

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### Deputation to Home Secretary on Women Police.

On Monday, 7th December, the Home Secretary received a deputation, organized by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, to ask for Government support for the Municipal Corporations Amendment Bill. Miss Rathbone, who introduced the deputation, pointed out the extremely slow progress of the movement with respect to the appointment of women police and referred to the counteracting forces, sometimes too strong for local authorities, which often lead them against their better judgment to fail to introduce women police. Miss Wilkinson, referring to the present position of Watch Committees, pointed out that the Bill would give the Home Office the legislative backing which she had thought the Home Office would consider necessary, and asked that the Government should not put on their Whips against the Bill. Lady Astor and Lady Rhondda (the latter speaking on behalf of the Six Point Group, which had initiated the Bill) referred to the warm feeling in favour of women police among the women of the country. Commandant Allen advocated the appointment of a Woman Inspector of Constabulary at the Home Office. Miss Macadam, of the N.U.S.E.C., referred to the need for part of the training of women police being undertaken by women. Miss Gray, High Mistress of St. Paul's Girls' School, supported the Bill on behalf of the Headmistresses' Association. The Home Secretary, in his reply, said that he realized how widely representative the deputation was, and pointed out how he had always been in favour of women police and that his first act when he became Home Secretary had been to increase the number of women police in the Metropolis from 20 to 50. He added, "I have nothing but good to report of their work." In his opinion, however, the difficulty was that both the Baird and Bridgman Committees, which had recommended the appointment of women police, had also recommended that the matter should be left in the hands of local authorities. The way, therefore, to get women police is not by asking Parliament to dictate to local authorities, but for women voters to use their votes in the Municipal Elections. He stated that in the whole country there were 89 women police, which showed in the minds of local authorities a distinct objection to having them. He proposed to ask the Whips not to oppose the Bill, and hoped that it would be re-introduced again next session, when there might be an opportunity for a full discussion. He added, "If there is anything further I can do to facilitate the appointment of women police throughout the country I will do it," and promised to consider

the publication of any statement as to what should be the work of women police sent in by any woman's organization. A question at the end as to why the Home Secretary had not circularized local authorities with respect to their adoption of the Baird Report did not receive any satisfactory reply. The following organizations were represented: National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, Association of Headmistresses, Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, British Commonwealth League, British Federation of University Women, Federation of Working Girls' Clubs, Girls' Friendly Society, League of the Church Militant, London Society for Women's Service, National Free Church Women's Council, Liverpool Women's Police Patrols Committee, Matron's Council for Great Britain and Ireland, Six Point Group, Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Organization, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, Union of Jewish Women, Women's Auxiliary Service, Women's Freedom League, Women's Guild of Empire, Women's International League, Women's National Liberal Federation, Women Sanitary Inspectors' and Health Visitors' Association, Women's Unionist Association, Kensington Vigilance Society, Kensington and Paddington S.E.C., Reading S.E.C., City of London S.E.C.

#### Municipal Corporation Amendment Bill.

We congratulate Miss Ellen Wilkinson on the reception accorded to her five minutes' speech on this Bill, which passed without a division, no Member of Parliament speaking against it and no dissenting voice being raised during the vote. Clearly, if the Bill had been one with which there had been time to proceed this Session it would have aroused more opposition, but it has achieved its purpose, viz., to show that with regard to the question of the principle of Women Police, members of all parties are highly sympathetic. Both Miss Wilkinson herself, when she carried out the ceremony of presenting the Bill at the Bar, and the names of the backers were received with cheers. Among the latter were Lady Astor, Sir John Simon, Mrs. Philipson, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Sir Henry Slessor, Captain Wedgwood Benn, Sir Robert Newman, and Mr. H. A. L. Fisher. We hope that the suggestion made by the Home Secretary at the deputation of Women's Organizations will bear fruit and that many Members will ballot for a Bill somewhat different in form perhaps from Miss Wilkinson's but containing the same principle. Our readers will find elsewhere in this issue a short article from Miss Wilkinson herself, giving her reasons for the introduction of the Bill.

#### Misplaced Leniency by a Berkshire Bench.

A Berkshire correspondent informs us of the following facts: On 24th November, Henry Eckett, aged 21, of Sandhurst, was charged in the Wokingham Police Court with the indecent assault of two little girls. Dr. Manning, who had examined the victims reported that "considerable force" had been used on one of them. The defendant pleaded guilty, and the Bench, though they admitted that here was "a very serious charge," sentenced him to one month's imprisonment in view of his previous good character. We find it difficult to comment upon this verdict with moderation and restraint. In less than a month the women and children of Sandhurst will be once again at the mercy of this unbridled and probably mentally unstable young man. We offer our indignant condolences to the parents of the children who have been the victims of his lust—and to the people of Sandhurst whose personal security is in the keeping of so blind and degraded a magistracy.

#### One in Six.

Meanwhile the infusion of the magistracy with women justices proceeds apace. Out of a list of thirty new appointments to

the Commission of the Peace for the County Palatine of Lancashire, made on 1st December, we note the presence of five women: Miss Anne Peatfield of Hastingden, Miss Mary Fairclough and Miss Ann Hayes of Leigh, Mrs. Emma Sadler and Mrs. Ethel Yearsley of Widnes. We congratulate these ladies upon the burdensome and responsible office which has been thrust upon them, and we feel that their presence on the Bench will not be conducive to the administration of justice on the lines described above. But 5:30 is a ratio which in no way reflects the sex-composition of our population and the nature of its multitudinous social relationships. Five in thirty is not enough.

#### The Machinery of Government.

The publication of the Government scheme for Poor Law Reform has brought the twin problems of social insurance and public assistance into the foreground and the contest of those of opposing views has begun to earnest. On another page in this issue our Local Government Correspondent gives a summary of the proposals and in our leading article we discuss the Maclean Report, without some knowledge of which they cannot possibly be understood. The whole subject bristles with difficulties. In our recent articles we have attempted to lay the solid foundation of facts without which discussion is impossible, and we propose in forthcoming issues to deal with the projected changes from different angles of opinion.

