

WOMEN'S SERVICE

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THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS

JUS SUFFRAGII

THE MONTHLY ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE.

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The Economic Crisis is World Wide

SUPPORT

The International Alliance for Suffrage & Equal Citizenship

and

The International Women's News

Work for the establishment of the Right of Women to take their full share in the reconstruction of economic and political life.

GOODWILL AMONG MEN.

How cheerful would be our welcome to the New Year 1932 if we could carry into it a real determination to obey the Christian message of peace on earth, goodwill among men.

For the difficulties of the world to-day are in their essence spiritual, and it is the spiritual darkness which produces the economic gloom.

Nature is as bountiful as before; treasures of corn, coffee and sugar are thrown away or burnt. Man-power is plentiful; millions are facing the bitter notice 'Not wanted.' Invention and brains are better than ever, yet each year sees thousands of keen young men leave our universities full of high hopes, to find they are not wanted in this grim world their parents have so mismanaged. Gold is plentiful and South Africa is yearly adding fresh millions to the world supply.

Every factor is present except goodwill, and failing goodwill we watch the slow paralysis of all trade and commerce; all the rich give - and - take between nations on which the last century built its wealth.

Banks and factories close, ships and trains are empty; each country in turn



A recent portrait of Mrs. Ashby.

EVENTS OF 1931.

Brazil:	Women appointed to sit on juries. (This seems to have been adopted as a practical experiment, without any new legislation.) Limited Suffrage Bill introduced.	Egypt:	Women Police appointed in Cairo.
Burma:	Miss May Oung appointed only woman delegate to Round Table Conference.	France:	Mme. de Noailles first woman to be made a Commander of the Légion d'Honneur.
Canada:	Quebec Act improving status of married women grants right to become tutrix, to dispose of own earnings, and to a woman separated from her husband the same rights as an unmarried woman or widow.	Great Britain:	Miss Caroline Haslitt, woman engineer, made C.B.E. Fifteen women elected to Parliament.
Ceylon:	First woman elected to State Council.	India:	Municipal franchise granted in Delhi. Three Indian women appointed delegates to Round Table Conference.
		International:	Consultative Committee of women's international organisations on Women's Nationality set up at request of the League of Nations, and

builds higher walls around itself, while the unregulated exchange causes chaos.

Conferences meet and dissolve, moratoriums are given and expire; while goodwill is absent confidence dies and fear stalks unashamed as our only leader.

The remedy is simple and obvious, but in a world of democracies no government has the courage to enforce it. Cancel war debts, remit war reparations, reduce war armaments and peace and prosperity will follow confidence.

Can we women help the world through this crisis? Can we, the newcomers into political life, see further and more truly because we are new?

Christmas is the feast of birth and therefore the feast of the Mother as of the child.

Shall we work to bring the Christmas message, Peace among Men of Goodwill, or shall we watch helplessly till our children curse us for our weakness and blindness in a world of ruin and decay.

May 1932 bring to us in the woman's movement the peace and happiness that comes to those who shoulder each other's burdens.

M. CORBETT-ASHBY.

	Report presented to Assembly, which voted for its circulation to Governments for discussion next year.	St. Vincent and Granada:	Women made eligible for Legislative Council.
Japan:	Bill for municipal suffrage passed by House of Representatives but defeated in the Peers.	Turkey:	Woman appointed postmistress-general of Stamboul. First woman surgeon appointed. Women admitted to marine Training School. Fifteen women elected to Parliament.
Persia:	Marriage age raised to 16 for girls and 18 for men; also women granted right of divorce.	Uruguay:	Women Police appointed in Montevideo.
Portugal:	Statement that limited measure of parliamentary and municipal franchise was granted by decree.	General Note:	
Roumania:	Women vote for the first time under municipal franchise law of 1929.		Apart from these, there have been, as usual, a good many First Woman this and that, a certain number of new records in air and motor racing, etc., set up by women, and a certain number of women decorated in different countries. On the other hand, there has been a noticeable tendency in many countries, and perhaps particularly in Great Britain, to penalise the married woman worker on account of the economic depression.
Spain:	Victoria Kent made Director-General of Prisons. Three women elected to Constituent Cortes. Equal suffrage made part of the new Constitution.		

NOTES AND NEWS.

Delegates to the Disarmament Conference Sir John Simon (British Foreign Minister) has authorised the following announcement:

Mrs. Corbett Ashby, President of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, has accepted the Prime Minister's invitation to serve as a substitute delegate on the United Kingdom Delegation to the forthcoming Disarmament Conference.

This news about our President will, we feel sure, be received with great pleasure by members of the Alliance, and we congratulate the various organisations and particularly St. Joan's, from whom the original proposal came, on the fact that the representations they made to the Prime Minister on Mrs. Ashby's appointment were successful.

We are glad also to be able to announce that Dr. Mary Emma Woolley has been appointed a member of the United States delegation to the Disarmament Conference. Dr. Woolley has for the past thirty-one years been President of the Mount Holyoke College, one of the foremost women's colleges in the country. She is well known as a pioneer of women's education in America and is Director and Vice-Chairman of the Massachusetts Branch of the League of Nations Association. She is also keenly interested in the League for Permanent Peace.

Women's Franchise in Spain. Spanish women have been granted the right to vote under the New Constitution. An attempt to postpone their enfranchisement for five years was defeated by the Socialists in a vote of 127 against 130. The many women in the visitors' gallery followed the debate with the deepest excitement, and when it was clear that the franchise would be granted a deep sigh of relief arose from them.

The National Association of Spanish Women organised a demonstration of gratitude to the Republic on the 15th November. The President, Senorita Benita Manterola, spoke, and also Signorita Campoamor, who received a great ovation. The Minister of Justice, M. Fernando de los Rios, replied on behalf of the Government.

Under the new Constitution, complete equality between the sexes is proclaimed. The law recognises the same electoral rights for all citizens above the age of twenty-three; any Spaniard is eligible, without exception, to all public offices; the family is in the

safe-keeping of the State. Marriage is based on equality of rights between the sexes; it can be dissolved by mutual consent or on the demand of one of the parties, in which case reasonable cause must be given. Parents are bound to nourish, bring up and teach their children. The State will assist in the accomplishment of these duties. Parents have the same rights towards children born out of wedlock as they have towards their legitimate children. The birth of a child shall not be qualified as legitimate or illegitimate and the civil status of the parents shall not be mentioned in any documents concerning the child.

Disarmament Committee of Women's International Organisations. The Committee has held many meetings to discuss the three specially important questions now before it: a joint Memorandum to be presented to the League of Nations with regard to what special steps can be taken to secure the collaboration of women in the work of the Disarmament Conference in accordance with the now well-known Spanish Resolution. It may be remembered that the Council decided that action on this Resolution should be divided into two parts, first collaboration with the Disarmament Conference, suggestions for which must be formulated by January 1st, and secondly general collaboration—a matter which is now receiving the attention of the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations, as the Memorandum has only to be sent in by next July. Drafts for the Disarmament Memorandum are under consideration and it is hoped to reach an agreed draft within the time allowed.

The Second matter is Finance, and the Committee is considering several schemes to make it possible even in these difficult times to collect funds sufficient to carry out the very important work which the Committee desires to do, not only the heavy office work, but also a method of keeping contact with women in the different countries by means of an Advisory Council in Geneva during the Conference itself, and a publicity service to reach even the smallest local women's papers and bulletins.

The third piece of work is consideration of an effective and dignified method of presenting the petitions and declarations which have been circulated during the past two years, first of all by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and subsequently through many other organisations. These will bear

many millions of signatures from all countries and will represent an expression of public opinion, both of men and women, which ought to be taken into account. It has not yet been possible to fix a date nor to make any final plans. It is hoped, however, that the presentation may be made fairly early in the Conference and that it can be effected in such a way as to bring forcibly home to the delegates the force and universality of the support given to the petitions. In order to be ready when the final plans can be made, and to allow time for the heavy work of counting and grouping the petitions, all signed sheets should reach the office of the Women's Disarmament Committee, 2 rue Daniel Colladon, Geneva, by January 15th.

