



THE INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE NEWS

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NOTES ON WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

THE following notes from various sources have been sent to the Editor by Fru Arenholt, Chairman of the Alliance Committee on Like Conditions of Work for Men and Women, and will doubtless prove of great value to those many readers who are specially interested in these matters.

British Women's Trade Union Conference.

The first annual Women's Trade Union Conference in Great Britain was held at Bournemouth in September, 1926, in conjunction with the Trades Union Congress. On the motion of Mr. Ogden (Cotton Textile Workers) a resolution was adopted declaring that, for the better protection of the general standard of life, industry should pay the full economic price for women's labour and demanding the establishment of a guaranteed minimum wage and the fixing of wages irrespective of sex.

The conference accepted an addendum to this resolution, urging trade unions to act in accordance with the general policy of the Labour movement with regard to equality of opportunity, irrespective of sex.— ("Industrial and Labour Information.")

Textile Unions and Married Women Workers.

The International Federation of Christian Textile Workers' Trade Unions held its ninth Congress at Antwerp, August 23-27, 1926. Among others, a report on the work of married women in the textile industry, and its dangers, was presented by Miss Weitasky, of Germany, the main points of which are contained in the following resolution, adopted unanimously by the Congress.

The Congress once again protests against the employment of married women in the textile industry. Factory work presents drawbacks not only for the health and morality of married women, but also for the future generation; it puts an obstacle in the way of a regular and happy family life and the proper education of the children.

The Congress therefore persists in demanding the prohibition of the work of married women in factories. Exceptions should only be permitted for women living alone and for those who have to support a family.

An adequate increase in the wages of men workers or the granting to fathers of families of a supplement for a wife and children should be the means of preparing the way for this measure. So long as these do not exist, the Congress is of opinion that further protection of married women workers is necessary, and it demands, in particular:

- (1) The prohibition of the employment of married women for more than 44 hours a week or more than 8 hours a day;
- (2) The development of maternity protection, so that the employment of mothers should be prohibited during 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after confinement. A suitable grant should be made to women during this period to compensate for the loss of wages incurred;
- (3) Lightening of work for pregnant women; the provision of seats for them during hours of work, and the possibility of rest periods when indisposed, etc.

The Congress, further, requests the International Labour Office to undertake inquiries into the extent and nature of work carried on in factories by married women in the different countries, and on the consequences of this work and for the worker herself, for the future generation, and for family life and the education of the children. The International Labour Office is also requested to make efforts to secure, through international conventions, the more complete protection of women, and the progressive suppression of the work of married women in factories.

The organisations affiliated to the International Federation of Christian Textile Workers undertake to support the action of the Office before their respective Governments, to make propaganda in their countries in favour of the realisation of the claims formulated, and in particular, to enlighten public opinion on the question of the disadvantages of the work of married women in factories.—("Industrial and Labour Information," 25 October, 1926.)

Germany.

A conference of women textile workers convened by the Textile Workers' Union, was held on 11 and 12 October last, at Gera, a centre of the German textile industry.

The congress was attended by 400 delegates, representing more than 600,000 women workers affiliated to the German Textile Workers' Union. Reports were submitted on the questions of special protection for women textile workers against the risks of their occupation, and of the legal protection of women workers with child.

The congress endorsed the demand of the women textile workers that pregnant women should be excused from work for two months before and three months after childbirth, that wages during that period should be replaced by insurance bonuses, and that hours of work should be limited to four per day during the fifth and sixth months after childbirth. In addition, certain improvements were demanded in conditions of labour, e.g., rest periods, and, as occasion required, rest rooms, inspection by women doctors attached to the factory inspectorate, etc.

As regards women's work in general, a resolution was adopted protesting against any restriction of the political and economical independence of women, and against any attempt to prevent the employment of married women or of women whose male parents were workers, on the pretext that double wages were thus earned.—("Vorwärts," 12-14 October, 1926; "Industrial and Labour Information," 22 November, 1926.) Taken from News Letter No. 77, U.S. Department of Labour Women's Bureau, Washington.

BOARD MEETING OF THE ALLIANCE.

