrawn before its second reading, and will probably be introduced next year. As it will figure largely in our columns next year, we will content ourselves now with pointing out that this is a consolidating Bill, codifying and extending many old laws and abolishing the distinction between factories and workshops, and represents a real advance over present conditions. Although most of the provisions in the Bill relate to both men and women, there are important exceptions, notably in the case of hours. The hours of women and young persons were fixed at 48 hours a week with provision for overtime, while those of men remain untouched. These proposals made in the very year that the Government accepted the principle of the Washington Hours Convention for all workers, appear to present something of an anomaly.

Other provisions, such as those relating to lead processes, cleaning of machinery in motion, lifting of weights, etc., were limited to women and young persons only. A very unfortunate provision allows for up to a maximum of 150 hours a year overtime for young persons. Although differences of opinion exist as to many other parts of the Bill, all women's organizations unite in fighting this provision.

*Juvenile Courts (Scotland) Bill*.—This useful little Bill provided for the presence of a woman magistrate in every children's court. Although the Bill did not get beyond its first reading, the Scottish Office has undertaken to introduce legislation on this point next year.

*Family Allowances*.—Here, as in the case of information on methods of birth control, although there is no practical advance to record, there is on the contrary a very marked, even startling, advance in the knowledge and interest shown by the public in the matter. This is due largely to family allowances having found a place in the Recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Coal-Industry. For the first time we find the proposal characterized by a group of economists and business men as "one of the most valuable measures that can be adopted for adding to the well-being and contentment of the mining population." Although the miserable petering out of the coal dispute prevented any terms of settlement being negotiated, which might include family allowances, there has been abundant evidence that among certain classes of miners at any rate, family allowances would be considered a welcome solution to the problem of maintaining the standard of living. The fact that resolutions in favour either of the principle or of certain schemes have been passed at gatherings so variously composed as the National Council of Women, the Women's National Liberal Federation,

and that the Labour party itself is considering the matter, shows that the idea is making real headway in the country.

In addition to the Coal Industry, two other Royal Commissions whose recommendations affect very closely and intimately the welfare of women have reported this year. The Majority Report of the *Royal Commission on National Health Insurance*, while expressing the opinion that on the whole the present scheme of National Health Insurance is satisfactory, recommended that the following benefits should be made statutory when the financial position improves:—

1. Improved maternity benefit, to include medical treatment, as well as cash benefit.
2. Benefits for the dependents of sick insured persons.
3. Dental benefits.

Only the Minority Report recommended the giving of medical benefits to the wives and children of insured persons. Other important proposals which would greatly affect women contributors relate to the pooling of the surpluses of approved societies, and the abolition of insurance committees. Women's organizations will have to watch very carefully any legislation which may be introduced based on this report, in order to try to fill up the gaps and do away with the inequalities between men and women.

The *Report of the Royal Commission on Lunacy* recommended the appointment of adequate numbers of assistant commissioners, and recommended that there should be women visitors on the visiting committees of all public mental hospitals.

*Nationality of Married Women*.—Considerable hopes were raised by the fact that the Imperial Conference set up a committee to inquire into the question of nationality, including that of married women. Unfortunately, however, the committee were not able to come to an agreement and completely ignored the nationality of married women in their report. As not only in this country, but in certain of the Dominions, resolutions had been passed by the Houses of Commons in support of the principle that a married woman should have the same right to change or retain her nationality as a man, this came as a very great disappointment.

*More Women in Parliament*.—During the year we rejoiced in the return of Miss Margaret Bondfield for Wallsend, and Miss Susan Lawrence for her old constituency of East Ham. Both of these had been very sorely missed from their places in the House of Commons, and their return was welcomed by women of all parties. The Conservative Party showed its belief in women as politicians in having appointed for the first time Dame Caroline Bridgeman as Chairman of the Unionist Association.

It will be seen from the above survey that the need for vigilance is as great as ever. Old standards with regard to the status of women are gradually being displaced. Women themselves must shape the policies of the future.

## WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS.

Contributed by the London and National Society for Women's Service.

From the point of view of professional women, the year which is now ending has been singularly uneventful. No doubt it is true that the young women who have embarked upon their new careers are consolidating their positions one by one; no doubt it is true that splendid new recruits are making their way into the ranks of architects, accountants, lawyers, and the rest, but there is, as yet, no way of making any general observations of their progress. They do not advertise themselves, and they are still too young to have risen to the top of their professions, and so neither the limelight, nor the well-wisher, can catch them to show how they are getting on.

A few small indications of their progress have emerged however. Among barristers for example, Miss Margaret Kidd was briefed in the House of Lords, and Miss Joan Clarkson before the Privy Council, and Miss Geikie Cobb made Deputy Chairman of the London Court of Referees under the Unemployment Insurance Act; and it is amusing to notice that the first of these, when she became a member of the Scottish Faculty of Advocates, secured a special Act of Parliament altering the rules of that Society in order that her widower, as well as her fellow members' widows, might benefit from the statutory pensions scheme.

Among Accountants it is encouraging to notice that several

young women are setting up their own offices, and in the final examination of the Incorporated Society this year, Miss Dods-worth headed the list and carried off the prizes.

The engineers are apparently advancing steadily, if still slowly. Miss Ashberry was elected the first woman member of the Society of Engineers (Inc.), and read a paper before that august body, and Miss Drummond, after a regular apprenticeship in a shipbuilding firm and six voyages as engineer on a merchant vessel, secured her certificate as Junior Marine Engineer.

Two women have qualified this year as Veterinary Surgeons, Miss Roberts of Liverpool, and Miss Woodward of Dublin, and Miss E. G. Knight has established a record as the first woman to take a degree in Veterinary Surgery at Liverpool. Mrs. Elliott Lynn has secured a "B" certificate entitling her to carry passengers in an aeroplane, and by her bold and outspoken stand has broken down the barrier erected last year against women aviators.

These are, no doubt, but a few of the items of news which might be gathered together, but it is to be hoped that they are enough to show the way in which the wind is blowing for the adventurous young pioneers of to-day.

The general position of professional women has not greatly altered in the year. A Bill to lengthen the training and improve the status of midwives was passed this year, and the proposed pensions schemes for nurses are taking shape and coming into effect in some of the big hospitals. Probation officers are now more fully recognized, and their status and salaries are laid down by statutory rules. It is to be regretted that these salaries continue the unequal pay convention, being £150 to £270 for women, and £180 to £370 for men; but there is power to vary these payments on account of special duties or qualifications.

The position of women police continues to be unsatisfactory. There are now only 137 employed in the whole country. The Societies interested in this question have kept an active watch upon the development of affairs, and have several times approached the Home Secretary and caused the question to be raised in Parliament. Like every other service which depends on local expenditure, however, improvement is slow and irregular. It is encouraging to notice that the German Government was so much impressed with the work of the English policewomen in Cologne that it announced its intention to employ women on police duties itself.

In the profession of politics, progress is more easily measured than elsewhere. Two women were returned to Parliament in by-elections—Miss Susan Lawrence and Miss Margaret Bondfield, both members of the Labour party. The Conservative party, not to be out-done, elected Dame Caroline Bridgeman, Chairman of the party, and she presided over its annual conference in October. Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan also became Chairman of the Metropolitan division, and a number of satisfactory appointments of women have been made on to commissions and special committees, of which one of the most interesting is that of Mrs. Philip Snowden to the Board of Directors of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

In science, as in politics, there seems to be little obstruction. At the meeting of the British Association, women were well to the fore, and Miss Garrod, who had made the sensational discovery of the skull of a Neanderthal man, received great publicity.