A Preliminary Conference for Disarmament took place in Paris at the end of November. Over 1000 delegates were present from 30 countries including many well known people representing 362 responsible associations. The idea of the Conference was to demonstrate the great body of public opinion throughout the world in support of the Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations to be held in Geneva in February.

A Woman Senator. For the first time in the history of the United States Congress a woman is actively serving as Senator. Appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of her husband, Mrs. Hattie Caraway took her seat among the 95 male members of the Upper House of the legislative body on December 8th. She will serve until January 12th, when the unexpired term will be filled by a special election, at which she will seek the distinction of being the first woman ever elected to the Senate.

Although Mrs. Caraway is the only woman in the Senate there are six women serving as members of the House of Representatives. Three of them, Florence P. Kahn, Edith Nourse Rogers and E. Wingo, were first elected to succeed their husbands, but were later elected to subsequent congresses in their own rights. The others, Mary T. Norton, Ruth Bryan Owen and Ruth Pratt, have been elected to each of their terms of office.

Ireland. The attack on the Married Woman Teacher has recommenced in Northern Ireland, and the first success has been scored by the Education Committee of the Belfast City Council. Hitherto under the Northern Ireland Education Act, resignation on marriage has not been compulsory, under the plea of economy, however, the City Council at its meeting on Dec. 1st, carried a resolution requiring women teachers to resign on marriage. The main arguments were two; the large number of young teachers unemployed and the injustice of allowing two members of a household to be "in gainful employment." It is obvious that too many young women are entering the teaching profession; unless Northern Ireland will follow the advice of Sir George Newman in his last report on the Health of the School Child.

‡ This authority urges more schools on open air lines, and in this way there could be more schools without a corresponding increasing expense. But it is easier to dismiss the married women "by replacing teachers with maximum salaries, by young teachers commencing with the lowest grades." "If a girl gets married all her attention should be devoted to her home and rearing her children"—"Just as if they were chickens." commented one listener, but then she was unmarried too. For the present nothing more can be done. The Ulster Teacher's Union has made every possible protest, and the married woman had better employ her leisure in taking cookery lessons at the Technical School.*

"Si vous voulez économiser cherchez la femme." The main industries in Northern Ireland are ship-building and agriculture, neither carried on in "Factories

and Workshops." Linen manufacture and the making up trades in normal times, occupy large numbers of women and girls. Very great improvements in the administration of the Factories and Workshops Acts, were effected by the women who held the post of Factory Inspector, only one woman being allowed in the service at a time. Now under the pressure of economy the post of Woman Factory Inspector has been abolished. There is a slight revival in the linen industry, and the need to reduce working costs wherever possible increases the temptation to disregard Factory regulations. A recent case of over-time work without payment of the legal wages is evidence of this. It remains to be seen if the present high standard of the administration of the Factory Acts can be maintained without the service of a woman.

In the Irish Free State, as elsewhere, work for Disarmament has been the main occupation of the Women's Societies. A committee, formed for the purpose, has had charge of collecting signatures for the Declaration and the work has been carried on with activity. Meetings have been organised by the Irish League of Nations Society in co-operation with various women's societies. Dr. Hilda Clarke addressed a well-attended meeting in Dublin on the question and a certain amount of press work has been done.

The agitation for provision of school meals is still carried on and the prevailing distress makes the need increasingly urgent. Irish education is based on one session day. This means that the principal meal of the day—when there is one—is left too late. For years doctors and women's societies have been trying to effect a change in the school hours so that the children may have some hot food during the school period. In the country this is at once more necessary and more difficult than in the towns. The children often come considerable distances and the older school buildings often have no provision for even the simplest cooking. Arrangements have been made in many places for cocoa, and it is hoped more will be done during the present winter. DORA MELLONE.

***Note by the French translator:**

It is interesting—on this question of marriage—to compare the position of women teachers in France and in Great Britain and Ireland.

In France, not only does the Government maintain at their post the married women teachers, but these are allowed generous leaves of absence for pregnancy and confinement. On the other hand, there are no unemployed unmarried women teachers, as in this country. As Dora Mellone points out, everything depends on the method of recruiting the teachers.

In England and Northern Ireland there are several varied types of women's training colleges. Many students are scholars, but there are also a good many who pay for their board and tuition. So that a college is a commercial venture, whose funds go up and down according to the number of students. These generally leave with their degree, but without a definite promise of employment.

In France the position is quite different. All the training colleges are State institutions, and all provide board and tuition to their students free of charge. They are admitted after a competitive exam., when only a definite number of students are taken—and this number generally coincides in each "département" with the number of vacant posts in the teaching profession—for the year. The result is that the standard is high and unemployment is unknown.

Besides, there is only one Union of Teachers for men and women alike, for the defence of corporate interests. It frequently happens that men and women teachers inter-marry, so their interests are identical; their salaries are on the same scale also.

DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.

(The Appeal printed below is issued by the Disarmament Committee of the Women's International Organisations. In addition, the National Branches of each constituent society are being asked to organise in their own countries a "currency unit drive.—ED.)

The object of this letter is to gain your co-operation for the greatest collective effort that women have ever undertaken. In spite of the popular allegation that women do not know how to work together, actually the largest women's international organisations, which represent over forty million women and cover every organised sphere of women's activity in all parts of the globe, have joined forces and created the "Disarmament Committee of the Women's International Organisations." The committee is continually increasing in strength and numbers. The present list of member organisations has grown from an original eight,—and other memberships are pending.

The Disarmament Conference is expected to be the greatest event in modern history and will open in Geneva on the 2nd of February, 1932. Again and again, the statesmen of the world have declared that the success of the Conference will depend upon an aroused and informed public opinion, provided with a means of clear and vigorous expression. Women have answered that appeal by creating the Women's Disarmament Committee whose object is to stimulate and concentrate efforts in every country, so that everyone may take a full share in this task.

The Women's Disarmament Committee in Geneva is really the centre of an international network of communication. National disarmament committees will receive and transmit news and suggestions, awaken local public opinion and bring prompt influence to bear in their respective countries. The International Disarmament Committee will function, as a connecting link between these National Committees, throughout the world, and the Disarmament Conference.

PROGRAMME OF THE WOMEN'S DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE.

The Disarmament Committee's plan of action includes a varied and intense programme:

Information. (1) The office of the Committee, which is in Geneva, must act as a clearing-house for information, ideas and suggestions for carrying out the work in different countries. It must have a capable, efficient, executive and clerical staff, as correspondence and documents must go out in several languages; letters and communications must be duplicated by thousands.

Service and Publicity. (2) An extensive publicity campaign by press, radio and public speakers is imperative. Means permitting, we shall probably publish a regular news sheet.

Presentation of Petitions. (3) One of the definite tasks that has been allotted to the Disarmament Committee of the Women's International Organisations is to organise an impressive presentation to the Conference, of the Petitions, bearing the many millions of signatures of men and women, the collection of which began over a year ago in all the countries of the world. If this expression of universal opinion is to carry its full weight, the ceremonies of the presentation must be not only dignified but dramatic and in real proportion to the importance of the work, so that the presentation will be recognised as a world event and be accorded a resounding publicity.

Advisory Council.

(4) From the date of the opening of the Disarmament Conference the efforts of the Disarmament Committee will be intensified. A council, composed of the ablest women from many countries will be brought together in Geneva to sit throughout the Conference in an advisory capacity. We must be able to help the women who will devote their time and work to the Advisory Council by participating in their travelling expenses to and from Geneva and in their living expenses during their stay here. This council will closely follow the deliberations and progress of the Disarmament Conference. Upon its recommendations, the Disarmament Committee will send out information and—as developments arise—calls for special action to the member organisations. Regular news bulletins will be issued to the World Press. Furthermore, the fact that the Assembly of the League of Nations has asked the Council of the League "to examine the possibility of increasing the collaboration of women with the work of the League" makes us hope that the opinions and recommendations of the women's organisations may be given serious consideration. Unanimous approbation of the plan of such a council has been expressed by competent and authoritative sources, who have declared that the psychological effect of such an unprecedented expression of independent public opinion could not fail to have real influence and carry incalculable weight.