The Alliance will hold a meeting of the Board in Prague from the 25th to the 29th May, on the kind invitation of Mme. Plaminkova, Member of the Czecho-Slovakian Senate. Any suggestions from members of the Alliance as to matters which they consider should be laid before the Board should be sent immediately to Headquarters.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

The International Council of Women is holding a Council meeting in Geneva from the 7-17 June. The programme of these meetings will be found in the French Section, space not permitting their being given in both languages.

The Editor regrets that the congratulations of the Alliance to the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair on her seventieth birthday did not appear in the March number owing to an oversight. We hope that it is not too late to offer our good wishes to one who has been for so long one of the great international figures in the woman's movement.

MISS ANNIE BAKER.

We regret to record the death of Miss Annie Baker, until recently Secretary of the National Vigilance Asso-

ciation, and Director of the International Bureau founded in 1899 by Mr. W. A. Coote for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women. After his death in 1919, Miss Baker, who had for many years been his secretary and friend, became head of both societies.

Miss Baker passed away on Saturday, 2nd April, after a long and painful illness. She was a well-known figure at International Congresses concerned with the traffic in women.

Miss Baker was a sincere, conscientious and self-effacing worker and was much liked by those who knew her intimately. Miss Baker's long and arduous work was recognised by the Government when she was made the only British woman assessor on the League of Nations Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women.

NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN IN GERMANY.

In the Chief Committee of the Reichstag, Frau Dr. Lüders, democratic Member, obtained an important success for the German woman's movement, when her six-year struggle to get a unanimous resolution that a Bill dealing with revised regulations regarding the nationality of the married women should be introduced were crowned with success. The resolution is as follows:—"The Reichstag resolves to adopt the following resolution: To prepare immediately a Bill whereby the Reich and States Nationality Law of the 22nd July, 1913, shall be modified in the sense that loss of German nationality by a German woman on marriage with a foreigner shall not occur so long as the couple do not remove their domicile outside German territory and the wife has not specifically renounced her existing nationality. On removal of domicile to a foreign country, the wife shall only lose her German nationality on the assumption that by her marriage she obtains her husband's nationality under the laws of the country of their new domicile. A German woman contracting marriage with a stateless person shall retain her nationality without further formality.

REVIEWS.

La Femme Emancipée, No. 4 of the Cahiers Contemporains. Editions Montaigne, 2 Impasse de Conti, Paris Vie. Price 12 francs.

This book is the collection of the opinions of various well known women given in answer to the following questionnaire: Has the emancipated woman increased her chance of happiness; is she animated by sentiments unknown before; does man consider her as a rival; has she a different view of her relations with men and the family; does she take a different view of moral questions from the women of former times? Papers have been contributed by Mme. Brunschvicg, Mme. Avril de Ste. Croix, Mme. Marcelle Tinayre, Mme. Grinberg, Mme. Jeanne Galzy, Mme. Maryse Choisy, Mlle. Hélène Burniaux, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, the Princess Cantacuzene, Frau Rudel Zeynek, Mlle. Gina Lombroso, Mev. Bakker-Nort, Princess Nouchaferine, and Mme. Kameneva. Many of these names will be well known to readers of this paper and possibly may serve to make the book of interest to them. Such a collection of "obiter dicta" does not, however, seem of much positive value, and the form of the questionnaire was not calculated to bring forth anything more than an expression of personal opinion. Roughly speaking there are two views: that a woman with greater freedom has greater chances of happiness, the seizing of those chances being a purely personal matter, and that she has modified rather than fundamentally altered her relations with society; and secondly that women are by nature unfitted for hard work and the constant struggle to gain a living, and are in consequence in reality far less happy than they were and tend to lose all the charms of—if not, indeed, all opportunity for!—any relations with the opposite sex. In fact, each contributor has answered according to what means

greater happiness to her, and we do not seem to be much further forward. There is, however, in some of the papers some real and serious discussion of the social changes that the altered position of women is bringing about, and though expressions of opinion on matters about which one has attained to a definite point of view sometimes seem rather superfluous, there is nevertheless sufficient contrast here to make it perhaps useful to the holder of either view to read it in order to get some comprehension of the other side.