#### Major Hills.

With all due regard to our non-party attitude we hasten to congratulate Major Hills and ourselves on his successful return to Parliament as Member for Ripon. Major Hills is a member of the Advisory Committee of this paper and, as our readers know, is a very welcome contributor to its columns. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship and has spoken at its Council Meetings. For some years he was one of the best friends of the cause for which we stand in the House of Commons, and his temporary absence meant a serious loss. Major Hills is not only a friend but he is fully informed on the difficult aspects of the struggle for a true equality between the sexes, and he has made the subject of the position of women in the Civil Service particularly his own. Women of all political parties will welcome his return to Westminster. We cannot omit to say that, although less intimately associated with our work, Mr. John Murray, the defeated candidate, has also proved himself a friend of political equality between the sexes. Some of our readers may have heard him speak or have read his letters to the Press on the subject of Family Allowances. We hope he may later on be successfully returned for another constituency.

#### Training for Mental Welfare Workers.

A meeting to consider the advisability of establishing some organized means of training social workers in the various branches of mental welfare was summoned this week at Caxton Hall by the Council of the Central Association for Mental Welfare. There was a large attendance of experts in mental treatment, as well as those concerned with the training of social workers, including representatives of mental hospitals, clinics for mental disorders, the Medico-Psychological Association, the Association of Mental Welfare Workers, the University Departments for Social Study, the Charity Organization Society, Settlements and other organizations. In a suggestive circular sent out by the Association beforehand, it was pointed out that in all probability early legislation giving power to local authorities to establish and pay for clinics and hospitals for early treatment will be introduced after the Royal Commission on Lunacy and Mental Disorders at present sitting has reported. The evidence of the United States where there are many such clinics is strongly in favour of the employment of trained social workers. Further, as the work of after-care develops, the appointment of social workers who under Clause 2 (4) of the Mental Treatment Bill may be paid out of public funds will increase. In these and other spheres of work trained social workers are definitely required and, in view of a greater demand in the fortunately not far distant future, the consideration of the best form of equipment shows wise forethought on the part of those engaged in this important form of social welfare, which in the new light cast on it by modern science and research has become one of the most hopeful and interesting, instead of, as it used to be regarded, the most hopeless and repellent. The conference was a model of its kind under the admirable chairmanship of Dr. H. B. Brackenbury,

and the speakers included Dr. H. F. Tredgold, Dr. Mapother, Miss Evelyn Fox, and Professor Carr Saunders. It was agreed to form a small committee to discuss an appropriate scheme of training with the Joint University Council for Social Studies. We commend the initiative of the Council of the Central Association for Mental Welfare to other controlling bodies of public or voluntary organizations for social welfare. In this country we have managed to avoid a sporadic growth of *ad hoc* schemes of training for social administration largely due to the statesmanlike attitude of such bodies as the Institute of Welfare Workers, the Institute of Hospital Almoners, and the Central Association referred to above.

#### "Not a Place where Women can earn a Living."

The Civil Service (Amendment) Bill of the Irish Free State Government has passed the Dail, "by the skin of its teeth," as A. E. says in the *Irish Statesman*. On the final reading a Government amendment was carried, providing for a long notice to the Dail before restriction of any examination to one sex. This, of course, in no way met the objections of the women's organizations, and the point was made clear during the debate. The next stage will be fought out in the Senate, where, to quote A. E. again, "the Bill should have no skin to hang on." In an address to the Statistical Society of Ireland on 3rd December, Professor Oldham remarked that "the male adults who drafted the Civil Service Bill were determined to oust adult women from that source of employment." He drew attention also to an important deduction from the census of occupations. Since 1891 the proportion of males in the adult population of Ireland has been increasing, for Ireland is not a place where women can earn a living. The dearth of female employment induces excessive female emigration and thus strikes at the homes of the nation. "The survival of the Irish race in Ireland depends on whether we can arrest the disease of the male surplus."

#### A Privilege for Women.

A curious privilege came to light last week during the Secret Session of Parliament. An order for the withdrawal of strangers from the House of Commons, although it includes the official reporter, does not extend to the ladies' gallery! We hardly think this can be regarded as a compliment. It dates from the time when the views of women on political matters was considered of so little importance that even their potential indiscretions could be looked upon as negligible.

#### Questions in Parliament.

CHILD ASSAULT.—Mr. Couper asked the Lord Advocate whether the Committee of Inquiry regarding Child Assault has completed its proceedings, and, if so, when the Report of the Committee would be issued? Sir J. Gilmour replied that the first part of the question was in the negative, and that he understood that the Committee hoped to present its report to him about the end of next month.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH (WRITING ASSISTANTS AND TYPISTS).—Sir Walter de Frece asked the Minister of Health whether he was aware that there is considerable dissatisfaction amongst members of the writing assistant and typing grades employed in his department owing to the small number of promotions which have been made in these grades recently, having regard to the number of open recruits and transfers from other Departments appointed to the clerical class in connexion with the recent increase of work; and whether he would give sympathetic consideration to the claims of all suitable writing assistants and typists for promotion to clerical posts arising out of the Widows', Orphans', and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act? The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health (Sir Kingsley Wood) replied that the Minister had no reason to believe that there was any considerable dissatisfaction among the staff as to the number of officers promoted to the clerical grade from the writing assistant and typing grades. During the last five years, 56 officers had been so promoted, and the Minister had recently arranged for a further number of officers of these grades to be placed on clerical duties to test their fitness for promotion.

POLICY.—The sole policy of THE WOMAN'S LEADER is to advocate a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women. So far as space permits, however, it will offer an impartial platform for topics not directly included in the objects of the women's movement but of special interest to women. Articles on these subjects will always be signed, at least by initials or a pseudonym, and for the opinions expressed in them the Editor accepts no responsibility.