In the Universities there is a forward step to record at Cambridge, and a backward one at Oxford. The former has adopted new statutes by which women are to be eligible for University teaching posts and Boards of Faculties, and eleven have been appointed to University Membership. All University prizes not specially ear-marked for men are also thrown open to the women students. At Oxford, on the other hand, the total number of women students has been restricted, not indeed below its present limits, but in such a way as to prevent any great expansion.

This set-back leads us, unfortunately, to the summary of the bad news of the year—which is indeed, not worse than that of last year, but not appreciably better.

The attack on the right of married women to work has continued unabated. The L.C.C. re-affirmed its decision to dismiss them, and a number of other local authorities have followed suit, as have also many of the banks. A considerable number of dismissals have followed, for which redress does not seem obtainable in the Courts. A change in public opinion and the reform of the attitude of the Government as employer will be the only cure for this evil; and while the employment situation is still so bad, it is a slow cure.

In the Civil Service matters are much as they were. The number of women administrative cadets has increased by the examination in August; a woman was appointed Assistant Curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Admiralty threw open its examination for draughtsmen. The Ministry of Health, after great pressure had been exerted by the women's societies, adopted officially and definitely the principles of equal opportunity, a single seniority list and interchangeable posts for men and women. The adjustments necessary to put this into effect are not yet completed, but already a certain improvement in the position of women is to be seen.

The equal pay campaign, in which the men's organizations were very active early in the year, has necessarily been damped down by the effects of the coal dispute; for economy in Government offices will be the essence of the new Budget, and hopes of any immediate action in this direction must be abandoned.

The pay of teachers, of course, remains as settled under the Burnham award, and no change can be looked for there for another five years.

In business, there is, perhaps, more progress than anywhere else; but there too there is opposition. The Society of Commercial Travellers, for example, has not admitted women members, but has postponed consideration of the matter for a year, and the new business of house decorating on which many young women were embarking, will suffer a blow from the Lead Paint Bill, which forbids women to paint buildings with white lead paint.

Nevertheless this summary need not end upon a despondent note. The future of the professional woman lies in her own hands; and those hands are both capable and strong.

## WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

A SURVEY BY ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

The position of women in industry in 1926 cannot, of course, be separated from the general tendencies since the end of the war emergency period. Ever since then, the feminist has to admit reluctantly that women have lost a good deal of the ground that was conquered. Avenues to which they were admitted, nay almost coerced, have since been closed. The prolonged depression in trade has added to the women's difficulties. There has been the bitter fight between the man with a wife and children to support, desperate for a job at any price, struggling with the woman who often has her own family responsibilities. At such a time, public opinion is naturally on the side of the man, a sentiment not unaided by the fact that he is a more costly person to keep out of the public purse. The result has been that not only have the new avenues been closed to women, but many women have been dismissed from jobs at which they have had up to twenty years' experience in order to make way for men. This has been notoriously the case in the Civil Service.

### MARRIED WOMEN'S WORK.

The unemployment crisis has undoubtedly increased the feeling against the work of married women. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say the feeling against well-paid work for married women. There is no objection to her keeping her job as an underpaid seamstress or char, but it is regarded as an outrage in many quarters that a woman should desire to keep her post as a teacher, or civil servant, or doctor, when "she has got someone to keep her." That a woman might be interested in her career quite apart from whether she had any alternative source of income is regarded as completely irrelevant. Women have themselves added to this feeling against other women. The unmarried teacher faced with unemployment owing to the cutting down of the education grants, or impatient for promotion, often feels that the married woman ought to give way, and many married women, tied to home and economic dependence, are often frankly jealous of the independence of the woman who can earn her own living after marriage. A good deal of propaganda needs to be done among women to induce them to take the decent feminist view.

### THE FACTORIES BILL.

The conditions of women in industry have aroused considerable discussion during the year. The introduction of the Factories Bill by the Labour party, and later the altered Bill produced by the Conservative Government, have called public attention to the antiquated regulations under which factory

workers are protected. There has been no general Factory Act for over twenty-five years, although in that period a revolution has taken place in large scale industry. Women of all shades of thought are very disquieted to notice that the Government Bill which is likely to become law during the coming season, while nominally conceding the 48-hour week, does by its overtime provisions take us back to the period before the 1841 Act.

### PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION.

These Factory Bills have aroused anew in certain influential middle-class quarters the discussion as to whether there should be any protective legislation for women as distinct from men workers. While a theoretical case may be made out for the view that protective legislation is a hindrance to the woman seeking employment, the practical experience of the factory workers has led them to support wholeheartedly the principle of regulation. Unfortunately men and women do not compete on equal terms as regards organization and bargaining power. Generally the women form the cheap and unorganized labour, and it is but common sense that the State should protect them as far as possible against unscrupulous exploitation of their health and strength. In the trades where protection is most needed, women are, alas, too cheap for any protective legislation to weigh against their being employed.

The feminist is on sounder ground who argues that all protective legislation ought to extend to men equally with women; that the health of the father should be considered as well as that of the potential mother. Most supporters of factory legislation would agree with this. In practice, however, it has been found that protection for men has followed the protection of the women. In both the new Factory Bills, regulations are prescribed for men that a few years ago were fiercely fought even as regards women. Public sentiment seems to work that way.

### TRADE UNIONS AND WAGES.

A good deal of attention has been paid to the organization of women workers during the year, by the Trades Union Congress. The flow from the trade unions which followed the war has been arrested, particularly in certain trades. One of the greatest women's occupations, the distributive trade, is as yet only slightly organized, and very bad conditions continue to operate in certain sections of it. The attempt to include the catering trades, and the drapery trades and soft goods section under the Trade Boards Acts has failed owing to the attitude of the Government. About two millions of women now come under Trade Board regulation of wages, but the number has not been added to in any way during the year.

Women workers, because of their unorganized condition, have suffered heavily in the reduction of wages since 1921. We are definitely back again in many trades at the "pocket money standard" which one hoped had been definitely abolished by the war. The number of young women who receive wages on which they cannot possibly live by themselves is a grave social menace that no feminist can afford to ignore. If you ask me what is the best thing that can be done for women workers during 1927 I should say "Raise their wages."

[In accordance with our editorial policy of boldly asking for what we want from the most eminent experts in the subjects under consideration, we asked Miss Ellen Wilkinson to write on Women in Industry in 1926. She is, as our readers well know, a trade union official in addition to being a Labour M.P., and if she had not, in the foregoing article, omitted all mention of her own personal activities during the year, our readers would have been reminded that she herself played a vigorous and significant part in the Trade Union Congress campaign for the encouragement of Trade Unionism among women. But veneration for the knowledge and experience of the expert does not always involve perfect agreement as regards the interpretation of such experience. Our readers will perhaps realize that we ourselves reflect the doubts of "certain influential middle-class quarters." (we accept the suggestion that we are influential) concerning the desirability of applying protective legislation to women *qua* women, and thus to some extent we fall under Miss Wilkinson's lash. We are glad that she accords a measure of theoretical soundness to the case for applying legislative restrictions to men and women irrespective of sex, and we remain of the opinion that good theory makes good practice. If undifferentiated protective legislation as between men and women is a desirable thing, there is everything to be said for asking for it. Otherwise how is any government to know that we want it?—ED.]