Co-operation with other Groups.

(5) Further, with the object of obtaining a comprehensive and universal general expression of public opinion, the Women's Disarmament Committee is also in touch with other groups interested in disarmament, such as the Christian International Organisations, the Student International Organisations, the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, etc., in view of co-ordinating effort and undertaking common and united action as the necessities for same arise. We shall need public speakers, halls and advertising, to hold joint conferences with other groups. Such combined action would go far towards achieving a general mobilisation of public opinion and furnishing it with an organised amplified and effective means for its expression.

Disarmament Exhibition.

(6) The possibility of an exhibition is also under consideration by the Disarmament Committee. Such an exhibition would bring within the understanding of even the simplest folk the entire and complicated question of disarmament, which, hitherto, has been beyond their grasp owing to the magnitude and incomprehensibility of the figures involved. This exhibition might be demonstrated in a popular and interesting manner by striking visualisation of armament and war statistics, the astronomical proportions and magnitude of which go beyond the comprehension of all but a very few mathematicians and experts.

The millions of Petitions, classified according to their respective countries, after their presentation to the Disarmament Conference, could be used as a background to the exhibition.

The exhibition could consist of five main sections and be composed of pictorial statistics, photographs, texts, plastic models and posters. All this material would be up to date and in accordance with the latest verified statistics. Each section would speak for itself and would need no explanation.

1. History: Wars and peace treaties, alliances and the League of Nations.
2. Economic and social foundations of war and disarmament problems.
3. War problems of the present time. Social, political and economic disarmament.

4. The 4th section should give a history and records of what has already been accomplished for peace by individuals and organisations throughout the entire world. It would be a practical demonstration of effective action of individuals and organisations, who could, probably, co-operate by having stands of their own.
5. A special section to awaken children's interest.

The task of arranging this exhibition is not so great as it would appear. Some of the material already exists and only needs to be collected, completed, classified and arranged here in Geneva. *The estimated cost of the Exhibition is between \$30,000 and \$50,000.*

Educational value. Apart from its utility in arousing public opinion, this exhibition would have a very definite, educational value and, perhaps, be useful to the delegates themselves, enabling them to get a clear picture of the grave questions upon which they will be called to take decisions of the utmost importance to the world.

After serving its purpose in Geneva, the Disarmament Exhibition might become a permanent educational institution, and carry on disarmament propaganda by travelling from country to country.

Thousands of people, after seeing the relief Tariff Map, which was exhibited on the Quai du Mont-Blanc in Geneva during the Economic Conference, got, for the first time, a clear picture of the competition in tariffs. The Disarmament Exhibition would, to a very much greater extent, render a similar service.

The exhibition hall could also be used as a centre for gatherings. Films, bearing on disarmament, could be shown there. The possibilities of the usefulness of this exhibition would, undoubtedly, surpass our expectations.

Formulated as briefly as possible, the foregoing is the projected programme of the Women's Disarmament Committee, for which we are in urgent need of funds.

Opportunity for Active Co-Operation and Financial Participation. The work before us is enormous, and its efficiency will be in proportion to the financial means that we can obtain to carry it out. At first sight, one would say that, with more than forty million women represented by this committee, there should be no difficulty in collecting directly from them sufficient financial support to carry out these plans. But, the truth is that, while there is no question of the immense potential influence which women can bring to bear through the public opinion they create, their great handicap always consists in the fact that the majority of women in these organisations are not financially independent and, thus, are unable to furnish promptly the funds necessary to give telling effect to their efforts.

Seeing the wonderful work that women do, however, it is hard to realise with what restricted means these great organisations have to contend. Only five of our organisations were able to guarantee an initial fund with which to start the Disarmament Committee. But, in spite of the financial handicap mentioned, we are doing our best to help ourselves, and each organisation is making an appeal for funds for this disarmament work. However, as everyone knows, the collection of a small contribution from vast numbers of individuals is always a long, cumbersome and exceedingly costly proceeding. When the expenses of such a campaign are deducted, the total balance is sometimes entirely out of proportion to the effort involved.

Even with the ridiculously small sum with which we have had to begin, it is astounding how much good work has already been accomplished. However, we have reached the point where we clearly realise the

great possibilities before us, which we cannot execute without substantial financial assistance. We are appealing to you, therefore, at this moment, for help to carry on our work.

Estimated Budget. Apart from the Exhibition, the minimum tentative budget of the estimated cost of the ten months programme set forth in this Appeal is \$75,000. In view of the extent and variety of our plans, this sum may seem unconvincingly small and modest.

No provision has been made for unforeseen and vital necessities, which are sure to arise out of the daily developments of the Disarmament Conference. These are almost certain to assume vast proportions impossible to estimate and to entail widespread activity. It is thus essential that we should have in reserve, at our immediate disposal, funds which can be used for such purposes, otherwise a serious handicap will be placed upon the efficiency of the Committee, which should certainly be in a position to turn to advantage every opportunity as it arises.

Philanthropists, who might, for the first time, be providing funds to be administered by women, and who have had no experience of the genius of women in obtaining the maximum of results with the minimum of means at their disposal, would certainly be astounded at the smallness of this budget in comparison with the results we expect to obtain. In their own organisations, women are accustomed to be careful. They are the proverbial enemies of useless expenditure and waste. The large amount of zealous, voluntary work rendered by women is also an important factor in their economic efficiency.

Urgency of initial fund. The crying need, which weighs most heavily on the Treasurer of the Women's Disarmament Committee, is an immediate, initial fund in hand to safeguard the office work. This would furnish the working means of placing our case before those who are able, and who undoubtedly would be glad to have the privilege of making this programme a successful reality. The first funds are always the most important contribution.

We feel no hesitancy or compunction in asking for the most generous assistance for this work that is of paramount importance to the whole world, and that touches every one of us directly. Certainly everything that is worth while in our whole civilisation is in danger! There is no exaggeration in our slogan: "Disarmament or Disaster!" Governments are spending this year alone *five thousand million dollars* for armaments! The success of the Disarmament campaign is dependent solely upon private resources and generosity. The matter is urgent!

Your contribution means that not only are you helping to make public opinion heard, but that you are taking advantage of the unique opportunity presented to participate directly and actively in this great work that will go on in Geneva during the Disarmament Conference. Could there be a better investment for the future of the world?

Address funds to:
TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT,
DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE OF THE WOMEN'S
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS,
2, RUE DANIEL-COLLADON, GENEVA,
SWITZERLAND.

Our Bankers are:
SOCIETE DE BANQUE SUISSE, 6, RUE DE LA
CORRATERIE, GENEVA.

Your private, local cheques can be cashed here. The Committee's cable address is "Disacom Geneva." It

would be a great help to receive a cable from you, telling us that we can count on your donation.

Faithfully:

MARY A. DINGMAN, *President.*
CLARA GUTHRIE D'ARCIS, *Treasurer.*

FEMINIST WORK IN AUSTRALIA.

This year during the month of September the Australian Federation of Women Voters (non-party) held its annual Board meeting in Sydney, when representatives were present from all States, Victoria appointing a proxy.

Realising the necessary sacrifice involved it was with a certain amount of trepidation that the call was sent forth to our women asking them to travel, in most cases, thousands of miles to reach Sydney.

It is in this Mother State of the Australian Commonwealth that the full force of the present social unrest in Australia is being felt, and this makes Sydney at one and the same time a centre of great interest and of grave concern. Nothing has moved people hitherto indifferent to national affairs so much as the present crisis, particularly as it affects the prospects of boys and girls who cannot find a pathway into active life to-day.

This stern fact is awakening the mothers of the Commonwealth into interest that will find expression in a better understanding of problems and their effect upon individual and national progress.