## MUDDLE AND WASTE.

Over half a century ago a book, now out of print, was written by "a man of business", the late William Rathbone, of Liverpool, for which he himself selected the title rejected by his publishers, *Organization versus Muddle and Waste*. The book is a plea for some kind of order in the overlapping methods of relief of distress of the period. But if muddle and waste was rampant in the sixties, what can we say of the situation in 1925, in spite of the warnings of the need for national economy proclaimed on every political platform? We have referred in previous articles to the network of "rival" public services which provide different forms of assistance to the public. This overlapping of function and undoubted overlapping of activities is described with no uncertain voice in the report<sup>1</sup> presented in January, 1918, by a Committee of the then still existing Local Government Board to the Ministry of Reconstruction. Readers will remember that the Ministry of Reconstruction, with Dr. Addison as Minister, was established for a few years to deal with post-war problems. The Ministry is almost forgotten now, though the problems survive. This Committee, which is commonly called the Maclean Committee, because Sir Donald Maclean was Chairman, was composed of members of all political parties, of representatives of those who signed both the Majority and Minority Reports of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws issued nine years before, and of leading officials of great administrative experience. It must therefore be regarded as a remarkably interesting and valuable document as it represents a compromise arrived at by men and one woman of widely different schools of political and administrative thought.

The report states that a very large number of different bodies are giving various forms of public assistance out of rates and taxes, "with very inexact delimitations of the persons eligible." In other words, the same public bodies are dealing with the same people. No fewer than seven different authorities are giving relief in the home. At least six provide medical treatment, five deal with the able-bodied unemployed and so on. But confusion, overlapping, and waste are not the only evils which arise from such duplication of administrative machinery. It leads—so the report tells us—to failure to detect real need. We have heard of the unfortunate candidate for assistance who is tossed from this department to that, who suffers from the existence of too many organizations and too little organization.

The position to-day is even worse than when the report was issued in 1918. The extension of unemployment insurance, the new provision for old age, widowhood, fatherless children, and orphans, has thickened the tangle. It must also be remembered that in addition to methods of assistance maintained out of the public purse, there are innumerable relief-giving organiza-

tions under voluntary control, so confusion is worse confounded. Immense sums are poured out in relief-giving societies, small and great, in hospitals, pension schemes, and other charities; there also appears to be at the present time a tendency to revert to pre-war and, we had hoped, out-grown methods of meals for unemployed, Christmas dinners, and the like. Nevertheless, in spite of the vast expenditure of money and effort, poverty and distress still stalk in the land. The total number of persons (men, women, and children) in receipt of Poor Law relief at the end of September, this year, was 1,220,500, representing an increase on previous years instead of a decrease as might have been expected. We do not suggest that the more constructive legislation of recent years has not greatly improved the lot of the people of this country. We can never again return to the conditions which prevailed before the War. But the results do not seem to be commensurate with the scale of the efforts, and we ask ourselves why? We believe that the first step is simplification of machinery and we now turn to the consideration of the concrete proposals of the report referred to above. It may be useful to outline these briefly.

In the first place the abolition of Boards of Guardians and of the Poor Law Unions and the merging of all the functions of the Poor Law Authorities in those of the County Council and County Borough Council is recommended. The provision of the care of the sick and infirm will fall to Public Health Committees of the Council under the Public Health Act, which will be extended as may be required. Local Education Authorities will become responsible for the care of school children. The unemployed will be provided for by new Committees appointed by the Council, and the mentally defective by Committees administering the Lunacy and Mental Deficiency Acts. To supplement and unify these services it is recommended that a new Committee, called "The Home Assistance Committee," which will include men and women of experience, especially those who have been members of Poor Law Authorities should be established. Such Committees should (1) make inquiries into the circumstances of those applying for any form of assistance, (2) supervise the recipients of assistance. Such a drastic change would result in unemployment to a large number of men and women who have given devoted service in the existing system. It is therefore suggested that officers of the present Poor Law Authorities should be transferred to the County and County Borough Councils, or suitably compensated.

So much for a bare outline of the report. No one can understand the proposals which the Ministry of Health have just issued without its careful study. It is short, cheap, and easy to follow, and we hope that those of our readers who have not done so already will buy it and study it for themselves.

## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND SLAVERY.

Under Article 23 (b) of the Covenant, Members of the League of Nations have undertaken to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control. In the programme for just treatment, a foremost place is naturally given to the suppression of slavery wherever it still persists. Information on this point has been compiled by a "Temporary Slavery Commission" which, after examining a mass of evidence, was able to submit a Report in July of this year. This Commission was constituted as "a body of experts to propose measures for facilitating the eradication of slavery." The report dealt primarily with slavery existing to-day, either openly adopted, or tacitly tolerated because of the difficulty of abolition outright. The present-day situation having been briefly described, suggestions are put forward for improvement. The result is a document of great value.

After pointing out that the object to be aimed at is "the complete, definite, and universal suppression of the status of slavery," it records that this status does not now enjoy legal recognition in any Christian State, except Abyssinia. Under the Republic of China, in Japan, and in Siam, it is prohibited. Mohammedan States have to face the difficulty that the legality of slavery is sanctioned by the Koran. It is recognized by law in Thibet, Nepal, Afghanistan, the Hedjaz, and elsewhere in the East, though the Maharajah of Nepal has now set a time-limit for the continuance of legal sanction within his dominions.

<sup>1</sup> Report on Transfer of Function of Poor Law Authorities in England and Wales, Cd. 8917, price 3d. (May be had from N.U.S.E.C., 15 Dean's Yard, S.W. 1.)

It is recognized that in many of these States the abolition of slavery must be gradual if grave upset and misery are to be avoided. It is suggested that *permissive* freedom may be sanctioned in the case of existing slaves, to be granted to anyone who claims it, while all children born after an agreed date, shall be free, although of slave parentage, and that the League of Nations might decide to admit only such States as had clearly shown a desire to abolish slavery.

In Abyssinia, for instance, which was recently admitted a State Member, a decree of H.H. Ras Tafari's of 15th September, 1923, prescribed the death penalty for any subject who, without the King's authorization, and except in war, forcibly enslaves another, while a chief who allows a man to be carried away from his province as a slave is to be heavily fined. The enforcement of these laws in a country such as Abyssinia may of course not be very rigid at first, but it is held that hopeful initial steps have been taken.