L'Orientation Professionnelle en France et à l'Etranger by Odette Simon, Librairie Félix Alcan, 108 Boulevard St. Germain, Paris. Price 15 francs.

This is the thesis presented by Mme. Simon-Bidault for her doctorate. It is not, of course, a book which specially concerns women as such, and it is not possible to give a detailed notice of it here. This question—so difficult to translate into English—which may perhaps be termed "vocational guidance" is one which is becoming more and more regarded all over the world. To those concerned with it, here is a very useful and practical book. It is for the most part concerned with France, going into considerable detail as to the methods adopted and giving some useful and interesting specimens of official forms, etc. There is also, however, a chapter devoted to brief sketches of what has been done in other countries, Belgium, England, Germany, etc. It is a book for the specialist, and to the non-specialist seems even alarmingly full of detailed information.

SLAVERY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

By JOHN H. HARRIS.

(Formerly Liberal M.P. for North Hackney.)

The writer of this interesting article on modern conditions of slavery is the Hon. Secretary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, the only voluntary Society concerned with fighting the evils of Slavery.

WHAT is meant by Slavery? It really embraces a three-fold category—Slave-Owning, Slave-Trading and Slave-Raiding. Within that three-fold category a great human tragedy exists beyond the shores of free countries—a tragedy involving untold suffering, misery and degradation for millions of people. In 1925 the British Foreign Office issued a White Book which was entitled "Correspondence respecting Abyssinian Raids and Incursions into British Territory." One of the despatches included in this White Book was written by a Government Official in Kenya. This gentleman, Captain Cochrane, says in this despatch:—

"As a result of living on the frontier of Southern Abyssinia for some years, and of making one journey into the Abyssinian hinterland, my experience leads me to endorse the veracity of the recently published newspaper articles."

What are these newspaper articles which this British Official endorses?

The following is an extract from the Articles which gives some idea of the conditions of slave-trading and slave-raiding to-day, endorsed, be it remembered, by a British Official, and the endorsement published by the British Foreign Office.

"Slave-raiding and slave-trading have increased in Abyssinia by leaps and bounds during recent years, and to-day it is possible for any visitor to witness in Addis Ababa the worst forms of slavery that have ever cursed the Dark Continent—slavery open, cruel, and fiendish, unfettered by European interference and hardly discountenanced by the Foreign Offices of the European Powers." "Gangs of slaves, marching in misery, the men chained together in rows, and the women and children dragging themselves along beside the main-body, can be seen by any traveller in Southern Abyssinia to-day."

"One of the writers of these articles has seen, with his own eyes, a convoy of ten thousand slaves marching towards the great slave market of Jimma; and in the course of a single day's march along the trail

he has counted the dead and dying bodies of more than fifty captives who have dropped by the roadside."

In another part of the same White Paper, the British Official refers to "the hell" which exists in Abyssinia. The foregoing gives a good indication of the kind of conditions involved in slave-raiding and slave-trading, but what is the number of slaves in the world to-day? It is of course impossible to do other than give a rough estimate of the number, but there are certain available figures. In March last a writer in the "Morning Post," who had lived in Abyssinia for five years, estimated that in that territory alone there were two million slaves.

Five Millions in Slavery.

In addition to these there is the enormous increase of slave-trading which has occurred in China, owing, very largely, to the disturbed political conditions. Speaking in the House of Lords in May, 1925, the Archbishop of Canterbury, dealing particularly with the enslavement of girls, said:—

"The revelations about China and the degree and character of Chinese slavery were to me startling in the highest degree. I had occasion to talk over the matter with an eminent Chinaman who is in this country. I drew a very dark picture of what China appeared to be. It appeared so dark to me that I hardly liked to put it to him as being true, but he said it was not nearly dark enough. I spoke of Western China, where slavery is rife, but said that it was impossible to buy slaves at this moment in the great cities in the East. He said: 'Oh, yes, it is. I could buy them in half an hour. There is not the slightest difficulty in buying girls; I could buy them anywhere.'"