## WOMEN IN COMMERCE.

By CAROLINE HASLETT.

There has perhaps been no spectacular progress of women's work in the large fields of commerce and industry during 1926, but there has undoubtedly been a strengthening in many directions of the foothold already won by women.

Perhaps in the advertising world one sees the most outstanding and complete successes of women achieving important managerial and executive posts, although in many other spheres in commerce woman is winning her way to some of the more remunerative posts.

There have been revealed recently many instances in which women are taking an active part on boards of directors. Mrs. Piggott, who has recently joined the Business and University Committee, is the Chairman of Manfields, Ltd., the well-known boot and shoe manufacturers. Miss Pilkington, another new member of this Committee, is director of Messrs. Clifton and Kersley Coal Co., Ltd., and yet another member, Miss Hope-Glen is manager of Peter Jones, Ltd.

The work which the Business and University Committee is doing in bringing together the University woman and some of the best women's brains in the commercial world surely is an excellent augury for the future.

In industry, and especially amongst the professional women engineers, progress is being made although perhaps somewhat slow. Miss Victoria Drummond has recently become qualified as the first woman marine engineer, which is an event of outstanding importance and significance.

It is becoming increasingly evident, however, that in order for women to attain to positions of influence and responsibility they will have to look increasingly to the new businesses which are developing. The artificial silk industry, which is one of the most overwhelming industrial successes of the last few years, should surely offer scope for many women, both on the research side and on the commercial side.

Another section of industry which is developing at an enormous rate is the electrical industry, and here again there is undoubtedly much scope for women's enterprise and initiative. The engineer has very successfully grappled with the many technical problems which have to be faced in the adaptation of the science of electricity for everyday purposes. It is, however, becoming increasingly clear to the electrical world that "interpreters" are needed to translate the mission of the power station and the manufacturer of electrical goods to the user, who is usually the domestic woman. This is obviously work which could be exceptionally well carried out by women, but at the moment there exists no organized method of training women for this kind of work. The training should include a knowledge of house-craft, a short intensive course in electrical terminology and the economics of electricity supply, and also a course of salesmanship. Given this training, together with a pleasant personality, and the ability to get on with one's fellow creatures, there is no limit to the successes which a woman could attain in the electrical world at the present time. The field at the moment is practically untouched, and although the demand for this kind of service is somewhat inarticulate, it undoubtedly exists. The problem is already being tackled by a group of head mistresses, and it is likely that in the very near future a course of training will be put into operation, which will probably go under the name of a domestic electrical course. For the woman with artistic ability there is also a tremendous potential opening in regard to the decorative effect of lighting in the home.

This new development in the electrical world has been made possible partly by the efforts and work of women engineers, who have been able to point out the need for women whose duty it is to demonstrate and sell electrical apparatus and to have at the same time some knowledge of the construction and maintenance of that apparatus.

Homecraft, with the help of electricity, has in the immediate future to be viewed from an entirely different angle, and in this reconstruction there is no doubt about the fact that women can play an important part, and every endeavour is being made to see that the status and salary granted for this work shall be on a commensurate basis.

Too long have women in industry and commerce followed "known" paths. The woman who would make an interesting and remunerative career for herself must be willing to strike out into new avenues. Such work of course will be difficult in many ways, but the adventure and the interest will make it well worth while.

## WOMEN IN THE UNIVERSITIES.

By B. A. CLOUGH.

The record of events during the past year which specially concern women at the universities is not a long one, but it includes some happenings of great interest. I propose to begin with Cambridge because the changes which have been brought about there by the new Statutes are fundamental and of great importance, and there is happily no occasion for changes of this character in any other British University.

These new Statutes which came into force on 1st October do not indeed touch the question of the admission of women to membership, but they do make it possible for the first time for women to take part in the educational work of the University, and owing to the generous spirit in which the Statutes have been interpreted this opportunity has been given to a very considerable number of the women lecturers. Women are now eligible for Professorships, Readerships, and University Lectureships, and eleven women have been appointed University Lecturers.

Teaching in the University is now organized in Faculties, each Faculty consisting of the teachers in a given subject from whom are chosen members of the Faculty Board. There are now women on many of the Faculties and on several Faculty Boards.

An additional Statute was brought forward by the Commissioners at a later date making women students eligible for University Scholarships and prizes, and this was accepted by the University without a dissentient voice.

These changes are unquestionably of great value to the Women's Colleges. The opportunity of sharing in the consideration and discussion of questions which concern their own work as teachers removes what has been from many points of view a very real disadvantage to College lecturers. The opening of University Scholarships and prizes will give encouragement and opportunity to promising students such as has been put to excellent use at Oxford.

At Oxford this year a really striking event is the election of the Principal of Lady Margaret Hall to the Hebdomadal Council, the chief executive body, the Cabinet in fact of the University. Those who have opposed the admission of women to full membership of the Universities have always put forward as one of their strongest grounds for so doing the extreme danger of allowing women any voice in the government of the University, any say in what concerned the education of men, and undoubtedly this possibility has been regarded with real terror as a disaster to be avoided at all costs. And now here is Oxford of its own free will electing a woman to membership of the select body of twenty-three which is the supreme executive authority of the University. The skies have not yet fallen, but then Miss Grier has as yet only held this position for one term.

The Oxford women's colleges have suffered a serious loss this year through the retirement of Miss Penrose from the Principalship of Somerville which she has held for nearly twenty years. Miss Penrose has a long record of service to women's University education. After a distinguished career at Oxford she became Principal of Bedford College in 1893, of the Royal Holloway College in 1898, and finally returned to her own College in 1907. She has done many things besides, and in the last few years has done valuable work as a member of the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities and on the Statutory Commission for Oxford set up to carry out the Royal Commission's recommendations. University women owe much to her wisdom and her statesmanship. The University has shown in a graceful manner its recognition of her services to the University and to the country generally by conferring on her the degree of D.C.L., an honour only once before offered to a woman.

It should be noted that the University has also this year for the first time included women among the recipients of Honorary Degrees at the Encenia. The Duchess of Atholl was among the eminent persons receiving an Honorary D.C.L., and an Hon. D.Mus. was conferred on Dame Ethel Smyth. Somerville has been fortunate in securing as Miss Penrose's successor, Miss Margery Fry. Miss Fry has won distinction and proved exceptional ability in various fields. Her work for Prison Reform in late years is well known, but she has not at any time let go her connection with her College and with University affairs. She has been for some years a member of the University Grants Commission.

Some anxiety was felt by those interested in University women's affairs at hearing this autumn that the Oxford University authorities had decided to limit the number of the Society

of Home Students to 250. This measure, however, is not regarded by those within the University as in any way disquieting. The limitation is in fact not new, but was already the rule and practice prescribed by the Delegacy (i.e. University Committee) which deals with the Society's affairs and on which it is represented. The number of students belonging to each College is naturally fixed by the capacity of the College buildings, but since no such question of space arises with regard to the Home Students, it has for some years past been the practice to fix the number admitted to the Society. It is highly satisfactory to find that in this year, as in previous years, a number of Oxford women have been successful in securing open University Scholarships and prizes. Each of the Colleges is represented in the list of winners.

The University of London has this year recognized the Final Examination in Household and Social Science as qualifying for an Honours Degree. This is a step of great importance to King's College for Women, six of whose students at once obtained this degree. Another woman, Miss L. W. Stone, has been appointed to a University Readership, to be held in connection with King's College, Strand, and three women have become Chairmen of Examiners. All these are appointments open to both men and women. Twenty-one women students have won open scholarships and prizes this year.