France and Italy are looked to for the further suppression of slave-raiding brigands in the Sahara, and it is suggested that Powers whose navies police the slave routes in the Red Sea should be granted the right to pursue and capture, even in territorial waters of other Powers there, ships suspected of carrying slaves, and that the transport of slaves by sea should be considered an act of piracy.

As regards the vexed question of compulsory labour, the Report lays down that "all forms of compulsory or forced labour should be prohibited except for essential public works and services and (unless this proves utterly impossible) then only in return for

adequate remuneration," and that "forms of direct or indirect compulsion, the primary object of which is to force natives into private employment, are abuses." This latter goes straight to the root of the problem that faces more than one Governor of a British Dependency at the present day—notably in Kenya and Nyasaland.

In September this Report was laid before the Sixth Assembly at Geneva, the British Government at the same time advancing the draft of a Convention framed to cover most of the points raised in the Report. The opinions of State Members of the League are to be invited at once, and considered next June at the Seventh Session, when, it is hoped, the Convention will be signed and will become binding on Members.

It is therefore noteworthy that this draft Convention, supported by the representative of Great Britain, has weakened upon the subject of forced labour for private employers. Instead of treating this as an abuse to be prohibited, it suggests that Members "shall endeavour progressively, and as soon as possible, to put an end to the practice," and it specifies four precautions designed to limit abuses. Moreover, the draft does not include three trenchant Articles advanced by Dr. Nansen as representative of Norway. These were for: (a) the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice, or some other agreed tribunal in disputes concerning the meaning or application of the Convention. (b) the submission of annual reports to the League upon the working of the Convention, and (c) requiring the International Labour Organization to study conditions of native labour with a view to international action in effecting improvement.

It therefore seems appropriate that pressure should be brought upon our Government in the Houses of Parliament, and by resolutions of interested bodies between now and next June, not only to stiffen the draft as regards forced labour for private employers and to incorporate the wholesome suggestions of Dr. Nansen, but also to specify categorically that in cases where compulsory labour is still to be called out for Government requirements upon works of urgent public necessity, such labour shall invariably (a) work under Government officers only, and (b) shall be confined to adult males only, and shall never be exacted from women, girls, or youths. W. McG. R.

### THE TREATMENT OF YOUNG OFFENDERS.

SUMMARIZED REPORT OF MRS. LE MESURIER'S LECTURE GIVEN AT THE N.U.S.E.C. SUMMER SCHOOL FOR MAGISTRATES AT OXFORD, 1925.

Two points among many others were made by the recent International Prison Congress with real and not merely superficial agreement. The first was the desirability of using every possible substitute for prison treatment, and this specially in the case of the young. The substitutes recommended were a greatly increased use of Probation, and extension of time for the payment of fines, and a greater use of fines. With regard to the last point, fines by themselves are, of course, uninformative, and there is danger in certain cases of their being paid by unsuitable people. Even if parents or relatives pay, it is still not a personal punishment to the boy or girl. It is therefore desirable to couple the fine with a period of detention and to introduce the principle of restitution to the injured party when the Probation Officer certifies that the offender is in work and in a position to make a weekly payment.

The real alternative for young offenders lies broadly between institutional and non-institutional treatment. Condensed into a phrase—in all possible cases a sentence of Probation should be given, in impossible ones a sufficiently long period of training in a suitable institution, but *not* in a prison. The crucial matter then is to know which cases are suitable for these different treatments? How are people to decide rightly? This leads on to the second point referred to as made unanimously by the Congress. They agreed on the broad principle that all information, medical and social, should be collected and at the disposal of the court *not after the event but before it*, so as to aid correct diagnosis and lead to right judgment and the best treatment. To know if a case is suitable for Probation or not, very careful inquiries are necessary, not only personal but into the environment. The work of observation and inquiry now being done at the Boys' Prison, Wandsworth, suggests that it might be described as a clinic and examination centre.<sup>1</sup> Three criticisms may, however, be made regarding this work as at present carried out. The first is that it is good work,

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Le Mesurier was herself responsible for starting the women's side of this work under the auspices of the Police Commissioners.

but not done in the right place. There are various strong objections to a prison as a place of remand and a centre for examination by medical experts. Secondly, the usual time available—seven days—is insufficient for all the work to be really and thoroughly done. It is possible to devise a scheme by which this difficulty might be overcome without asking for an extension of the period of remand. Here the experience of Belgium may be quoted in connexion with the Observation House for Boys at Moll, where, after judgment but before sentence, lads can be detained for the fuller examinations and investigations that are often desirable or even necessary.

The third criticism is that at present full use is not being made of all the information actually collected. Some Courts appear not to be aware of the work done at Wandsworth and of the fact that they can have a report from the Governor of the Boys' Prison on any case where they ask for it. Some ask, others do not. It is desirable to have a more uniform procedure in the matter—a report on each boy, giving all the important facts available, should be sent automatically in every case to the Court and the best opinion among magistrates generally would doubtless welcome this. Finally, magistrates should realize the great importance of taking the trouble to make a sentence really clear to a young offender. Many lads have the haziest and most incorrect idea of what Probation really means and regard it simply as a "let-off". Very few realize that a Borstal sentence includes not only the period of training in the Borstal Institutions, but, most important of all, the after period on licence under the Borstal Association, when they are again "on probation" so to speak and have to show themselves fit for freedom. Without a good system of after-care, no reformatory treatment can hope to reap a full harvest, and warm praise should be conceded to the ceaseless efforts of the Borstal Association and the very encouraging results won by them.

### WOMEN POLICE.

I am not going to argue the case for women police to the readers of the WOMAN'S LEADER, but some may have been puzzled as to the reason why I am introducing a Bill in this particular form. There are several ways, of course, by which Watch Committees can be made to appoint women police. The Home Secretary has the power to issue regulations to this effect if he so desires, but it is unlikely that any Home Secretary of whatever party would care to face the hostility of reluctant Watch Committees without the backing of Parliament. This Bill gives the necessary support to the Home Secretary.