Therefore, to the two millions, one must add the unknown numbers to be found in the Great Chinese Empire. The author of "Red Theology in the Far East," says "at a very moderate estimate there are two millions of these slave children in China." But there is a third computation, namely, the disclosures made to the League of Nations by its own Slavery Commission.

The Slavery Commission was set up by the League of Nations in 1922, and for two years concerned itself in an exhaustive enquiry into conditions of slavery all over the world. The Report of this Commission, when published, showed that slave-raiding and slave-trading, as distinct from slave-owning, were in operation in nineteen political areas, including territories in Africa, Arabia, the Border States of India, and, further, a new traffic in the Far East, of which everyone had been entirely ignorant. The Commissioners reported as follows:—

"The Temporary Slavery Commission is informed on authority which it regards as entirely trustworthy, that many of the slaves of foreign origin in the Hedjaz are either young girls from the Far East who come as pilgrims, or are smuggled for sale; or are persons coming from various countries accompanying their parents or masters in the pilgrimage to Mecca . . . but there appears to be no doubt that they are sold as slaves."

Thus, if we take together the two millions in Abyssinia, an enormous and unknown number in China, and a large number in the 18 or 19 political areas upon which the League of Nations Commission reported, it cannot be any exaggeration to put the estimate of slaves to-day at three millions to five millions.

Again, in what literal sense do we mean "slaves"? Let there be no mistake; this number does not include domestic servants, or people under different labour systems. It means at least three, but probably five millions of men, women and children, in the sense in which Slavery is defined by the new Anti-Slavery Convention which was passed by the League of Nations last September, under the leadership of the British Government. The Clause defining slavery is as follows:—

"Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised."

The first part of the task before us is to set free these three millions of people, each of whom is **owned by somebody**, and held by somebody as a saleable property right, just as people own a table or a chair or an animal, capable of sale in a market somewhere. Indeed, the League of Nations Slavery Commission drew attention to the fact that in certain parts of the world, slave markets, for the definite purpose of the sale of human beings, have been re-established.

But apart from these systems of slave-owning and slave-trading in human beings as a property, there are systems which are so closely akin to slave-owning, that it is almost impossible to see wherein the difference lies.

There is peonage, which is a system of holding the labourer in debt, the main principle of which is to keep the debt at a point where it can never be liquidated, the debtor and his family being saleable, as units, as labourers. There is the pawning and pledging of human beings, and then, in addition, are the varying systems of contract and indentured labour, all of which are designed to secure control of labour forces, at wages below the market rate.

Child Labourers in Rhodesia.

The most recent system of indentured labour which has been inaugurated, is that of Southern Rhodesia for the indenturing of children. Under this Act, the Officials of Rhodesia can compel children whom they believe to be without parents or guardians, to accept an indenture for varying periods. If any boy under 14 refuses to accept an indenture, he can be flogged. Girls can also be compelled to accept an indenture, but there is no penalty of flogging attaching to this refusal. One of the most striking features of this particular piece of legislation, is that there is no provision for taking the children first before a magistrate, nor for submitting those to be flogged to a doctor, in order to ascertain their physical capacity to bear the whipping.

These systems of slave-owning, slave-trading, slave-raiding, peonage, contract labour, indentured labour, forced labour, affect the well-being of many millions of people amongst the backward races of the world.

—The Liberal Woman's News.

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE AT LIEGE.

The Committee met at Liège from 12th to 18th March on the invitation of the Belgian Section.

Madame Drevet of the French Section gave a masterly summary of the debate on the amazing Bill which provides for the mobilisation of the whole of the French people "without distinction of age or sex in the case of aggression or threatened aggression." This Bill became law after three days' debate with only one dissentient voice raised against it. A manifesto signed by the French women of all parties and of no party has been issued protesting that the Chamber which has not shown itself willing to give the vote to women claims the power to control their consciences and lives without their consent and that, though elected on a Peace Programme, it betrays its mandates by passing the most militarist measure of any country in the world. The signatories of this manifesto declare that they will use every opportunity to denounce this law which is dangerous to liberty and peace.