In the Universities of Scotland and Wales and in what are sometimes called the newer Universities of England women are of course constitutionally on equal terms with men. It is, however, said not infrequently that in some of these Universities the equality is more theoretical than practical. That, for instance, here as in other quarters a woman has to be much more than a little superior to her men competitors to obtain a good appointment. In the four University Colleges forming the University of Wales, there are two women professors, two lecturers, many assistant lecturers, and this is probably not an unfavourable example. It would be interesting to have more information as to the position of women in the Scotch Universities.

One comparatively new movement is reported from Scotland, an increasing belief in the desirability of residence for women students at the Universities, and indeed for men also. Edinburgh has had hostels for women for some years and is building more; Glasgow has one at least, and more in prospect, and Aberdeen will soon have some good buildings.

Perhaps strictly speaking the subject of Crosby Hall does not come under the heading of this article, but it is not possible to pass over such an achievement on the part of University women. Though the actual opening of the hall and the new residence attached to it will not happen till next year, and the whole of the sum required has not been obtained yet, the undertaking is so nearly completed that it is time to congratulate the British Federation. The end of their strenuous and untiring labour is in sight and success is assured to this bold enterprise. The hall will soon be restored to life, taken into use and therefore properly seen and valued, and there will be quite new opportunities for students from overseas and abroad to meet those from our own Universities and for these to meet each other and for all to find out many things. The interest and sympathy which the scheme has aroused among University women of many different races and colours is very remarkable and most promising for the future.

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## WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL LIFE.

By MARGERY CORBETT ASHBY.

1926 shows no sensational victory for the woman's cause in actual achievement, though the resolution in favour of women police by the International Police Congress may have far reaching effects if the women here and elsewhere make a strenuous effort to educate public opinion. We know our task in this country is peculiarly difficult since it is the conversion of many local authorities that is necessary. It was very satisfactory that Germany, the new State member of the League, should have brought the number of women substitute delegates up to seven, and those of us who have worked with Dr. Gertrude Bäumer are confident that she will count among the admirable and distinguished women who have kept our representation at such a remarkable level. Advance here should be easy if the other Dominions would follow the steady example of Australia.

The delegations from overseas are not always full, and surely Canada and New Zealand, with their high standard of living and advanced legislation, could add to their weight and prestige by including an expert woman in their delegation. This year, for example, New Zealand has passed acts for women Justices of the Peace, Guardianship of Infants, Family Allowances, and Destitute Persons.

What an immense assistance it would be in harmonizing the views of East and West, if India in 1927, would include in her delegation a woman such as Miss Sorabji to round off the achievements of 1926, which made women in India eligible to sit on the councils of Madras and Bombay.

1926 is notable for the appointment of Frau Emmey Freundlich, member of the Austrian Parliament and president of the Women's International Co-operative movement, to the Preparatory Committee for an economic conference. This is a much-needed recognition of the fact that women represent the consumer in all economic problems in a quite definite way. It would be interesting to discover the amount of wealth controlled by the average housewife. On its wise distribution depends the level of health and happiness of the human race, yet women have hardly as yet begun to realize their power and responsibility as buyers. Occasionally we are goaded into a boycott, say of coal, but how far this is really due to sheer inability to pay the swollen price, and how far to conscious limitation of purchase it is difficult to tell. Austria, Finland, and the United States are the only instances known to me of any attempt at organization outside the co-operative movement in different countries. A Housewives' movement has been started here in the Home Counties.

The League has before it in 1927 two immense and vital tasks: economic peace and political peace, in preparation for the great economic conference to be called in 1927. We must try to secure the presence of women, and especially Frau Freundlich, on the permanent body. To secure political peace through the limitation of armaments, a conference is ordered by the Assembly for 1927, but is unlikely to meet owing to the enormous amount of preparation needed. In this case an important aspect will be dealt with by the conference on the private manufacture of arms. Difficult as it is to make men realize our interest in economic problems, it seems infinitely more difficult to persuade them that the limitation of armaments is also our affair. If they disregard as sentimental our passionate, intimate and personal interest in the preservation of life, can we appeal to them on the sober ground of statistics, such as those of Sir Josiah Stamp and others, that show reasonable limitation of armaments could produce a rise of 10 per cent. in the standard of living of each family? 10 per cent. is a cold economic statement; cannot we women make it live in terms of house room, milk, and boots, the health of thousands of mothers and babies? The Slavery Convention will affect the lives of 600,000 women, but the coming struggle to limit forced labour will improve the lot of as many again. The only ethical basis of the British Commonwealth is at stake in this matter. The great British queen under whom it was consolidated, declared in 1843, "there shall not be in the eye of the law any distinction or disqualification whatever founded on mere distinction of colour, origin, language, or creed, but the protection of the law in letter and in substance shall be extended impartially to all alike." 1926 has shown the most determined effort made in eighty years to tear up this great charter. Surely

women who have been denied personal liberty so long will work for liberty for others, even in far away Africa.

Of the self-governing countries, the huge republics of South America are the most backward in their treatment of women, and we were delighted to welcome in Paris the delegates from Argentine, Brazil, and Uruguay. The senate of the former has passed a Bill giving Equal Civil Rights to women, and an even wider measure has been introduced in Chile.

In Latin Europe the gains and losses almost cancel each other out, since the women in Spain voted in the referendum, the women in Italy have lost all opportunity of using their newly-gained municipal vote. It is a poor consolation that men have equally lost their citizen rights.

In France, the great Congress of June had a wonderful influence on public opinion as reflected in the whole Press, provincial or Parisian, and of all political shades. The financial crisis has stopped legislation with the exception of a useful small measure making the consent of the mother necessary with that of the father to the marriage of minor children. A determined effort is being made by the women to reap in 1927 the seed sown in 1926.

It is curious that 1926 has shown on the whole a decrease in the number of women in Parliament, though Great Britain welcomed the election of Miss Bondfield and Miss Lawrence, and a third woman has been elected to Congress in the U.S.A. Czecho-Slovakia has fifteen members as against seventeen, Lithuania five as against seven. The number of magistrates and councillors in Germany shows a decrease, though the number stands at 1,148; there are fewer members (six) in the Baden Landtag. Canada and Hungary have only one member each; on the other hand Belgium shows a considerable increase in the number of women councillors, and twenty-six women were elected in Palestine to the Jewish National Council. In Spain, Dona Maria Espinosa is elected to the Council of Segovia.

The interesting pioneers of 1926 include Frøken Birgit Spangbord, first woman judge in Sweden, and Mme Elena Jackevreiate, judge in Kannas, Lithuania. In Australia, Mrs. Kirk becomes the first woman pastor of an evangelical church there. In Austria two women qualify for the first time as engineers, and Frau Ottilia Wagner becomes first Commerziellrat, and Frau Herta Spring first woman "Hofrat." Prince Edward Island admits its first woman barrister, and Czecho-Slovakia sends three women senators and M.P.s on a parliamentary delegation abroad.

Holland, which already has a woman in charge of the great State research station in tropical agricultural diseases, has appointed Dr. Wilbrink, woman specialist in sugar diseases, as Director of the Sugar Examination Station at Cheribon, Java.

In the United States, Miss Mary Simpson is the first woman to act as clerk in Charge of Bills in the Senate. In Uruguay, Dr. Luisi has been given the Chair of Social Hygiene at the University of Monte Video, which Chair was actually founded in her honour, and Mexico accepts Mme Kollontay as Soviet representative.