Both at Board Meetings and Public Conferences, a plea for a new Australia in which men and women shall be equal was made, and the need for a deeper national consciousness on the part of the Australian people was realised.

Great stress was laid on the fact that in the pending social changes women's place must be safeguarded.

Enlightening addresses were given at Conference Meetings by Colonel Bruxner, who outlined the new States movement; Mr. R. W. C. Mackay, M.A., LL.B., who addressed Conference on the question of the need for the revision of the Federal constitution. He considered that the problem should be approached not from ideas prevalent 30 years ago, but from changes that have taken place since the Australian Commonwealth Constitution was agreed to.

"A challenge to the present Parliamentary Voting System" was the subject of an address given by Mr. A. G. Huie—an outstanding authority on proportional representation and Elective Ministries.

Mr. W. G. McCreddie explained the Major Douglas Credit System and its relationship to currency.

Woman's place in the new Australia was dealt with from social-political-economic aspects by various speakers.

Mrs. Jessie Street, speaking in favour of the economic independence of the married woman, claimed that some way must be found for making the woman and mother who worked in the home economically independent. If no such independence was given to women it was quite possible, she considered, that the institution of marriage would be threatened.

Miss M. M. Simpson, Mrs. Edith Waterworth, J.P., and Mrs. Jamieson Williams, J.P., made a valuable contribution on the social-educational side of women's work, while Miss Preston Stanley, J.P., contributed a masterly address on "The Political Status of Women," in which she urged women to take more interest in the process of Government.

Australia, she said, had divorced herself from the rest of the world by her own folly. Since the war £412,000,000 had been borrowed of which £332,000,000 was new money—thus adding dangerously to the already heavy interest burden.

Primary industry was crippled by the tariffs and

Australia depended on her primary industries for new wealth brought into the country.

Resolutions were passed in support of

- (1) Disarmament by general treaty applying to all nations and in support of the Disarmament Signatures Petition being circularised throughout Australia.
- (2) The Revision of the Commonwealth Constitution.
- (3) Co-operative Government, State and Federal, by means of proportional Representation and an Elected Administration.
- (4) The study of currency and its relation to the present industrial and social unrest.

Social functions included a Civic Reception by the Lord Mayor of Sydney (Alderman Jackson) who extended a welcome to inter-state visitors.

In our endeavour to do a bit of national stock-taking we came to the conclusion that next to its problem of providing employment, the most important task confronting Australia is the revision of present government machinery and our financial system which was considered inadequate to carry us through the troubles which oppress the Commonwealth.

Australian women realise that relief in the present economic stress must eventually come through international action on a great human scale, but Australia must put her own house in order.

Following the Sydney meetings some of us travelled some six hundred miles further on to Brisbane where public conferences were again the order of the day.

This meant a total distance of some seven thousand odd miles of travel for the Western Australian representatives, including myself, and we held meetings in all the capital cities of the Commonwealth.

As a result of contact with our co-workers we feel we have become revitalised, and we are also fully aware that both national and international organisations are too valuable to Australia to allow of any weakening at this juncture, hence our determination to "carry on."
BESSIE M. RISCHBIETH.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

We have received further details of the election of the first woman, Mrs. Molamure, to the State Council of Ceylon. There were three other candidates, all men, and Mrs. Molamure succeeded in polling nearly two thirds of the votes recorded, and that in an electorate where the men outnumber the women by 2 to 1. The news of her election was received with jubilation and augurs well for the prospects of women candidates at the next General Election.

It is with great pleasure that we are able to announce that Frau Olga Rudel-Zeynek has been awarded the Honorary Gold Medal of the Austrian Republic in consideration of various services in the field of social welfare. That her international activities are also appreciated is shown by the fact that she was recently appointed Austrian representative on the Board of the International Migration Service. For many years this extremely busy woman has also been working on the Board for International Child Welfare.

Three women judges have recently been appointed to the Courts of Angora, Stamboul and Smyrna, thus bringing the number of Turkish women holding official positions in the administration of justice up to the total of nine in an astonishingly short time.

The second 'Grand Prix de Rome' for sculpture has been won by a woman, Miss Boulah. This is the third great victory that women have achieved in art this year as Milles, Desportes and Roget were the winners of the musical competition in Rome.

It is barely half a century ago since the first Danish woman doctor was qualified, and since then there have been many who have upheld the honour of this profession in Denmark so that women doctors are now held in as much esteem as their men colleagues. The first Danish woman doctor to make a reputation abroad is Dr. Johanne Christiansen, who, while she herself was taking a rest cure in Italy, conceived the idea of establishing a Danish health resort there.

With Danish and Italian capital a sanatorium and convalescent home was commenced last year in Maderno by Lago di Garda, and the first season proved very satisfactory.

The Dean and Chapter of Westminster have given permission for adding a memorial to Dame Millicent Fawcett to that of her husband, Henry Fawcett, which now stands in Westminster Abbey.

Miss Doris Stevens has been nominated to the American Institute of International Law. She is the first woman to be elected.

The State of San Paulo (Brazil) recently granted the right of women to serve on juries.

Mrs. K. Malherbe has been elected as the first woman Mayor of Pretoria (South Africa).

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance has just celebrated its twenty-first anniversary.

We learn from the General Press that an official decree will shortly be published in Paris to the effect that women engaged in trade are to be eligible for election to tribunals of commerce.

Following the admirable precedent which she established on a tour in Alsace last year, Mlle. Gourd during a recent tour of Conferences in the South of France made a collection for Alliance funds and has sent a contribution of 400 francs contributed by the groups of the Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes of Chambéry, St. Jean de Maurienne, Grenoble, St. Etienne, Châlon sur Saône, Mâcon and Lyon. We are very grateful to Mlle. Gourd and also to these suffrage groups which in the midst of the present difficulties have been so generous as to remember international needs.

We are pleased to learn that Miss Mary Pickford, M.P., has been appointed a delegate to the Special Committee on Indian Franchise set up after the Round Table Conference.

We learn from the General Press that the Constituent Assembly of Peru has a majority in favour of extending the franchise to women.

The British branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has collected 1,844,732 signatures to their Declaration in favour of Disarmament for presentation to the Disarmament Conference. The campaign will continue up to January 16th.

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THE HINDU LAW OF INHERITANCE.

The Hindu Law is a growth of centuries. It is based on the Shrutis and Smritis, the revealed and other Shastras, innumerable commentaries on these Shastras, the various customs and practices followed by different people, and last, but not least, on the rulings given by the British Courts of Justice.

The original Shastras can be approached only through the various commentaries written by a large number of learned Rishis at different times. These commentaries in relation to women's right of inheritance differ considerably in their verdict, and have given rise to separate schools followed in various parts of India. Of these, Dayabhag and Mitakshara are the two chief schools, Dayabhag being followed in Bengal, and Mitakshara in the rest of India. Mitakshara is again sub-divided into Bombay and Benares Schools, which differ from each other in many details. The long-standing customs and practices varying in different parts of India are given preference over any established school of law. Thus Hindu Law is a mass of intricate complications which defy all uniformity.

The rulings of the British Courts have further complicated matters, but they have crystallized and hardened that which was loose and flexible before. The rulings of these courts are binding, and Case Law, as it is called in legal language, supersedes all other forms of law.

The effect of these rulings has been very prejudicial to the interests of women. The British judges, when they first started their judiciary work, had to rely solely on the translations and interpretations of the texts as they were made by the Pandits who were engaged for that purpose. These Pandits interpreted as suited their own inclinations, and as at that time, laws concerning women were not very liberal in England, the partiality of the interpretation in favour of men did not strike the judges as anything unnatural or reprehensible. Compared to the Law of England, which till 1882 did not allow married women to possess any property, the Hindu Law was much more advanced. Naturally, therefore, the judges to whom the whole spirit of the Hindu Law was absolutely foreign and difficult to comprehend, could only see it in the light of their own experience, and in the light in which it was presented to them. Many cases to the point can be cited and are being cited as examples of the above statement, but it is not possible for me to quote them here.