The British representatives reported the action taken by their section in regard to China. The President of the Irish Section, Miss Louie Bennett, made a proposition which was warmly supported by the whole Executive—that the Women's International League P.F. should send a delegation to China consisting of two members, one European and one American. Madame Drevet will go from Europe. The aim of the delegation would be to establish contacts between women of East and West, to interest Chinese women in the aims and objects of the W.I.L.P.F., and to confer with them on conditions in China with a view to educating public opinion in Europe and America. Already National Sections have started raising the

necessary funds and plans are on foot to set the enterprise in motion.

It will interest suffragists to know that Miss Mary Sheepshanks has been appointed International Secretary; she will take up the duties at the Geneva office in the early autumn.

Women and the Mobilisation Bill in France.

The French Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has been roused to strenuous protest by the new "Bill for the Organisation of the Nation in Time of War" which involves the possible mobilisation of all men, women and children. An open letter has been written to M. Paul Boncour deploring his championship of the Bill, resolutions have been passed denouncing it, and a Petition of Protest has been drawn up and is being circulated for signature. One of the main grounds for protest, as stated in the declaration at the head of the Petition, is the fact that the Government should, for the purposes of this Bill, regard women as citizens who are at its disposal, while denying them the right of citizens to express their opinion through the franchise.

Resolution on China passed by the Executive Committee of the Women's International League (British Branch) on Tuesday, April 5th, 1927.

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League views with much concern the most recent development of the situation in China.

It emphasises its conviction that however clear the implication of Nationalist authority in the attack on Europeans in Nanking may appear to many Europeans, it is absolutely necessary for the future political and trading relations between Great Britain and China that definite investigations before a neutral and competent authority should demonstrate the exact facts.

It therefore urges the necessity of an impartial inquiry by the League of Nations or a specially-appointed Tribunal, before any demand is made concerning reparations or damages.

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR MEXICAN WOMEN.

Equal rights between men and women in Mexico is the aim of Elvia Carillo Puerto, leader of the Mexican Feminist movement.

Press descriptions of Senora Puerto say that she is small, gentle, pretty, and charmingly dressed—but she has commanded armed men battling for their conception of freedom and justice, and she has barely escaped with her life in a revolution in which four of her brothers, one of them formerly Governor of Yucatan, lost their lives.

Senora Puerto was one of the first three women elected to a Mexican State Legislature. This was in Yucatan. She then prepared to become the first Mexican Congresswoman. She was a pioneer woman suffragist in Mexico, having organised the first Women's Congress and the first birth control clinic in Mexico. She is president of the permanent commission of the Mexican Congress. She has formed Feminist groups in various parts of the Republic and has long been active in efforts to improve working conditions of both men and women.

Senora Puerto wants Mexican women to attain social, economic and political independence.

"Mexican women," she said, "are confined to their homes by the fetters of social custom and tradition—fetters intangible but nevertheless potent. We want women to take a larger part in all activities of society, using that word in its most comprehensive sense. The way will be long and hard. First, not merely Mexican women, but Mexican men must be converted to the idea. A great deal of educational work is necessary.

"Our organisation is but started. Indeed, it is scarcely large or strong enough to be called more than a nucleus. Everything is in the future. But ultimately we will succeed!"

Equal Rights.

REPORTS FROM AUXILIARIES.

AUSTRALIA.

New South Wales.

We understand that the Child Endowment Bill has now been passed, but that no statutory payments can be made under it until the new basis wage has been fixed by the special Commission. This is to be fixed on the basis of a man and wife without children, and the allowance for children would come into operation—probably at the rate of 5s. a week for each child as an addition to the actual wage. What this is to be fixed at is not yet known.

Victoria.