It may also be argued that the Bill is unnecessary, as Watch Committees have the power to appoint women police and that the recent Home Office Committee even recommended them to do so. The plain fact is that most Watch Committees are reluctant, and that even if the Town Council is anxious for them to do so such a Council has no power to enforce its will. This was made unpleasantly clear last year at Manchester, when the City Council were informed that by an Order made during the War, and still in force, they had no power to discuss the minutes of the Watch Committee which were only laid before them by courtesy for their information! To no other Corporation Committee does such a rule apply. The Bill is framed to deal with these recalcitrant Watch Committees.

There are certain women's organizations who feel that if we make compulsory the appointment of women police, unfit women may be appointed. Under any conceivable system there is this danger to be feared. If this Bill could be passed through the House, it would be best to secure from the Home Office regulations under which women shall be appointed so as to ensure fitness and suitability.

I am aware that any Bill is open to serious objections, but the object of this Bill is to secure as far as possible this session an expression of opinion in favour of women police from the House of Commons. ELLEN WILKINSON.

### WOMAN PRINCIPAL OF MORLEY COLLEGE.

We congratulate Morley College on their choice of Principal in Mrs. Barbara Wootton. Mrs. Wootton, a brilliant economist, and formerly director of economic studies at Girton, has recently been a member of the staff of the Joint Research Department of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party, and is editor of the *Highway*, the journal of the Workers' Educational Association. Although Morley College has among its 1,400 students more men than women, this post has for many years past been held by women, the last principal but one being Miss Sheepshanks.

### SCIENTIFIC HOUSEKEEPING AND DOMESTIC SERVICE.

#### ZITA'S KITCHEN AND INFORMATION BUREAU.

Your Editors have asked me to give some account of Zita's Kitchen, which is really the outcome of my domestic service experience during the war and after until December 1st, 1921. Since then I have been investigating food values, food production, manufacture and distribution, and trying to earn my living at the same time as a free-lance journalist. Altogether a period of nearly ten years (March 2nd, 1916 to date). I happened to have made a hobby of cooking from girlhood and had been trained as a daily newspaper woman thirty years ago on the "Edinburgh Evening News"; social work was familiar to me from my birth, my father having been a great social worker whose good deeds still flourish.

The first lesson I learnt in 1916 was that it is possible for a woman who considers herself and is considered by others to be a good housekeeper to be extraordinarily ignorant. A lady who worked all through the war in hospital kitchens, starting as scrubber and scullery maid and ending as Cook Superintendent, made the same discovery and has just written (November 14th, 1925), "this ignorance I believe often causes 'places' to be looked on as 'bad', or mistresses as 'hard.' When a lady orders her dinner and arranges what cleaning is to be done, unless she has a fair idea—and a practical one—of the length of time each item takes, she can easily expect the impossible, and so cause already uninterested girls to dislike their work still more."

Others, I am sure, must also have made this discovery. I set to work in 1916 to remedy my deficiencies, and when I returned to journalism in December, 1921, wrote articles based on practical experience and research work. For a year—during 1923—I financed a small employment bureau called the "House Assistants' Centre" but had to give it up because the L.C.C. had changed their bye-laws, and would not allow yearly membership fees. This meant that instead of being able to give my time to managing the bureau, I had to employ someone else, and earn the money to finance it by free-lance journalism. My intention was to run it as a social work not as a commercial undertaking; but to develop it on co-operative lines. However, although we had many applications for workers, and many applications for work, my manageress could not make the two fit in, consequently she ran it at a loss and I had to make up the deficiency each week by my journalistic earnings. In consequence I did not apply for a renewal of my L.C.C. licence.

This experience convinced me the solution of the domestic service question is an economic one, and that the *first step is to train the mistresses*. This is the root of the matter, the crux of the problem.

It is not of course a popular proposition; nevertheless I am convinced it is the only solution; and would help to solve the question of unemployment generally. In addition to practical work (as above), I sent in 1916, at great expense, to America for books written by American College Women. (They have had the domestic service problem for over 40 years there, and have made it a university subject.) These have been added to from time to time, together with Government and scientific publications, until with my MS. notebooks I now have the nucleus of a very complete and useful housewife's library, which cannot be found anywhere else in one place.

Last March it was completed by the installation of "Zita's Kitchen," in which foods and recipes are tested according to their economic value, and records made. This kitchen is not a commercial undertaking; it is simply an adjunct to my newspaper articles. It is in no sense a laboratory; but the results of laboratory food work are there applied to everyday cooking. I cannot, of course, spend as much time in it as I should wish because research work is expensive; materials, heat, light, service, equipment, all have to be paid for by my journalistic earnings. It is merely a beginning.

Its aim is to standardize cookery recipes, by the use of exact weights and measures, thermometers, etc., and to apply scientific results to everyday housekeeping. It is frightfully interesting and I wish I could afford to share it, but unless the expenses are in some way shared it is obvious this is impossible. What I have already done shows that scientific laboratory work, a knowledge of economics, and efficiency principles applied to household administration, catering, and cooking would not only

solve the domestic servant question and improve national health, but would also lower the housewife's housekeeping books without lowering the workers' wages. ANN POPE.

### WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN THE SORBONNE.

(Mrs. Corbett Ashby, President of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, contributes the following notes on the recent meeting of the I.W.S.A. Board in Paris, held in preparation for the forthcoming biennial international Conference in May.)

It is sad that wreaths of bay can no longer be used to decorate our friends, for M. Lapie, the distinguished new Rector of the Sorbonne, has ensured the success of the coming International Suffrage Congress in Paris by graciously lending us the vast amphitheatre and magnificent saloons of this historic building.

For a thousand years the University of Paris has been tolerant and clear-thinking and it is a wonderful omen for the near success of the woman's movement in countries of Latin civilization that we should meet for ten days within its walls. To us who have wrestled so often with impossibly bad buildings it seemed almost a dream as Madame Lapie, gracious and charming, at once *femme du monde* and *femme d'esprit*, led us from room to room soberly and richly decorated in the style of old France, and then to the amphitheatre where each delegate can hear and be heard and there is room for all the visitors from this and other lands who find encouragement and strength in this international co-operation towards a great ideal.