The Hindu Law is a system which works primarily for the benefit of families, and takes cognisance of individuals only as constituents of families. It therefore aims at the preservation of property for the legitimate use of the members of the family rather than the enjoyment of it. It makes the property a constant factor which continues while the family members come and go. This system has worked satisfactorily for several centuries, but present-day conditions are entirely different to those of olden days, and the system is ill suited to them. Besides, certain abuses have crept in which have stultified it. A steady tendency towards the lowering of the status of women is the worst and the most serious evil which is greatly responsible for its disintegration.

A study of the History of the property rights of Hindu women under Hindu Law shows that they were never so low as they are to-day. Under the Law as it is practised to-day, the nature of a woman's ownership is of two kinds: absolute and limited. These will be dealt with by me as simply and briefly as possible, while at the same time I shall point out the disadvantages from which women suffer and the steady decline in their status.

All sons born into a Hindu family have an inherent

right in the family property, and are called co-parceners. Co-parceners are entitled to receive education and maintenance (in keeping with the status of the family) at the expense of the family property and are entitled to demand a partition of the family property whenever they like. Female children of the family are not considered co-parceners, but their maintenance and marriage expenses are necessary charges on the family property. According to some schools, an unmarried daughter is entitled to one-fourth part of the brother's property after the death of the father. It has been argued that she is allowed this share in lieu of maintenance and marriage expenses to which she is entitled. Even in those parts, therefore, where she is entitled to inherit a portion of her father's property, she is not considered a co-parcener. On account of this view, she loses in status, and foregoes all the privileges which necessarily go with co-parcenership. She has no legal right in the family property, and her education is left to the sweet will of her relations. Her maintenance is assured if she continues to live with the family and she is entitled to a dowry on marriage, but no amount or proportion is fixed for the dowry. It often happens that daughters of rich parents are given away in marriage with a dowry utterly inadequate to the status of the family. In many cases she loses her right to the fourth portion of her brother's share if no division takes place, and she has no right to claim a division.

Thus it happens that in most cases the daughters do not receive anything from their ancestral property except what is given as dowry at the time of marriage. In cases where the father is divided from the family, and is the sole owner of his property, dying intestate without male issue, the daughter inherits the property. But there exists a difference of opinion in the various schools as to the nature of her estate in that property.

As has been already said, the nature of woman's estate in her property is of two kinds: absolute and limited. The absolute ownership of women is called her Stridhan. Mitakshara included every kind of property a woman obtained through partition, inheritance, purchase, gift or finding, to be her Stridhan. But, unfortunately, this liberal interpretation of Stridhan is not accepted by all schools. The following is regarded by all schools as her absolute property, to be disposed of as best she likes without any restrictions:

- (1) All that she receives as gifts at the time of marriage and after from her parents or husband or anybody else.
- (2) All that she acquires through her own efforts.
- (3) All that she inherits from her mother's Stridhan.

With regard to (2), there are certain conditions in certain places. If in acquiring wealth the wife has used the husband's capital or in any other way made use of his belongings, the husband has a voice in the disposal of the property so acquired.

The property that a woman inherits from her father's home is also classed as her Stridhan by some. The Bombay School makes a great distinction between the women born in the family and those brought into the family by marriage, holding that all that the daughters of the family inherit becomes their Stridhan.

Regarding that part of women's right of inheritance arising out of her marital relationship, and which, according to the law current in India at present, is confined to limited ownership, there has been much controversy among learned jurists on this point. The most progressive maintain that by the fact of marriage a woman loses her rights in the family she is born into, but acquires them in the family she adopts by law. According to this view, the moment a woman marries, she becomes a co-parcener with her husband. The great jurist, Dalla, says: "Wealth is considered as common to the married pair." They become co-owners of the property. A proof of this is given in the fact that at the

time of partition she is given a share in the property of her deceased husband equal to that of each son. The late Babu Golap Chandra Lanka, a profound Oriental scholar and great jurist said: "She gets the share in virtue of the co-ownership she acquires from the moment of her marriage in her husband's property; by reason of her being the lawful wedded wife. It is erroneous to suppose that partition creates her right to get a share, for according to Mitakshara, partition does not create any right, but it proceeds upon the footing of pre-existing right." On the other hand, the other schools hold, and they are supported by Case Law, that a wife does not become a co-parcener with her husband, and the share to which she is entitled at the time of partition is given her in lieu of her maintenance charges. This view changes the situation entirely, and, as in the case of the daughter, so in the case of the wife, lowers her status considerably. She again has to forego all the privileges which are inseparable from co-parcenership, and is reduced to the position of a charge on the family entitled to maintenance alone.

While a son in virtue of his being a co-parcener with his father has the right to protect the family property by impeaching any transaction of his father, on the score of want of necessity and immorality, the wife who has the same interest in the property as the son, cannot do anything. The debts of the husband, contracted for whatever purpose, moral or immoral, are given preference over her claim of maintenance. And thus a bad and spendthrift husband can reduce his sonless wife to a state of penury, leaving her utterly destitute, and thus defeating the very object of this complicated and most elaborate Law. However, the fact remains that though she still gets a share equal to that of her sons at the time of partition, all she can rely upon is maintenance allowance, the amount of which depends on the sweet will of the family members or the courts of law. In cases where there is only one son, the question of partition does not arise at all. She stands the risk of being treated merely as a dependent of the family, which risk is sometimes too real, especially when the son is a step-son or an adopted son.

Her rights in the property of her husband, ancestral or otherwise—when she does inherit it in the case of partition or the absence of male issue—is always limited. She can neither sell it nor mortgage it, nor can she dispose of it otherwise. Only the income of the property can be used as she chooses in her lifetime. After her death, the property goes to the reversionary heirs, comprising no less than two hundred souls, starting from the nearest blood relations and extending to the most distant agnates who may never have seen the deceased owner of the property. This fact of limited ownership gives rise to many abuses and much litigation. A married woman under the present circumstances stands a better chance of inheritance when the family is divided than when it is joint. There are many other complications, intricacies, differences of opinion and practice, which provide exceptions to all rules. But I have tried to give that version of the laws which is most widely followed and generally accepted.

A change in the present Law, making their status absolutely equal with that of men, is urgently demanded by the Hindu women. . . .

MRS. BRIJLAL NEHRU, Stri Dharma.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN BURMA.

(Reprinted by kind permission of the "Birmingham Post").

The women of Burma have an entirely different status from that of the women of other Oriental countries. They are, in every case, the business heads of

the family. The man may work in his paddy-fields or drive his bullock-carts, but it is the women who arrange for the sale of the rice or for the transport contracts.

The Burmese are Mongolian in origin and, it is thought, entered Burma from the direction of Tibet and forced their way southwards down the Irrawaddi, driving the inhabitants into the jungle. They brought their religion, Buddhism, with them, and the course of their advance is marked by innumerable pagodas along the river valley stretching from Manipur to the famous Golden Pagoda in Rangoon. The tribes they displaced live an isolated life in the jungle, hardly touched by civilisation; and to this day the custom of tattooing the faces of the young girls black has survived from the time when they were in constant fear of raids by Burmese slavers. From the fourteenth century until the middle of the last century the Burmese Empire prospered. Its administrative centre was at Mandalay, where the royal family built one of the most magnificent palaces of the East.

The *Poongyis*, or priests, were held in the highest esteem, and built monasteries in every village and town. At these monasteries the children of rich and poor alike were educated. They were taught to read and write, and, while the boys left at the age of seven or eight, the girls usually continued to study until they were married.

... She comes to maturity young, as do all Orientals, and is usually married before the age of fifteen. It is not unusual to find a grandmother of thirty or thirty-one. As soon as she is married she takes over the complete control of her husband's business, as well as attending to her family duties. If two Burmese are making a contract, they will invariably arrange that it is not to be signed until the following day, and in the meantime will place the full details before their wives, and without their approval the contract will not be confirmed.