Dr. James Booth, an old subscriber to our paper has sent us the following interesting information:

"Victoria's first women Justices of the Peace were appointed in February: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Bleazby, Councillor Mrs. A. E. J. Booth, Mrs. Eleanor Glen-cross, Mrs. E. L. Rees, Ex-Councillor Mrs. M. C. Rogers, Mrs. L. M. Skene and Councillor Mrs. B. M. E. Ross-Watt. All the above were sworn in together before Chief Justice Irvine. Unlike the women justices in South Australia and New South Wales, they have the same power as male justices and several have already sat on the bench. My wife has now her regular day at the City Court. The Church (of England) Constitution Act passed by the General Synod of all the Australian Dioceses has a clause by which the masculine includes the feminine, and this means that where the various dioceses adopt the Act women are eligible as members of Synod or of Vestries. I have fought on our local Melbourne Synod for seven years for this. I got it passed for Synod but not for Vestries. Two dioceses have already adopted the Constitution, one of them being Adelaide, and it is almost certain the others will follow."

Western Australia.

Miss May Holmes has been re-elected to the Legislative Assembly for Labour. Mrs. Edith Cowan, a former Member, and Miss Blake, the other two women standing, were defeated.

GREAT BRITAIN.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

To the Editor of "Jus Suffragii."

Dear Madam,

We regret that last month when you published the statement sent to the Press by the retiring members of our Executive Committee you did not give us an opportunity of placing our point of view before your readers. While quoting the reasons for which the resignations had been made, we had carefully abstained from comment, as it seemed unfortunate that a domestic difference of opinion should have been given such wide publicity. As, however, the statement issued by the resigning members was published in your last number, we must ask you to insert the statement issued by the National Union. We should also be glad if you would publish the names of those remaining on our Executive Committee. They are as follows: Miss Rathbone, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Miss Courtney, Mrs. Layton, Miss Macadam, Miss Picton-Turbervill, Mrs. Ryland, Mrs. Stocks, Mrs. James Taylor, Mrs. Van Gruisen, Miss Helen Ward.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT AS TO THE RESIGNATION OF CERTAIN OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The question which led to the resignation of certain members of the Executive Committee had nothing whatever to do with the demand for Equal Voting Rights between men and women. The National Union is absolutely united as to that and is eagerly awaiting the explanation of the Prime Minister as to how he intends to give effect to the pledge given by his Government on the subject. The differences expressed had relation to two questions discussed at

the recent Council Meeting. First, there is the interpretation of the phrase "equality." The resigning members appeared to think that "equality" is in all cases the same thing as identity. The majority took a wider view, holding that there are certain questions, such as Family Allowances, the right of married women to determine the conditions of their maternity, International Peace, etc., which are as essential to "Equal Citizenship" as some reforms which are more obviously equalitarian. Secondly, there is the question of the Union's attitude towards Factory Legislation designed for the protection of the worker. All were agreed that such legislation, where necessary, should include both sexes. Otherwise it may impede the entry of women to certain trades. But in deciding whether to oppose any proposed regulation altogether or to work for its extension to both sexes, the majority held that the merits of the proposal, its bearing on health and safety and the wishes of the workers concerned should be taken into consideration. The resigning members held that the Union's action should be dictated solely by its bearing on equality.

Yours, etc.,

EVA M. HUBBACK.

Equal Franchise.

At last, after a breathless ten days, we can record a definite step in advance. On Wednesday, April 13th, a day before Parliament rose for the Easter recess, the Prime Minister at long last made his eagerly awaited statement on Equal Franchise. He has definitely undertaken to introduce legislation next session giving the vote to women on the same terms as men and from the age of 21.

A most agitating time had for us preceded this announcement. Rumours had appeared in the Press showing that when the Cabinet at last turned its attention to the subject it was riven in two, the leaders of the party against Equal Franchise consisting of Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Winston Churchill. A barrage in the Rothermere and Beaverbrook Press had been concentrated against what they chose to call "Votes for Flappers"—the existence of two million voteless women over 30 being ignored or even denied. On the day before the announcement, the Cabinet met in the morning, but could not come to any agreement. The mellowing effects of lunch, however, were seen in the fact that in the meeting resumed in the afternoon the decision was come to, as announced above.

In view of the explicitness of the pledges which had been given by the Prime Minister and by the Home Secretary on his behalf it is difficult to see how the refusal to honour them, at least in name, could have been entertained. The only danger now lies in an unexpectedly early general election coming before legislation embodying Equal Franchise has reached the Statute Book.