Such isolated instances may seem drops in the ocean, but a drop may become a rill, and a rill become a river.

The young romance of the woman's movement, with its dauntless courage and dramatic victories, has given way to the steady, unremitting toil and solid achievements of middle age, and personally, I think middle age a very good age.

## WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

By MARIAN BERRY.

Little change has occurred in the position of women in Local Government during the past year, but it must be remembered that no triennial elections took place for local governing bodies.

At the end of March elections were held for the Urban District Councils and also for a third of the Rural District Councils and Boards of Guardians in England and Wales, but the number of women candidates was small in comparison to the need. In certain places the women candidates secured a large number of votes, and in the case of the Guardians' elections at West Ham and Worcester women headed the poll. But the distinctive feature of these elections—as has so often been the case in the past—was the deplorable apathy of the electorate. In the Eland Division of Yorkshire only 50 per cent. of the electorate voted; in the Midlands, at Alfreton and at Melton, less than half

the voters took the trouble to vote, and at Tottenham only 13 to 25 per cent. of the electors went to the poll.

Doubtless owing to the work of the various women's organizations more interest was shown in the Town Council elections on 1st November. A considerable number of women stood, either as the nominees of one of the political parties, or as independents. In view of the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult for independent candidates to secure support in the large centres, it is satisfactory to record that Miss Eleanor Rathbone secured a majority of 994 as an Independent for the Granby Ward of the Liverpool Council, after a contest that aroused widespread interest. More women were returned than in the spring, but the results showed that an energetic campaign is needed to secure an adequate representation of women on Town Councils. At the present time the number of women Town Councillors does not exceed 300.

Three women were elected to the Mayoralty, namely, at Banbury, Mrs. Gillet; Margate, Mrs. Hatfield; and West Bromwich, Mrs. Cottrell. In Scotland Miss Violet Robertson and Miss Snodgrass, two of the women who have served for some years on the Glasgow City Council, were elected as bailies. It is a matter for regret that the number of women Mayors has been reduced—in 1924 seven women held the office, including a woman Lord Mayor at Norwich.

The appointment of Mrs. Foster Welch, J.P., as Sheriff for the county borough of Southampton was a matter for congratulation to women. Since medieval times Mrs. Foster Welch is the second woman to occupy this office, Councillor Mrs. Lucy Green Wells, of Canterbury, having filled the position with distinction from 9th November, 1924, to 9th November, 1925. The *Vote* for 3rd December pointed out that: "Although women exercised the office of Sheriff in medieval times, the recent appointments of Mrs. Wells and Mrs. Welch are unique in history, inasmuch as the mediaeval women Sheriffs held their office either by right of inheritance or in virtue of a grant from the Crown as a source of profit for their lives, whereas Mrs. Wells and Mrs. Welch have been elected to an office which is now purely honorary.

During 1926 the number of women magistrates continued steadily to increase, and has now reached the total of 1,569 in England and Wales. Nine hundred and forty-one women have been appointed in the counties, and 628 in the boroughs.

In considering legislation affecting Local Government during the past year, it is important to remember that under the Government's Economy Act only one register of electors is now to be prepared, and this register will come into force on 15th October in each year.

The Midwives Acts of 1902 to 1918 have been amended in several important aspects by the Midwives and Maternity Homes Act which comes into force on 1st January. This Act provides for the registration and inspection of all maternity homes, and it will be an offence after 1st January for any person to carry on a maternity home which has not been duly registered by the local supervising authority, i.e. the county or county borough council.

Considerable progress has been made in the provision of State-aided houses, and 90,326 houses have been authorized under the Housing Act of 1924. Owing to the financial position the subsidies given under the Housing Acts of 1923 and 1924 are to be reduced. In future the subsidy under the 1923 Act will be £4 for 20 years, and in the case of the 1924 Act, £7 10s. for a period of 40 years. In agricultural areas the subsidy has been reduced from £12 10s. to £11. The Minister of Health suggested that increased subsidies have only involved increased building costs, but if this should prove to be the case there will either be a reduction in the number of houses built, or higher rents must be charged.

The Public Health (Smoke Abatement) Bill is a measure that has concerned all women interested in public health problems. This Bill dealt only with the smoke issuing from industrial buildings, and did not touch the domestic chimney; also steamers and Government buildings were excluded from the Bill's operations. In spite of the efforts of the Smoke Abatement Society, the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship and other organizations, the scope of the Bill has not been materially widened and the loss of potential fuel in the form of domestic soot will continue. The Bill will not come into force until July next.

Other Local Government Bills of importance were the Housing (Rural Workers), Small Holdings and Allotments, the Local Government (County and Boroughs and Adjustments), and a measure to amend the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913.

## WOMEN IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

By E. LOUIE ACRES.

Unobtrusive but definite progress has been made in advancing the position of women in the Church of England, and public opinion has been educated by controversy in the Press, noticeably arising out of two articles published by a religious contemporary, "Where are the Men?" and "Insistent Problems of Sex," which called forth floods of sound criticism from many readers who gave their views on the modern girl and her place in the Church in "letters to the Editor."

The Bishop of Liverpool invited Miss Royden to preach at Evensong in the Cathedral on the first Sunday in July, upon which the above-mentioned journal, in deploring the permission so given, described the occasion as a "sad innovation."

The building of a central house for Deaconesses has been commenced, and at the ceremony of laying the foundation stone, the Bishop of Winchester spoke in no uncertain terms of the Order and the status of the woman-deacon. In marked contrast to this was a sermon preached by the Bishop of Manchester on 17th June, at a Service of Thanksgiving—the first of this nature ever held—when over a hundred deaconesses assembled in the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, forming into procession as an ecclesiastical act of thanksgiving and worship. The sermon seemed calculated to avoid the issue of the ordination of women, and caused much disappointment amongst those assembled.

Arising out of a suggestion made by the Central Conference on women's church work, a Central Committee has been formed to co-ordinate the work of women in the Church of England, and to be a centre of information. Representatives of the Central Conference and the Inter-diocesan Council have been appointed to serve, and Miss Yeatman Biggs, St. Nicholas Close, Coventry, has undertaken the work of secretary.

There is nothing to report on the revision of the marriage service, for the Bishops have not yet completed their private sittings, and the form of the revised prayer book will not be made public until 1927.

Early in the year a meeting was arranged by the League of the Church Militant, which was an excellent demonstration—although not arranged with such an idea in view—of the spiritual power of women in public speech and prayer, when Miss Royden took the chair at a meeting of Godspeed to Dorothy Maud (daughter of the Bishop of Kensington) who was leaving for work in South Africa. With bishops and clergy in the audience and on the platform two women spoke, and led a packed congregation of men and women in prayer. The significance of this has been commented upon both by supporters and opponents of the Ministry of Women in the Church.

A speech in the strongest terms by the Rev. Canon Raven, to a large audience at Southport, during the Church Congress week, in which he spoke of the present refusal in the Church of England to welcome to the full the ministry of women, as an apostasy, brought forth some equally strong comments in the Press. The influence of such advocacy by one as well known for scholarship and spiritual power as Dr. Raven, cannot yet be gauged, but I believe a later age will think of it as a milestone on the road of progress. The end is not yet.

## WOMEN IN THE FREE CHURCHES.

By CONSTANCE M. COLTMAN, M.A., B.D.