A good example of the business ability of the Burmese women is to be found in the arrangements which they make for the livelihood of their children. At the birth of a child the father has to make the mother a present of land or cattle, which she administers until the child has reached the age of twelve. She is responsible for the cultivation of the land and for the care of the animals, and she is considered to have failed if the value of the birthday gift has not been increased five times at the end of the twelve years.

The Buddhist religion has had undoubtedly a large influence on the character of the Burmese, especially upon the women, since they spend longer under the care of the *poongyis*. Buddhism above all else teaches contentment to its followers. They are urged to control their emotions and to lead a peaceful life in which envy and hate find no place, with the result that the Burmese are one of the kindest and happiest peoples in the world. The prisons in Burma are largely filled by aliens, and there are only very occasional major crimes committed by the Burmese; these usually take the form of "crimes passionelles." Dacoity is now uncommon and much more likely to be committed by one of the pagan tribes than by the followers of Buddha. Their religion seems admirably adapted to their natural temperament, and Christianity has been able to make little headway, except amongst the jungle tribes.

The final overthrow of the Burmese kings in 1870 by the British has had little effect upon the methods of education outside the two big towns of Rangoon and Mandalay, so that even amongst the villagers it is an exception to find anyone who cannot read and write, but, whereas the priests were the true holders of power in the country, they have now found that this position has been taken from them by the British, and the recent troubles in Burma can be traced to their attempts to regain their former position.

SECTION FRANCAISE.

PAIX ENTRE LES HOMMES DE BONNE VOLONTE.

Comme nous souhaiterions allègrement la Bienvenue à cette nouvelle année si nous pouvions nous décider à pratiquer effectivement le message du Christ: Paix sur la terre, aux hommes de Bonne Volonté. Car les difficultés de l'heure sont dans leur essence spirituelles, et c'est l'obscurité de l'esprit qui cause notre dépression économique.

La Nature est plus que jamais prodigue de ses dons: on jette ou on brûle le blé, le café, le sucre. L'homme offre ses forces, en abondance; et partout il se trouve sans emploi. L'invention et l'activité de l'esprit ne connaissant pas de limites: et tous les ans des milliers de jeunes gens quittent nos écoles et nos universités pour découvrir qu'il n'y a pas de place pour eux dans ce monde si mal organisé par leurs parents. L'or ne manque pas, puisque tous les ans l'Afrique ajoute de nouveaux millions aux ressources monétaires du monde.

Le seul facteur qui n'existe pas est la bonne volonté. Et parce qu'elle est absente, nous assistons à la paralysie graduelle de tout commerce, de toute industrie. Et la richesse, que le libre échange entre les nations assurait au siècle dernier voit sa source tarir. Les banques, les usines se ferment. Les bateaux, les trains se vident, chaque pays élève une muraille autour de soi, et le mécanisme des changes est un chaos. Des Conférences se réunissent et se dissolvent. Des moratoires sont accordés et arrivent à leur terme. La confiance meurt, et la crainte seule reste pour nous diriger.

Le remède est simple et manifeste. Mais aucun de nos gouvernements démocratiques n'ose prendre l'initiative. Supprimons les dettes, remettons les réparations, réduisons les armements et la prospérité suivra la confiance renaissante.

Les femmes qui sont tout récemment arrivées à la vie politique ont une vision plus claire des nécessités de l'avenir que ceux rivés au passé par des préjugés ou des traditions.

Ne peuvent-elles aider dans cette crise? Noël est une fête de Naissance. C'est la fête de la Mère et de l'Enfant — Travaillons-nous pour apporter au monde le message de Noël? Paix sur la terre aux hommes de Bonne Volonté, ou resterons nous inertes, et responsables devant nos enfants de la dégradation du monde?

Que 1932 apporte au mouvement féministe la paix et le bonheur, récompense de ceux qui connaissent la fraternité dans l'effort.

d'après MARGERY CORBETT ASHBY.

LE SUFFRAGE DES FEMMES EN ESPAGNE.

Les femmes espagnoles sont désormais électeurs et éligibles au même titre que les hommes, d'après la nouvelle Constitution. Une tentative pour ajourner leur affranchissement de cinq années a été repoussée par l'influence du vote socialiste à une majorité de trois voix. Ce fut avec un soupir de soulagement que les visiteuses de la Galerie, à la Chambre des députés, apprirent le vote favorable.

L'Association nationale des Femmes espagnoles organisa une manifestation de reconnaissance envers la République, le 15 novembre. La Présidente fit un discours ainsi que Senorita Campoamor qui fut l'objet d'une ovation. Le Ministre de la Justice, M. Fernando de los Rios, répondit au nom du Gouvernement.

La complète égalité des sexes est proclamée par la Nouvelle Constitution. Les droits électoraux sont les mêmes pour tous les citoyens âgés de vingt-trois ans. Tout Espagnol est éligible, sans exception, aux fonctions publiques. La famille est protégée par

l'Etat. Le mariage est basé sur l'égalité des droits entre les sexes. Il peut être dissous par consentement mutuel ou sur la demande d'une des parties, à condition qu'il y ait une raison reconnue valable. Les parents sont tenus de nourrir, élever et éduquer leurs enfants. L'Etat doit les aider dans l'accomplissement de ces devoirs. Les parents ont les mêmes droits et devoirs envers les enfants nés hors du mariage qu'envers les enfants légitimes. Le mot "légitime" ou son contraire, du reste, ne doit plus figurer sur l'acte de naissance et il ne sera pas fait mention de l'état civil des parents dans aucun document qui concerne l'enfant.

L'EFFORT FÉMINISTE EN AUSTRALIE.

Cette année au mois de septembre, la Fédération australienne des Femmes Électeurs a tenu son Board meeting à Sydney; tous les Etats étaient représentés, en dépit du sacrifice énorme qu'un voyage de plusieurs centaines de milles représentait pour certaines déléguées. Sydney est à présent le centre des troubles du Commonwealth et c'est avec une certaine trépidation que le Comité aborda l'étude des questions urgentes; tout le monde voit l'avenir sous de sombres couleurs et pense avec peine aux jeunes gens, aux jeunes filles dont le désir d'activité, et de travail est complètement frustré par la situation financière actuelle. Notre grande préoccupation est de maintenir les droits à l'égalité déjà acquis par les femmes.

Des discours instructifs furent prononcés, notamment sur le sujet du nouveau Mouvement dans les Etats par Col. Bruxner. Mr. A. G. Hule réclama la représentation proportionnelle et Mr. W. G. Mc-Creadie expliqua le Major Douglas Système de crédit et son rapport avec la circulation du numéraire.

Plusieurs orateurs marquèrent la place de la femme dans l'Australie d'aujourd'hui. Mrs. Jessie Street en particulier, se fit l'avocate de l'indépendance économique de la femme mariée. Miss Preston Stanley, J.P. fit un discours sur le statut politique de la femme où elle nous adjura de prendre une part plus active dans les affaires du Gouvernement. La misère de l'Australie, dit-elle, est le résultat de sa propre folie. Par des emprunts incessants le Gouvernement accumulait des échecs auxquelles il fallait faire face. Les droits protecteurs ruinent les industries essentielles et naturelles au pays qui jusqu'ici avaient fait sa richesse.

Les résolutions de la Conférence proposèrent:

- (1) le Désarmement général.
- (2) la Révision de la Constitution du Commonwealth.
- (3) un gouvernement coopératif national et fédéral par une représentation proportionnelle et des corps administratifs élus.
- (4) l'étude des questions de monnaie, de crédit et leurs rapports avec les désordres sociaux actuels.

Les femmes australiennes se rendent compte que le malaise économique étant universel, le remède doit avoir une portée internationale. Mais il faut que d'abord l'Australie mette de l'ordre dans sa propre maison.