The steady grinding work of the Board day after day hammering out the details of organisation and programme, are lost to memory in the brilliance of the social interludes. The Sorbonne for work, the Hôtel de Ville for play and Fontainebleau for rest. What could the most blasé congressist ask further?

M. Guillaumin, the President of the City Council, who doubles the part of admirable administrator and man of letters, welcomed us warmly and promised to receive us at the historic and magnificent Hôtel de Ville, which will give delegates a much appreciated chance to see one of the most interesting buildings of Paris. M. Briand was away in the country, but M. Bertholot took his place and gave us the good wishes of the Government and even hinted at practical sympathy.

The women's organisations, apart from our auxiliary, are warmly interested. Madame Avril de Ste. Croix and Madame Pichon Laudry, President and Secretary of the French National Council, have promised friendly co-operation. I had a chance of interesting the University women through Mlle Bonnet's kind invitation to address them at the Maison des Etudiantes.

It remains for the British delegation and visitors to second the admirable efforts of the French Suffragists. First we must ask our leading women to represent us; our women M.P.'s are urgently invited to tell of the practical achievements of the woman's vote. Secondly we must have experts on the subjects of the commissions, equal moral standard, position of the wife and mother, the unmarried mother and her child, and the position of women in industry. Thirdly we want delegates who can speak to resolutions on women police, and the position of women in the Civil Service and the Diplomatic and Consular services. Fourthly we want the clear-headed and good-tempered delegates who can alter our constitution in a brief space of time. Fifthly, for the Hall of the Sorbonne is spacious, we want many British visitors who by friendly conversation with the 600 delegates of 40 countries and the many French visitors will extol the value of Suffrage and build up that habit of co-operation on which our final demonstration alone can rest. The final meeting of the Congress will be the women of the world united for Peace and the League of Nations.

M. CORBETT ASHBY.

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT MATTERS.

BY BERTHA MASON.

## POOR LAW REFORM PROPOSALS.

We give this week a brief summary with one comment of the proposals for the reform of the Poor Law which have been circulated by the Minister of Health to certain local authorities for consideration and report.

It must be understood that no Bill is yet before Parliament. Further, we have it on the authority of the Minister that the proposals to which we draw attention must be regarded as simply provisional. They are drastic and far-reaching and demand careful and searching examination.

## I. GENERAL.

1. Boards of Guardians to be abolished.
2. The Unemployed Workmen's Act, 1905, to be repealed and liabilities under that Act to be transferred in London to the County Council, and in other cases to the borough and urban district councils.
3. The registration of births, deaths, and marriages to be transferred to electoral registration Officers acting for Parliamentary boroughs and counties.
4. Relief granted to able-bodied persons to be limited and correlated with unemployment insurance.
5. The area of settlement of the chargeable poor to be the county or county borough instead of the parish or union.
6. The powers of Guardians in respect to setting to work and relief of the poor, apprenticeship of children, vaccination, emigration, etc., to be transferred to county or county borough councils.
7. Provision to be made to facilitate the joint use of institutions by two or more county or county borough councils.
8. Existing Poor Law property (including institutions) and liabilities and staffs to be transferred to the councils, including the whole or largest part of the Poor Law Union at present served.
9. The Minister to be empowered on the application of the Councils to increase the number of elected councillors or to provide for co-option in cases where the present numbers would be overtaxed by the addition of the transferred duties.

## II. COUNTY BOROUGHS.

10. The Borough Council to provide at its own discretion for the carrying out of the transferred duties.

## III. COUNTIES.

11. The county council to be the supervising and controlling authority for all health purposes throughout the administrative area.
12. The county council to provide (subject to paragraph 13) for the carrying out of the transferred duties through existing or new committees of the council, assisted where necessary by local sub-committees consisting of county councillors, or partly of county councillors and partly of representatives of the borough and district councils of the localities.
13. The county council, with the concurrence of a borough or district council, to delegate to a borough or district council any transferred service identical in kind with a service already administered by the borough or district council.

## IV. FINANCE.

The assigned revenue system to be abolished; new system of local finance is proposed whereby the payment by the Exchequer of a percentage of local authorities' expenditure is to be replaced by a block grant fixed for a period of years; the grant to include all grants now made in aid of public health, education, relief of the poor, and police services.

## LONDON.

Proposals affecting London follow those for the country generally, the London County Council and the Metropolitan Borough Councils taking the place of County Councils and County Borough Councils.

It is proposed that the Metropolitan Asylums Board shall cease to exist, its staff, property, and liabilities to be transferred to the L.C.C. The Metropolitan Common Poor Fund is to be abolished. Briefly these are the proposals for the Reform of the Poor Law which are now before the country.

We propose to review them in detail in our next article. For the moment we simply draw attention to what appears to

us to be a serious omission in the proposals. So far as we can see at present, nowhere is it laid down that whatever body may be ultimately appointed to deal with relief, the *destitute person* has a legal right to necessary assistance. This right is provided for in what is usually described as the Statute of Elizabeth (43 Eliz. s. 2). It is no new thing; it dates from 1601, and is understood and acted upon by most Boards of Guardians. Unless there is specific provision for the preservation of this legal right there is danger that in the reasonable and proper desire to check unnecessary expenditure to avoid fraud the main factor in the whole situation, viz., the destitute person and his right to relief, may easily be overlooked.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P. Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. SODDY. Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HUBBACK.

Offices: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1. Telephone: Victoria 6188.

## ANNUAL COUNCIL, 24th to 27th February, 1926.

Secretaries of Societies are asked to note the following dates:—  
Monday, 11th January.—Last day on which resolutions for the Preliminary Agenda should reach the office.

Monday, 25th January.—Last day on which nominations for Honorary Officers and Members of the Executive Committee should reach the office.