The outstanding feature of 1926 for Free Churchwomen was the Conference of Women Ministers held in London during the autumn under the auspices of the Union of Women Voters. Women ministers from the Congregational, Baptist, and Unitarian Churches were present, as well as representatives of the Quakers and the Salvation Army, and many other Non-conformist and Anglican sympathizers. This momentous gathering heralded a new phase in the history of the ministry of women. Those women ministers in England, who had hitherto ploughed lonely furrows, sustained only by a sense of individual vocation, now found themselves welded together in the corporate unity of a great and growing movement and encouraged by the insistent demand for their services from eminent lay women in every sphere of life.

1926 recruits to the ranks of women ministers include the Rev. Joyce Daplyn, B.A., who has not only settled as Assistant to All Souls' Unitarian Church, Golders Green, but as Chaplain to the Union of Women Voters contributed largely to the success of the Conference, and the Rev. Violet Hedger, B.D.,

who early in the year accepted the pastorate of Littleover Baptist Church, Derby. Miss Margaret Paulden, who for seven years has been doing most valuable work at Berkeley Street, Liverpool, was formally recognized as an accredited woman minister by the Summer Assembly of the Congregational Union. The same Assembly took an immense step forward, pregnant with possibility for the future, when it accepted the "tremendous change" that women shall henceforth be eligible for the Chair of the Union, that is to say, the highest office that Congregationalism can bestow.

In Scotland, the shade of John Knox must be stirring uneasily. Scottish newspapers made much of the fact that for the first time in the 500 years of its history, Edinburgh University has conferred the B.D. degree upon a woman. An honours graduate of Glasgow University was admitted this autumn as the first woman student of the Scottish Congregational College and she also is pursuing her studies with a view to the B.D. In the great U.F. Church, one of the two arms of Scotch Presbyterianism, the question of admitting women to the full ministry reached the arena of discussion at the Assembly last May. The matter was for the time being left over, but the very fact that a Presbyterian Assembly could discuss the ministry of women registers a great advance.

The position is curiously similar in Wesleyanism. At last summer's conference the lay session recommended by a narrow majority that unmarried women should be made eligible for the ministry on the same terms as men, but this was defeated by the pastoral session. However, as a Danish correspondent commented on the rejection of their own Bill for the ordination of women: "Even lost battles are useful. We must satisfy our antagonists with some victories in order to win the last victory ourselves!"

Much has been achieved in 1926. Much still remains to be accomplished. Among those Free Churches admitting women to their full ministry, the opportunity so vast, the response so small. In Presbyterianism and Wesleyanism the ministry of women discussed only to be rejected. Nevertheless, this year in special degree has witnessed steady growth and consolidation within and increasing recognition without. The day is drawing near when all Free Churchmen and women will have real equality of status and opportunity in the highest and holiest of human vocations.

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## WOMEN AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

By CLARA D. RACKHAM.

The year which is just closing has been an interesting one as regards penal reform. First place must of course be given to the Criminal Justice Act, which came into force last summer. This measure has given greater powers to magistrates in enabling them to try cases which they had hitherto been obliged to commit to a higher court, and serious indictable offences involving large sums of money can now be dealt with summarily if both the accused and the magistrates so desire. It is interesting to note that though the jurisdiction of magistrates is thus extended there is no extension of their powers of punishment, and they can still only award six months imprisonment for an offence which might be punished on conviction or indictment with a long term of penal servitude. This is a striking illustration of the present day tendency to be content with shorter sentences than used to prevail in the past. It is probable too that modern standards do not regard these offences of larceny with the extreme seriousness with which they were once regarded.

It would be possible to regard this extension of magisterial powers with greater favour if there was some provision for legal assistance of poor defendants in the police courts. At present many poor persons stand in the dock undefended and are quite ignorant of the fact that if they elected to go for trial to a higher court some legal assistance might be forthcoming. It is quite illusory so state that the very small number of appeals is proof that those who are convicted and sentenced in the police courts are satisfied with the decision of the justices. The expense of an appeal is so heavy as to put it quite out of the reach of numbers of persons. Both these considerations add very greatly to the responsibility of magistrates in view of the increased duties recently laid upon them.

It is very satisfactory that justice is now being speeded up by the provision in the Act which allows accused persons to be committed to the sessions or assizes which are nearest in time instead of those nearest in distance. The result is that a prisoner can be tried at the Quarter Sessions for the county instead of waiting perhaps months for the borough sessions, and vice versa. Another provision which most magistrates will welcome is that which lays it down that when they convict a man for being drunk when in charge of a car, they must deprive him of his licence for twelve months. This is one of the rare cases in our penal system in which there is some rational connection between a crime and its punishment.

The part of the Act which is of the greatest interest to most magistrates is that dealing with Probation. It is much to be hoped that as a result of this new measure, we shall before long possess a regular system of Probation, that is, one or more Probation Officers attached to every court paid by public funds responsible to a committee of justices, with training or experience in their work, and with pensions on retirement. But though the system can be thus laid down, its success will depend on the personality of the officers and the willingness of magistrates to make a proper use of their services.

Mention must also be made here of the Adoption of Children Act, which will come into force on 1st January next. The Petty Sessional Court is one of the courts at which an application for an adoption order may be made, and as it is the most accessible to the majority of people, it is probable that it will be the one most widely used. The magistrates will have a task of great difficulty and responsibility in making Adoption Orders, having due regard to the rights of the natural parents, the welfare of the child, and the claims of the adopter, and it is a task in which the presence of women magistrates is of the greatest importance.

Three other measures concerned with legitimacy, Reports of Judicial Proceedings, and Increase of Penalties affect the administration of justice, but not the work of the magistrates in Petty Sessions.

The reports of the Departmental Committees on Legal Aid to Poor Persons and on Sexual Offences against Young Persons (Scotland), have been issued during the year. The former takes us a little way in the right direction, but its recommendations are disappointing. The latter has been discussed in these columns. We are still waiting for legislation which will carry out the recommendations of this Report, as well as of the English Report, which appeared in December, 1925. It is much to be hoped that in a year's time we shall have more to report on this urgent question.

## WOMEN IN THE THEATRE.

By CICELY HAMILTON.

The year 1926 will hardly go down to theatrical history as a woman's year. The new stars of the feminine gender that have made their appearance on our stage are not, as yet, of the first magnitude; though there are critics and playgoers who count on a future of the type described as brilliant for two at least of our younger actresses, Valerie Taylor and Jean Forbes-Robertson. Both of these have improved their position during the last twelve months. Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, in his time, was a memorable Romeo; his daughter's Juliet has, so far, only been seen on the experimental Sunday stage, but, judging by the interest and discussion roused, it is not unworthy of her family record.

To turn to those who are leading ladies established. Sybil Thorndike's only essay in modern drama was *Granite*, which provided her—if not for very long—with a part of the "weird" order. Her Shakespearean venture was more fortunate; exactly a year ago she appeared as Queen Katharine in *Henry VIII*, and her performance had no small share in the remarkable run of the play. Miss Thorndike's Shakespearean productions are becoming a Christmas habit; at the moment of writing she is rehearsing *Macbeth*, to the accompaniment of costumes by Ricketts. This Christmas habit of hers, by the way, is a grave inconvenience to a writer of a yearly summary; it is as impossible here to treat of her reading of Lady Macbeth, as it was last year to chronicle the success of her Queen Katharine. Before the curtain has risen on the first performance of the tragedy, these lines will be in the hands of the printer. Another Shakespearean actress, Edith Evans, left the Old Vic in the spring with a reputation enhanced; since then she has been seen in such different revivals as Somerset Maugham's *Caroline*, and Ibsen's (somewhat musty) *Rosmersholm*. One of the surprises of the autumn season was Edna Best as Tessa in *The Constant Nymph*, a part which revealed the more serious side of her talent.