Après cette Conférence à Sydney quelques déléguées entreprirent un voyage de plusieurs milles jusqu'à Brisbane où elles tinrent d'autres réunions similaires. Toutes les capitales du Commonwealth organisèrent des réunions sur les mêmes sujets. Le résultat des contacts ainsi réalisés est un renouveau de vitalité et nous sommes persuadées en Australie qu'il est à cette heure absolument essentiel de continuer notre effort féministe national et international; si nous ne voulons pas nous abandonner au défaitisme, il faut "continuer." d'après BESSIE M. RISCHBIETH.

IRLANDE.

Les attaques contre l'institutrice mariée viennent de recommencer dans l'Irlande du Nord et la Commission

d'Education pour la municipalité de Belfast vient de remporter son premier succès. Jusqu'ici la démission après mariage n'était pas obligatoire, mais, sous prétexte d'économie, elle l'est désormais. On a fait valoir surtout deux arguments: l'un que nombre de jeunes institutrices célibataires sont sans poste; l'autre, qu'il est injuste d'autoriser deux membres de la même famille de cumuler salaires ou traitements.

Le recrutement désordonné des institutrices est responsable de ce chômage forcé. L'hygiéniste Docteur Sir George Newman recommande l'extension des écoles de plein air qui ne coûteraient presque rien et absorberaient nombre des maîtresses sans emploi.

Mais l'administration préfère supprimer les institutrices mariées dont le salaire suit forcément l'échelle d'augmentation, et employer des jeunes filles au traitement le plus bas.*

Si vous voulez économiser, cherchez la femme. Depuis qu'une femme Inspecteur avait été admise à l'administration de la Loi sur les Usines et Ateliers de nombreuses améliorations avaient été introduites dans le Service.

Le tissage de la toile et la confection occupent dans l'Irlande du Nord un très grand nombre d'ouvrières d'où la nécessité du poste. Maintenant, par mesure d'économie il n'y a plus d'Inspectrice. Pourtant, la renaissance d'activité du tissage a donné lieu récemment à de certaines infractions à la loi — des ouvrières étant obligées à des heures supplémentaires irrégulièrement payées — et l'on se demande si l'absence d'une Inspectrice ne continuera pas à favoriser de telles infractions.

Dans l'Etat libre d'Irlande, la détresse d'une partie de la population a attiré l'attention sur la nécessité d'assurer un repas aux enfants des Ecoles. La journée scolaire, contrairement aux habitudes d'autres pays, n'a qu'une session. Cela signifie que le principal repas, quand il existe, ne vient qu'assez tard. Depuis des années des médecins, et des sociétés féministes ont représenté combien il serait préférable de modifier les heures de classe de façon qu'on pût servir aux enfants, du lait chaud ou du chocolat à certain intervalle. La chose est pratiquée dans quelques écoles, mais est particulièrement difficile dans les écoles de campagne où il n'existe aucun matériel culinaire.

Dans l'Etat libre d'Irlande la propagande pour le désarmement a eu l'appui de toutes les sociétés féministes. Un comité a réuni les signatures pour la Déclaration et Dr. Hilda Clarke a parlé sur le sujet dans une réunion à Dublin, où l'assistance était nombreuse.

d'après DORA MELLONE.

*Note de la traduction.

A propos du mariage, il est intéressant de comparer la situation des institutrices en France et au Royaume Uni. Le grand argument de ceux qui s'opposent au maintien des institutrices mariées est que celles-ci occupent des postes qu'il serait plus équitable de donner à des célibataires sans emploi. Or, en France non seulement les institutrices mariées sont maintenues à leur poste, mais l'Etat leur accorde d'assez généreux congés d'accouchement. D'autre part, il n'y a pas d'institutrices célibataires, sans emploi. Comme l'indique Dora Mellone tout dépend de la méthode de recrutement. En Angleterre et en Irlande les Ecoles normales ont des formes extrêmement diverses: bon nombre de leurs élèves sont boursières, mais bon nombre aussi payent des frais d'étude et de pension. De sorte qu'au point de vue commercial il est intéressant pour un collège de recruter autant d'élèves que possible, sans se préoccuper si celles-ci seront plus tard pourvues d'un emploi.

En France le régime des Ecoles Normales d'Etat est universellement admis. Toutes sont des pensionnats, dont les élèves, boursières, sont reçues au concours. Le nombre des boursières acceptées chaque année dépend du nombre des postes d'institutrices vacants dans chaque département. Celui-ci règle celui-là. Le résultat est, que dans l'enseignement le chômage est inexistant. Enfin, il n'y a qu'un seul Syndicat de défense des Intérêts corporatifs pour les Instituteurs hommes et femmes. L'Instituteur d'une localité est généralement marié avec l'Institutrice et leurs intérêts coïncident. Le fait qu'en Grande Bretagne il existe une opposition violente au maintien des Instituteurs mariés est toujours un sujet d'étonnement dans l'enseignement français.

POSITION DES FEMMES EN BIRMANIE ANGLAISE.

Les femmes birmanes ont dans la société une position de responsabilité et d'indépendance qui forme un frappant contraste avec la situation des autres Orientales. Pendant que l'homme travaille aux champs ou conduit ses bœufs, c'est la femme qui arrange les contrats de transport et la vente du riz et autres céréales.

Les Birmanes sont d'origine mongole. Venues du Thibet ils forcèrent leur chemin le long de la vallée de l'Irawaddy, refoulant les indigènes dans la Jungle. Ils apportèrent avec eux leurs croyances bouddhiques, ainsi qu'en témoignent les innombrables pagodes qui jalonnent le fleuve de Manipur à la Pagode dorée de Rangoon. Les tribus ainsi déplacées demeurèrent dans la jungle, à peine touchées par la civilisation, et jusqu'à nos jours a survécu la coutume indigène de tatouer en noir le visage des jeunes filles, par crainte des razzias des trafiquants d'esclaves. Depuis le 14ème siècle jusqu'au milieu du siècle dernier l'Empire Birman fut prospère. Sa capitale administrative était Mandalay où la famille royale bâtit un des palais les plus magnifiques de l'Orient.

Les Poongys ou prêtres étaient vénérés et ils bâtirent des monastères où ils firent l'éducation des enfants, riches, ou pauvres, indistinctement. Les garçons quittaient l'école après avoir appris à lire ou écrire, vers sept ou huit ans, mais les filles continuaient souvent à étudier jusqu'à leur mariage.

La Birmane d'aujourd'hui est une des plus aimables Orientales. Elle a la peau claire quoique légèrement cuivrée, les cheveux noirs enroulés sur le sommet de la tête. Elle porte encore le costume national composée d'une jupe de soie flottante avec une blouse à longues manches. Elle accomplit ponctuellement, six fois par jour, le rituel des ablutions, de la tête aux pieds, et s'oingt le corps, ensuite, d'huile de coco. Ses traits sont menus mais bien définis et l'habitude des fardeaux sur le sommet de la tête lui donne un port droit et majestueux. Le ton de sa voix est peut-être sur le mode aigu, mais elle est réputée de bonne humeur et toujours prête à sourire.

La Birmane est en général mariée à quinze ans. Ce n'est pas une chose extraordinaire qu'une grand mère de trente à trente et un ans. Dès qu'elle est mariée, elle contrôle non seulement le travail domestique, mais les affaires de son mari. Un Birman ne signera jamais un contrat sans en parler à sa femme.

L'entretien et l'avenir de ses enfants est une grande préoccupation pour la femme Birmane. A la naissance d'un enfant le père fait à la mère cadeau d'une terre ou de quelque bétail, et la mère administre ce bien jusqu'à ce que l'enfant ait atteint l'âge de douze ans. Elle met son point d'honneur, selon la tradition, à quintupler pour le moins, la valeur de ce cadeau d'anniversaire.

La religion bouddhiste exerce sans aucun doute une

forte influence sur le caractère des Birmans, en particulier sur les femmes, car elles demeurent plus longtemps que les hommes sous la tutelle des "poongys." Par dessus toute chose, la religion leur enseigne la sérénité et le contentement de soi. Les Birmans sont l'un des peuples les meilleurs et les plus heureux de la terre. La clientèle des prisons est surtout faite d'étrangers; il n'y a guère que des "crimes passionnels" qui soient commis par des Birmans. Leur religion semble admirablement adaptée à leur tempérament et le christianisme a fait peu d'adeptes excepté chez les tribus païennes de la jungle.