## NEW LEAFLETS.

Societies actively working for the Equal Franchise campaign will be interested to hear that a new edition of the pamphlet entitled "The Case for Equal Franchise," by Miss E. Macadam and Mrs. Hubback, bringing it up to date, is now ready. This contains a large number of facts and subjects invaluable to speakers on Equal Franchise. Price 1d.

"What the Vote has done," by Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., has also been brought up to date. Price 2d.

"Family Limitation and Women's Organizations," a new leaflet by Mrs. Stocks, price 1d., may also be had on application to headquarters.

## SALE OF WORK.

The Sale of Work which was held at the Church House, Westminster, on Thursday, 3rd December, was certainly a great success.

At 3 p.m., when the Chairman, Mrs. Franklin, in a few well-chosen remarks asked Lady Francis Balfour to open the function, the Hall presented a most gay and business-like appearance with a fine showing of stalls stocked with a goodly array of useful products.

Lady Frances Balfour expressed her pleasure at being present, and, wishing the Sale of Work every success, declared the function open.

The proceedings realized a net profit of approximately £80, and the Entertainments Committee, together with all those loyal helpers and supporters who have worked so indefatigably for the past few months, deserve to be congratulated on this successful culmination of their efforts.

## PERSONAL.

We offer our sympathy to Lady Balfour of Burleigh on the death of her father.

## WOMEN IN 1925.

We hope that members of our Societies will push the sale of the New Year number (1st January) of the WOMAN'S LEADER, which can be ordered in advance, which will contain a summary of women's work during the year, and will include articles by Miss Symons, Lady Rhondda, Miss Cicely Hamilton, etc.

## CHESTER WOMEN CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION.

The work of the Chester Women Citizens' Association, whose members number between five and six hundred, and of which the Mayoress is President, and Councillor Phyllis Brown chairman, has received signal recognition in the fact that the Secretary, Mrs. F. F. Potter, the wife of the County Director of Education, at a meeting held at Birkenhead recently, was unanimously requested to act as secretary to the North Western Federation of similar societies in Lancashire and Cheshire. Mrs. Potter has accepted the invitation so cordially extended, and we congratulate the North Western Federation on securing her services.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE CHINESE COMMISSION ON CUSTOMS.

MADAM,—Your correspondent, A. M. Hubbard, draws some conclusions from the resolution passed by the special council meeting of the Women's International League on China which are not quite justifiable. The resolution did not ask that full fiscal autonomy should be granted immediately or that there should be no treaty arrangements to protect foreigners living in China.

It is true that little can be done until there is a stronger central government, or federation of governments, in China, but a British policy on the lines asked for in our resolution would both help the Chinese Government and do much to lessen the anti-British feeling. The fact that Germans, who have been forced by the Treaty of Versailles to give up their capitulations, have not suffered in consequence, and the movement of the Missionary Societies to set aside their special privileges won by the sword and only to accept the protection that China will voluntarily give them, shows that even now the situation is not quite what your correspondent suggests.

HILDA CLARR.

MADAM,—May I draw Mrs. A. M. Hubbard's attention to an article by John Brailsford on "Germans under Chinese Law" in *Foreign Affairs* for November? The Germans have had to give up the rights of extra-territoriality, and their verdict is that, on the whole, in the words of a representative German, "The Chinese judges have given the greatest care to the consideration of all cases. In that regard they have acted as fairly as the judges in any other country." Chinese procedure and attitude towards legal affairs differed considerably from ours; the same might be said of Japan and even of other European countries, and it does not seem to have led in China to any authenticated case of "torture and summary execution." The real solution in all countries is probably the setting up of international courts to deal with cases in which foreigners are concerned.

As regards the contention that autonomy in fiscal matters would only make things worse for China, in her present state of civil war, I would suggest that if the Powers had acted immediately after the Washington Conference they would have found a Government a little better fitted to treat with them than the present one. In any case, it ill befits us, as interested parties who gain by China's lack of fiscal autonomy, to set up as judges of the exact time when she is ready to take control. The money belongs to China, and it is for her people to deal with military governors who seek to profit by it.

Unless we admit that our Government has no control over the actions of its traders or of the Shanghai Municipal Council, none of whom hesitates to claim the protection of the National forces, or over the return of the Boxer Indemnity, it cannot be said that the hostility felt towards Great Britain is due to factors over which our Government has no control.

DORIS NIELD CHEW.

## THE TEMPERANCE PROBLEM.

MADAM,—Mr. Guy Hayler, the American Prohibition Leader, has done me the honour, in your issue of 13th November, to reply to a portion of my letter commenting on Mr. George B. Wilson's article on Temperance. I am grateful to him for having quoted details of the Acts of Parliament of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries on the sale of liquor, none of which is at variance with my statement, all of them being directed to the proper suppression of abuses, and to the regulation of the sale of liquor. I would venture to repeat, as I pointed out in my previous letter, that the close regulation and supervision of all industries was then the accepted policy in this country.

To the other four important points as to present-day conditions which I mentioned, Mr. Hayler makes no reference whatever.

I thank Mr. Hayler for this unintentional support from an unexpected quarter.

C. R. VENNER.

## WOMEN IN 1925.

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## GLASGOW S.E.C. AND W.C.A.

An attractive Fête and Pageant were held in the McLellan Galleries, Glasgow, on Tuesday, 24th November, the object being to raise £1,000 to put the funds of the Society on a satisfactory basis. The effort took the form of an Italian Fair. The stalls being decorated with brightly coloured awnings and the vendors dressed in Italian costume. Twice during the course of the day a Pageant of twelve famous women was shown which added greatly to the attractiveness of the Fair. The Fête was opened by the Lady Blythwood, Miss Frances Melville, B.D., J.P., President of the Amalgamated Society, being in the Chair. The Fête was followed by a bridge and whist party and a dance attended by 300 members and friends, which proved very successful not only as a social function but as an attractive means of propaganda for our Society among younger people.