Of our visitors, an American actress, Jane Cowl, made an instant hit in a Coward play; and another, Florence Mills, in *Blackbirds*, has repeated her Parisian success.

As regards plays, Clemence Dane's contribution to the drama of the year was *Granite*, a strange, ambitious tragedy, with a supernatural element. Two new women playwrights—part playwrights—have been concerned in two of the outstanding successes of the autumn theatrical season: Margaret Kennedy, whose notable book *The Constant Nymph* was dramatized by herself and Basil Dean; and Adelaide Philpotts, part-author—with her father—of the Haymarket play *Yellow Sands*.

## WOMEN AND SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION.

Social work or social administration obviously covers much that is dealt with in other articles of this New Year number, but a few notes on some developments that fall outside their scope may perhaps find a place here. Some progress has been made during the year in schemes of training for social and public work. The University of Manchester has come into line with most other British Universities, and has decided to establish a diploma in Social Science and a Certificate in Public Administration. The fact that Miss Hilda Cashmore so long associated with Bristol has now become Warden of the Manchester University Settlement will undoubtedly add to the pull of Manchester as a centre of training. The Joint University Council for Social Studies has been at work during the year on reports of training for different branches of social service. In conjunction with the Hospital Almoners Institute it has recently published a report on hospital social service or to use better understood language, the work of hospital "Almoners." This report which will be shortly reviewed in these columns should give a great impetus of a profession for which women of good education and training are pre-eminently suited. The Council jointly with the Probation Committee of the Magistrates Association has also issued a statement on the importance of systematic training for probation workers.

Perhaps the most outstanding event of the year in connection with social administration was a conference in September summoned by the League of Red Cross Societies which was attended not only by social workers of many countries, but by delegates from State departments and from leading International and National health and social organizations as well as

representatives of great foundations such as the Rockefeller and Commonwealth Fund and the League of Nations and the International Labour Office. This conference agreed on an International Congress of Social Workers which will be held in Paris on July, 1928, under the presidency of Dr. Alice Masaryk, who was chairman of the preliminary meetings. Though men will take part equally with women, several women with international reputations will preside over different sections, and will present national reports on different aspects of social work.

The United States and Canada have for some years held annual gatherings of social workers on a very large scale, but this will be the first attempt to call together a meeting of social workers from all corners of the world, and the fact that other important conferences on different aspects of social work, such as child welfare, are to take place at the same time in Paris, will greatly increase the prospects of a successful gathering. A British Committee will shortly be formed under the chairmanship of Mr. Percy Alden, which will probably include hospitality to delegates passing through England among its duties.

No survey of the year can be complete without mention of the social work carried on by the League of Nations. The Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People met in March with delegates from nine nations, Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Poland, Roumania and Spain. Of these, only one, Dr. Estrid Hein, was a woman, though the majority of assessors were women. Great Britain was represented by Dame Katherine Furse, Miss Eglantyn Jebb, and Miss Eleanor Rathbone. For the work of this committee, Dame Rachel Crowdy, the able head of the section, had the assistance of Miss Wall, lent by our Home Office, whose admirable work as secretary of the Committee on Child Assault last year has not been forgotten. The subjects under discussion included protection of infancy, which was submitted to a committee of which Dame Janet Campbell, of the Ministry of Health, has been appointed a member; child labour; the effect of family allowances on the well-being of children, alcoholism and education on sex matters.

Another development of the year in connection with international social reform is the emergence of a new organization entitled the International Association for Social Progress, which has been formed by the union of three international organizations—the International Association for Labour Legislation, the International Association on Social Insurance, and the International Association on Unemployment. This body, which has its headquarters at Basle, will work in close co-operation with the International Labour Organization. The year 1926, which has brought with it closer friendship between European nations and closer bonds between women of all lands forged at great international gatherings, has therefore also on its credit side a marked development in the international exchange of ideas of social progress.

Towards the end of the year the eagerly waited for report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Education and the Ministry of Labour on Education and Industry, made its appearance. The recommendations of this report, which will be dealt with fully in an early number of this paper, deserve the careful consideration of all social workers.

The publication of Mrs. Cecil Chesterton's vivid book *In Darkest England*, has revived interest in the needs of the homeless woman. An article by her in this paper led to a very interesting discussion, and already an influential committee has been formed to establish lodging houses in different parts of the city where they are most required. This is a subject on which much valuable experience has been gained, and the promoters of the new schemes, however urgently they may be required, will do well to take into consideration the knowledge of those who have had personal contact with this problem.

E. M.

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**WOMEN IN THE HOME.**

Each home is a little world which reflects indirectly the events of the world outside. An improved process for the working of low-grade ores in the Transvaal may affect the international price of gold bullion. The price of bullion affects the general level of prices. Prices touch the woman in the home. Less remote and tortuous events such as the more effective generation of cheap electricity which the Government's Electricity Bill foreshadows, the more vigorous prosecution of smoke abatement, a change of Government housing policy, the attitude of the Board of Education to nursery schools, all reflect themselves back upon the obscure and individual existence of the woman in the home. It is impossible therefore to retrace the year's events bearing upon the woman in the home without tediously retelling the story of the political year—the industrial year—the commercial year.

But there are a few events which have a more direct and intimate bearing than the others: events, for instance, immediately concerned with birth and death; with the production and wastage of human life. For human life is the product of the woman in the home, and its wastage, in so far as this occurs, is the wastage of her life's work, her happiness, and her energy. Thus if the race is recruited by means of a high birth-rate and a high death-rate the work of the woman in the home is a laborious and hopeless work. In so far as it is recruited by means of a low birth-rate and a low death-rate it is correspondingly hopeful and cheering work. All the more is this the case when one remembers that the family income bears no relation to the ups and downs of family expenditure. The resources at her disposal for bearing six children and rearing three are precisely the same as her resources for bearing three and rearing three, or for bearing and rearing six, or one, or none. Thus it is cheering to notice that 1926 seems to show a continuance of the double tendency which has progressively lightened the burden of home-making since the 1870's: a falling birth-rate combined with a falling death-rate. The Registrar-General records this year a birth-rate of 18.3, the lowest recorded rate with the exception of the abnormal war years, and a correspondingly low general death-rate and infant mortality rate of 12.2 and 75 respectively. Thus we are left with a very reasonable survival rate obtained to an increasing degree in the way in which it should be obtained: by the deliberate propagation and careful conservation of human life.

Nevertheless our satisfaction remains incomplete. 75 is a low infant death-rate compared with the rates to which we have become accustomed in this country. But it is still unnecessarily high. The seeds of life are still sown wastefully and they will continue to be sown wastefully so long as involuntary motherhood and an inelastic family income continue to characterize the home life of millions of women. To what extent has 1926 modified these two unpleasing features?