We tried and partially succeeded in altering the tone of the Press by interviewing editors, inspiring leading articles, writing and inducing others to write letters and articles. We wrote personal letters to the Cabinet and circularised pledges. Our Easter Holiday comes opportunely and will give us breathing space before continuing our campaign in favour of two Bills we are promoting, which will shortly be coming before the House. One is the *Married Women's Employment Bill* to prevent the refusal to employ married women in the public services. At present both the Civil Service and the great majority of Social Authorities dismiss their employees—whether clerks, teachers, doctors, even in some cases, though more rarely, charwomen, on their marriage. This restriction on the liberty of married women is greatly and justly resented by women's organisations and we hope to see the Bill pass its second reading successfully.

The *Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Act Amendment Bill* is designed to undo the harm of the

Lead Paint Act of last session and to prevent the exclusion of women from the house-painting industry. It will probably not go beyond its first reading, but may result in setting up a Home Office Enquiry into the relative susceptibility of men and women to lead poisoning.

Age of Marriage. The present age of marriage for girls in this country is 12 and for boys 14. At our request, both Major Hills and Lady Astor pressed the Government to introduce legislation raising the age—so far without result. In view of the importance attached to the point in the Report of the League of Nations on the Traffic in Women and Children, we hope something will shortly be done.

Summer Schools. The N.U.S.E.C. is arranging a series of week-end summer schools which we hope some readers of this paper, if in England, will attend. The first will be at Malvern—surrounded by beautiful country—on May 13th. The principal speakers will be Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Commandant Allen and Mrs. Hubback. Subjects—Legislation before Parliament, Women Police, the Employment of Married Women, Social Insurance, Women and International Life. Fee for Residence and School, £2 2s. Apply 15, Dean's Yard, S.W.1.

Later schools will be held at Ilkley at the end of June, St. Andrew's (Scotland) the first week in October, and possibly in London.

Visitors to London. We always welcome visitors from foreign lands to our delightful headquarters just behind Westminster Abbey and five minutes from the Houses of Parliament, in order to exchange information and if required, to explain the methods of our work.

E. M. H.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL & POLITICAL ALLIANCE. RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE 15th ANNUAL MEETING.

March 19th, 1927, St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Square, W.1.

1. Equal Political Rights.

(a) **Equal Franchise.** St. Joan's S.P.A. demands an immediate Government measure giving votes to women at 21 and on the same terms as men.

(b) **Women in the House of Lords.** St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to further legislation to enable peeresses in their own right to sit and vote in the House of Lords.

2. Equal Moral Standard.

(a) **Solicitation Laws.** In view of the fact that the Government has promised to appoint a committee of enquiry into the laws dealing with street solicitation, St. Joan's S.P.A. urges that the committee shall sit in public and its evidence be published. It re-affirms its conviction that sections specially directed against "common prostitutes" should be repealed and an equal law be substituted applicable to all persons who annoy or molest others in the streets or public places.

(b) **State Regulation of Vice.** St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to do all in its power to hasten the abolition of all brothels known to the authorities within the jurisdiction of the British Empire.

(c) St. Joan's S.P.A. urges the Government to press for the publication of both sections of the full report of the League of Nations Committee of Investigation into the White Slave Traffic which was presented to the Council of the League last week.

3. Equal Pay and Opportunities.

(a) St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government and Local Authorities to establish among their employees a system of equal pay and opportunities for men and women, thus setting an example to other employers throughout the country.

(b) **Employment of Married Women.** Believing that women should have the right to decide for themselves whether or not they should engage in paid employment after marriage St. Joan's S.P.A. calls

upon the Government to adopt the Married Women's (Employment) Bill, 1927, "to prevent the refusal to employ women in the public service by reason only of their being married."

(c) **"Protective" Legislation.** St. Joan's S.P.A. while believing that protection should be afforded to industrial workers declares that to impose restrictions on women only, is to treat them permanently as minors, and to lower their status as workers.