La déposition des rois Birmans par les Anglais en 1870 et la domination anglaise qui s'ensuivit a eu peu d'effet sur les méthodes d'éducation, en dehors des deux grandes villes de Rangoon et de Mandalay. Même dans les villages les illettrés sont l'exception. Il n'est pas moins vrai que l'influence croissante des méthodes britanniques, rivalise de plus en plus avec la traditionnelle autorité des prêtres. Les récents désordres en Birmanie n'ont pas d'autre cause que l'effort fait par eux pour essayer de regagner la position qu'ils occupaient jadis.

d'après le *Birmingham Post*.

NOUVELLES BRÈVES.

L'élection de Mrs. Molamure au Conseil de l'Etat de Ceylan, que Jus Suffragi a enregistré le mois dernier a été un succès sans précédent. Mrs. Molamure recueillit les voix de 2/3 des votants—le nombre des électeurs hommes étant le double de celui des femmes.

C'est avec grand plaisir que nous félicitons Frau Olga Rudel Zeyneck pour sa nouvelle décoration—la Médaille d'or honoraire de la République autrichienne—appréciation des services rendus par elle à la cause de l'Assistance publique infantine. Frau Zeyneck a été récemment nommée à la Commission internationale de migration et elle a été pendant plusieurs années membre de la Commission internationale pour l'Amélioration du sort de l'Enfance.

Le deuxième Grand Prix de Rome a été décerné pour la sculpture à une femme, Melle. Boulah. C'est une troisième victoire féminine cette année pour l'art, Mesdemoiselles Desportes et Roget ayant déjà été lauréates pour la musique à Rome.

Trois autres femmes viennent d'être nommées Juges, respectivement aux Cours d'Angora, de Stamboul et de Smyrne. Le nombre des femmes turques dans l'administration de la Justice a été ainsi porté à neuf dans un laps de temps très court.

Il y a à peine un demi-siècle que la première femme Danoise prenait son titre de Docteur et voilà maintenant qu'en Italie, un sanatorium dont le projet et le capital sont exclusivement danois vient d'être organisé à Maderno sur le Lac de Garde par la doctoresse Jeanne Christiansen. Celle-ci ayant elle-même profité d'une cure en Italie, eut l'idée du sanatorium et la première année d'exercice a été couronnée de succès.

Nous sommes heureux d'apprendre la nomination de Miss Pickford, M.P., comme déléguée au Comité Spécial sur la Réforme électorale de l'Inde. D'autre part Sir John Simon, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Grande Bretagne, autorise à annoncer que Mrs. Corbett Ashby, notre Présidente, a été invitée par le Premier Ministre, à servir comme déléguée suppléante, dans la Délégation du Royaume Uni à la Conférence du Désarmement.

Mrs. K. Malherbe a été élue maire de Prétoria (Afrique australe).

Miss Wan Kwei Fen, une féministe chinoise a été nommée à un poste dans l'Aviation chinoise.

Pour la première fois dans l'histoire des Provinces Unies de l'Inde, une femme a occupé le fauteuil présidentiel d'une Commission.

Dame Millicent Fawcett aura bientôt sa pierre commémorative dans l'abbaye de Westminster à côté de celle de son mari Henry Fawcett.

Miss Doris Stevens est la première femme nommée membre de l'Institut américain de droit international.

L'Etat de Sao Paulo (Brésil) a récemment accordé aux femmes le droit de servir aux jurys.

Mrs. Hattie Caraway a pris sa place parmi les 95 membres mâles du Sénat américain où elle remplace son mari jusqu'à sa nouvelle réélection, le 12 janvier prochain.

COMITE D'ENTENTE DES GRANDES ASSOCIATIONS INTERNATIONALES.

Resolution.

Relative au Champ d'Action du Comité d'Entente.

Les délégués des Grandes Associations internationales, réunis dans leur Comité d'Entente, en réunion plénière, le 19 novembre 1931, ont rendu compte des Congrès et Conférences tenus depuis quelques mois par leurs organisations respectives.

A cette occasion ils ont constaté que tous ces Congrès et Conférences avaient été fortement préoccupés par les grandes questions de l'heure présente.

Ils en ont tiré cette conclusion unanime qu'il serait pratiquement impossible de séparer de façon absolue les divers aspects de la crise économique, politique et morale qui agite actuellement le monde. Le Comité d'Entente ne saurait donc, sous peine de faire œuvre vaine, limiter son attention aux problèmes éducatifs au sens étroit de ce mot.

Dès son origine, d'ailleurs, le Comité d'Entente, en recevant parmi ses membres des Associations internationales particulièrement tournées vers les adultes, avait déjà indiqué cette tendance.

L'éducation ne saurait s'arrêter à la sortie de l'école: les idées qui sont la raison d'être du Comité d'Entente des Grandes Associations internationales, et dont dépend l'avenir de la paix, peuvent se développer seulement dans une certaine atmosphère morale, que les écrivains, les journalistes, les hommes d'Etat contribuent à former autant que les éducateurs proprement dits.

Désireux d'affirmer aujourd'hui plus nettement que jamais ces préoccupations et de ne négliger aucune forme d'action favorable au rapprochement des peuples, le Comité d'Entente décide de faire sien le texte suivant adopté, sur la proposition de MM. Murray et Painlevé, par la Commission internationale de Coopération intellectuelle, dans sa session du 25 juillet 1931:

"La Commission internationale de Coopération intellectuelle,

"Considérant que le fardeau des charges militaires qui pèsent sur les nations rend particulièrement difficile le recrutement, les études et la formation des élites intellectuelles et entrave ainsi le progrès intellectuel de l'humanité;

"Considérant, d'autre part, que la Commission a accepté et qu'elle remplit le devoir d'enseigner à la jeunesse les principes de la Société des Nations, de la paix et de la coopération internationale;

"Que le développement de la Société des Nations est étroitement lié aux progrès du désarmement et des conventions internationales assurant la paix,

"Exprime le vœu ardent que la Conférence générale qui se réunira en février prochain aboutisse à une réduction sensible des armements du monde — terrestres, navals et aériens — dans des conditions qui donnent à la sécurité de chaque peuple des garanties internationales."

LA COMITE DU DESARMEMENT DES ORGANISATIONS FEMINISTES INTERNATIONALES.

Le Comité s'est réuni plusieurs fois pour examiner trois questions importantes: la première, celle du memorandum à présenter à la Société des Nations sur les mesures à prendre pour assurer la collaboration des femmes à la Conférence du Désarmement, d'après le formulaire bien connu de la Résolution espagnole.

La seconde question porte sur nos finances. Le Comité est en train d'examiner plusieurs projets afin de réunir, même en ces temps difficiles, des fonds suffisants pour lui permettre de continuer son travail; il voudrait organiser un Conseil Consultatif à Genève pendant que siègerait la Conférence et un service de publicité qui atteindrait tous les Bulletins ou journaux féminins.

La troisième partie du travail a pour objet la présentation solennelle des pétitions collationnées par la Ligue Internationale pour la Paix et la Liberté, et diverses autres sociétés. Ces pétitions porteront des millions de signatures; il faut les grouper, les classer; elles forment une manifestation imposante du désir de paix des hommes et femmes de toutes les nations et ne manqueront pas d'exercer leur influence sur les délégués qui les recevront. Aussi est-il de toute importance que ces pétitions soient adressées avant le 15 janvier au siège du Comité féminin pour le Désarmement, 2, rue Daniel Colladon, Genève.

Une Conférence préliminaire pour le Désarmement a eu lieu à Paris fin novembre. 1,000 délégués venant de 30 pays y assistaient. L'objet de cette Conférence était de montrer l'appui énorme que l'opinion publique se prépare à donner à la Conférence du Désarmement de la Société des Nations en Février 1932.

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