In actual practice very little. As regards family limitation the defeat of Mr. Thurtle's Bill in the House of Commons (dealt with in our political survey) has hardened the heart of the Ministry of Health and brought to the working women of the country no brighter hope that expert and disinterested advice on birth control will be made accessible at maternity and infant welfare centres to those who ask for it. They remain for the most part dependent for such information upon the quackery of commercial agencies and the ignorant advice of well-meaning friends. But their demand has grown in volume and in force. The organized women of the Labour party have successfully forced their almost unanimous demand for such information upon the attention of their somewhat reluctant male colleagues. And at the October conference of the National Labour party they succeeded in carrying against the dead weight of their party officials a motion referring back that part of the annual report which declared that birth control was no concern of the party. It was a notable victory, and one which opens the way next year to the championship by the Labour party of a demand for a change of policy at the Ministry of Health. Curiously enough the House of Lords has lent its weight to the cause of the working mother by carrying last April, and against the Government Whips, a resolution embodying the same demand. Nor have the working mothers been left to fight their battle alone. At its Council Meeting in March the N.U.S.E.C. advanced to its "immediate programme" the demand that birth control advice should be given to those married women who ask for it at maternity and infant welfare centres.

Meanwhile, though 1926 has brought no practical relief to working women up and down the country, in a few centres voluntary effort has attempted to fill the gap. The number of birth control clinics has increased. Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow have during the year added their total.

But this is the negative side of the matter. It is easier to limit the birth-rate than it is to make proper provisions by means of an elastic family income for those children who are brought into being and always will be brought into being by the urge of individual parenthood and national survival. The recommendation of the Coal Commission that family allowances should form part of the coal settlement kindled a great hope. The shelving of the Commission's report extinguished that hope. In France the family allowance system continues to stride forward from industry to industry. In Great Britain it marches only through the minds of men and women. But it marches, and there is no doubt that the serious recommendation of the Coal Commission has assisted its march. In the summer it became part of the official programme of the I.L.P. In the autumn the National Council of Women assembled in Annual Conference and lent its weight to the principle. More and more clearly is it seen that if a living wage is to become practical politics, it must be brought into relation with varying needs, or, in other words, it must take the form of an individual wage supplemented by family allowances. Only thus can the woman in the home be assured of the materials of her craft. Only thus can the occupation of motherhood attain dignity and security in addition to self-determination. M. D. S.

**THE WOMAN'S LEADER IN 1926.**

1926 has been a surprising year for newspapers, and very few of them can record an unbroken existence. There were days, early in May, when even *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* failed to make their habitual appearance, counting themselves among the innocent victims of the General Strike. But the WOMAN'S LEADER, having a certain irrepressible buoyancy which it derives from its connection with the suffrage movement, remained afloat during this unprecedented storm. A certain amount of cargo had to be thrown overboard, a certain amount of strain was imposed upon its personnel, but its files show an unbroken sequence of dates: 30th April, 7th May, 14th May. And at no stage does stencil or typescript usurp the place of the habitual printer's ink. The WOMAN'S LEADER is apt to be a somewhat boastful paper, and there is no doubt that its four-page "strike number" added fuel to its boastfulness.

It is also proud of a certain elasticity which it has manifested during the past year. By telescoping itself to four pages, it was able to ride the storm of a general strike. But by expanding itself to twelve pages during the remaining midsummer months, it was able to accommodate a great deal of news concerning a number of exceptional events which made 1926 an unusually active year in the history of the woman's movement. There was the International Suffrage Alliance Conference at the end of May, the Peace Pilgrimage in June, and the Equal Franchise Demonstration in July, all of which it served by the extra exertion of increased cubic capacity.

So much for the outward events of 1926. It is, however, when we turn to matters of internal policy that we find the WOMAN'S LEADER faced with its most momentous decision: the decision to be or not to be. The position was strangely reminiscent of certain deliberations which took place in the late spring of 1923. Then too, its editors were faced with the question, to be or not to be. Like all propaganda papers, the WOMAN'S LEADER was at that time losing money—steadily year by year—and out of somebody's pocket that money had to come. It was then that a body of guarantors came forward and undertook for a period of three years to contribute an assured income to the paper. The editors produced a narrowly drawn budget. On such a sum, they said (it was as a matter of fact somewhere in the neighbourhood of £800 a year), the WOMAN'S LEADER could exist. The sum was forthcoming, and the WOMAN'S LEADER

did exist. Some of its readers are pleased to say that it existed usefully, that it kept the faith, and served the causes which its guarantors intended it to serve. Others are of opinion that its criticisms contained an unpleasantly acid quality, that it was unsympathetic with the difficulties of the Labour Government, and that it exhibited animus against the Conservative party. To these last two criticisms the WOMAN'S LEADER must undoubtedly plead guilty. It is always unkind to whatever Government happens to be in power, and since the period in question covered both a Labour and a Conservative administration, it was, of course, unkind to both. That is because no Government has so far given it what it wants. For the rest, the only claim that the editors make with regard to the conduct of the paper during the three years' guarantee period, is the claim that they have been years of conservative finance. As they forecast their expenditure so precisely did they spend or rather refrain from spending. During each of the three years the budget balanced with a few pounds in hand on the right side. It is possible that Conservative readers and Labour readers may, for opposite reasons, attribute a black significance to the adjective which has been applied to the administration of the paper during those three guarantee years. Be that as it may—they will go down to history as three years of very conservative finance.

But in the spring of 1926, that period came to an end. The WOMAN'S LEADER once again saw yawning ahead of it an indeterminate future. Had its three years of conservative finance justified themselves? Had the women's movement obtained its journalistic money's worth? It was a difficult decision for those responsible for the day to day conduct of the paper, and ultimately of course it was a decision which had to be taken by the guarantors themselves, for it was only with their practical assistance that the will to live could become effective. And it so happened that the guarantors "turned up their thumbs." A new three years' guarantee was forthcoming, and thus with its lease of life renewed the WOMAN'S LEADER faces 1927. The survey of 1926 which this article rounds off shows all too clearly how many things remain to be fought for. And fight it will. To those who find its mood unduly acid, it issues the warning that if equal franchise is not granted within a year its acidity will be intensified a thousandfold. Nevertheless on the editorial table beside the ink pot which contains sulphuric acid, there stands a second ink pot containing honey. Into it the editors dip their pens when they write, to their generous indefatigable guarantors, and to the tireless unpaid contributors who week in and week out supply the expert political criticism and accurate information which constitute the chief claim of the WOMAN'S LEADER to a new three years' lease of life.

**IN MEMORIAM.**

The past year has taken its customary toll of valuable lives. Mr. George W. Johnson, a life-long worker for the woman's movement, who died in February, has fortunately left a book on the subject completed shortly before his death. The passing of Lady Wright in March deprived us of a most gracious and beautiful personality. Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson and Miss Eva Gore Booth were conspicuous instances of distinguished women who gave of their best to the service of women. Education has lost Professor Lillian Knowles; medicine, Dr. Helen Webb and Dr. Helen Hanson; art, Lady Stanley; travel, Gertrude Bell and Emily Hobhouse; and nursing, Anne Campbell Gibson. Mr. and Mrs. Baillie Weaver, who both died during the year, were united in service to the common cause. Mrs. Heberden, who died at the age of 88, was a pioneer suffragist and social reformer, and Miss Isabel Willis, a few years younger, was a devoted worker for peace and suffrage up to the time of her death. Mrs. Story, whose vivid and beautiful life came to an end in September, lived only two years short of a century. Miss F. M. Taylor, Miss Mary Beard, Miss Lucy Keyser Yates, and Miss Parker, who lost her life in the Croydon air disaster, should also find a place in the 1926 roll of women, of whom we can mention only a few who served their day and generation with distinction.

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