## SAFFRON WALDEN S.E.C.

A meeting of the Saffron Walden branch of the Society for Equal Citizenship was held at the Town Hall on Tuesday afternoon, when an address was given on "Penal law and the young offender," by Mrs. Rackham, of Cambridge, presided over by Miss Valley. The Chairman, in introducing the speaker, referred to the great work that Mrs. Rackham was doing. Mrs. Rackham spoke on the horrors of prison life to which young children were subjected at the beginning of the last century and the improvements that had been effected in dealing with the young offender and in keeping him out of prison.

## OUR WHO'S WHO.

Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., who gives us her reasons for the particular form in which she introduced her Bill on Women Police, is too well known to our readers to need any further introduction. Mrs. Le Mesurier, who writes on "The Treatment of Young Offenders," is Hon. Visitor to H.M. Wandsworth (Boys') Prison and Vice-Chairman of the National Association of Prison Visitors. Mrs. Corbett Ashby will be known to our readers not only as President of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, but as Liberal Candidate for Richmond at two recent general elections. "Ann Pope" is a well known journalist, and our readers will remember the series of interesting articles on Household Economics which she contributed to our columns two years ago.

GENERAL ELECTION IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.<sup>1</sup>

The General Election in Czecho-Slovakia, the second since the foundation of the Republic in 1918, is now completed. It shows no very startling changes of opinion; at the same time there are some interesting features to record.

Nine and twenty parties or groups put forward candidates for election to the house of Deputies, and twenty-three for the Senate. The small new parties, which were in fact splits from recognized political parties, have suffered complete defeat. The Communists, the one party who vote irrespective of racial differences, have made considerable gain, and will be the second strongest party in the new Parliament, the Agrarian (Sveha's party) being the strongest; both the Czech and German Social Democrats have lost largely to the Communists. The contrast in this matter between Czecho-Slovakia and Austria, where the Communists have ceased to be a serious problem, is doubtless partly due to the Pan-Slav feeling in Czecho-Slovakia, but probably partly to the wise and statesmanlike attitude of the Austrian Social Democrats.

The Slovak Catholic People's party (Hlinka's party) which stands for autonomy for Slovakia, has also substantially improved its position from six to twelve seats in the Senate and from eleven to twenty-three in the House of Deputies.

The coalition of all the Czech elements (excepting the Communists) who formed the late Government have again a majority and will doubtless form the new Government. They will be joined by the Traders' Party and probably also by the Slovak Catholic People's Party, thus it is probable that the policy of the Government was somewhat more conservative.

<sup>1</sup> Contributed by the Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, W.C.

## THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN JOURNALISTS.

PRESIDENT: VISCOUNTESS BURNHAM.

Founded for the Association of Women engaged in Journalism in the British Empire and abroad, *The Woman Journalist*, the organ of the Society, is published every alternate month. Supplied free to members, it is an invaluable guide to current journalism. Members of the Society are privileged to receive free medical advice, free legal advice, and the Honorary Ophthalmic Surgeon is always available by appointment. A Benevolent Fund, administered without publicity, is another advantage to members.

The Subscription for membership is One Guinea for London and Half a Guinea for Country.

Application for membership should be made to Sentinel House, W.C. 1.

**COMING EVENTS.**

**ACTRESSES' FRANCHISE LEAGUE.**

DEC. 15, 3-6 p.m. Thé Dansant, at Hyde Park Hotel, in aid of Extension of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital. Particulars from Miss Adeline Bourne, 146 Harley Street, W. 1.

**CALDECOTT COMMUNITY.**

DEC. 12 and 19, 4.30 p.m. Nativity Play, "The Emperor's Vision," to be given by Children of the Community, at Caldecott House, Goff's Oak, near Cheshunt.

**GUILDHOUSE WOMEN CITIZENS' SOCIETY.**

DEC. 14, 3 p.m. The Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. A Representative of the Westminster Housing Association on "Westminster's Ugly Buildings."

**LONDON SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE.**

DEC. 11 and 12, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Christmas Sale. Exhibition of Samplers and other Works of Art.

**NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.**

**Aberdeen W.C.A.** DEC. 15, 7.30 p.m. West End Café, 154a Union Street. Miss Eleanor Rathbone on "Family Endowment." Chair: Mrs. Traill.

**Dundee W.C.A.** DEC. 14, 8 p.m. Miss Eleanor Rathbone on "The Work of the League of Nations for Child Welfare." Chair: Mrs. David Johnston.

**Dunfermline S.E.C.** DEC. 11, 7.30 p.m. Masonic Hall, New Row. Miss Eleanor Rathbone on "A Living Wage and Family Allowances."

**Edinburgh W.C.A.** DEC. 11, 3.30 p.m. Drawing-room Meeting at 5 Royal Terrace (by kind permission of Mrs. Hannay, O.B.E., J.P.). Miss Eleanor Rathbone, J.P., on "Family Allowances and the Need for a Living Wage." Chair: Professor F. G. Bailey, F.R.S.E.

**Glasgow S.E.C. and W.C.A.** DEC. 16, 3 to 5.30 p.m. Reception to Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.A., J.P., in Cadoro Restaurant.

**Maidstone W.C.A.** DEC. 14, 7.30 p.m. Town Hall. Mrs. F. W. Hubback on "Widows' Pensions."

**Oxtd and Limsfield W.C.A.** DEC. 14, Afternoon. Debate on "Family Allowances. Miss Courtney in favour, Miss H. Fraser against.

**St. Andrews W.C.A.** DEC. 14, 5 p.m. United College Hall. Miss Eleanor Rathbone on "The Work of the League of Nations on Child Welfare." Chair: Professor Turnbull.

**SIX POINT GROUP.**

DEC. 14, 5 p.m. 92 Victoria Street, S.W. 1. Viscount Astor on "The Liquor Control Bill." Chair: Professor Winifred Cullis.

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**FELLOWSHIP SERVICES**, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 13th December: 3.30, Music; Lecture: Mr. John Lee, C.B.E., on "The Sacramentalism of Commerce." 6.30, Maude Royden, "Locarno: A Spiritual Change."

**C.B.C.** Society for Constructive Birth Control and the Free Birth Control Clinic, founded by Dr. Marie Stopes and Councillor H. V. Roe. New address: 108 Whitfield Street, off Tottenham Court Road.

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