It believes that the only policy which safeguards their individual liberty and responsibility is that of basing all labour regulations and restrictions upon the nature of the work and not upon the sex of the worker and calls upon the Government to apply this principle to the promised new Factories Bill.

4. Nationality of Married Women.

St. Joan's S.P.A. records with deep regret that the Imperial Conference did not recommend legislation to give effect to the Resolution adopted by the House of Commons on February 18th, 1925: "that in the opinion of the House, a British woman shall not lose or be deemed to lose her nationality by the mere act of marriage with an alien and that it should be open to her to make a declaration of alienage." It urges the Mother Country to take the lead in passing legislation to give effect to this Resolution.

5. Age of Marriage.

St. Joan's S.P.A. deplors the fact that 12 is still the legal age of marriage for girls and urges immediate legislation to remedy this evil.

6. Women Police.

St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to further legislation making it compulsory on Watch Committees and Standing Joint Committees to appoint a sufficient number of women police.

7. Birth Control.

St. Joan's S.P.A. expresses its satisfaction with the continued policy of the Minister of Health in not allowing information on artificial Birth Control to be given at Infant Welfare Centres which are maintained out of public funds to which people of all opinions are required to contribute.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance was one of the twenty-four societies represented on the deputation received by the Prime Minister on March 8th to discuss the problem of Franchise. The Alliance was represented by Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, B.A., Hon. Secretary of the Liverpool branch of the Alliance, who spoke on behalf of the "Under Thirties."

She pointed out the justice of their claim, the necessity of the vote for their welfare, and the danger of allowing them to reach the age of thirty without any sense of political responsibility. She said that the demand was not confined to London and the south, but that the north was just as keen. She assured the Prime Minister that she had the good wishes and prayers of her colleagues for the success of the deputation.

INDIA.

The Age of Consent Bill.

It is very gratifying to see that Sir Hari Sing Gour's Bill, to raise the Age of Consent of girls from 14 to 16, is receiving active support from the Indian women themselves. The Women's Educational Conference (Poona) passed an emphatic resolution on the subject. Some days after, a largely attended public meeting, in Bombay, has further supported the measure. Its President, Lady Tata, examined the question in all its aspects and declared that the "incalculable harm done to the nation by early marriage and the steady deterioration of the race, due to the custom, are not matters to be left unremedied till some convenient moment." Her whole speech is an effective answer both to the conservative section of Indians and the equally conservative Government in this vital measure of social reform. Ahmedabad has followed Bombay's example. In Madras and elsewhere, the W.I.A. and

its Branches had organised last time strong public opinion on the question. But it is highly necessary that the agitation should be revived now with greater vigour as Sir H. S. Gour expects that the Bill will be discussed on the 27th. It is a great handicap that there are no women in the Legislative Assembly to advocate the Bill, when it will come up for discussion on the 25th instant. The object and provisions of the Bill appeared in the December number of STRI DHARMA.

Maternity and Child Welfare Conference.

The Maternity and Child-welfare Conference, opened by Lady Irwin, in Delhi, last month, was a great success. It was attended by nearly 200 workers in the cause, men and women, professional and lay, from all over the country, including Burma and Ceylon. The proceedings of the Conference show that the problem was dealt with in a wide and comprehensive spirit. The new programme recognises the futility of introducing strange and costly methods of work in the country. It, therefore, includes ways and means for making the intelligent and fullest use of all the existing and indigenous resources of professional practice and skill, and for gradually improving their quality. Importance was also laid on the necessity of greater co-ordination between official and non-official agencies in the maternity and child-welfare work. It was proposed that special subjects, of infant welfare and maternal care, should be included in the curriculum of medical schools and colleges. The Conference also adopted two important resolutions, for the raising of the Age of Consent of girls and the necessity of providing Maternity Benefits to women-workers in factories.

The Indian States and Women's Rights.

The Indian States are peculiarly fortunate in being able to effect reforms in social and other conditions unhampered by the "neutral" attitude of the Government, as they are in British India. In Baroda, a Committee has been appointed to enquire into the working of the law preventing child marriage, which has been in force for the last 20 years, and recommend how to make it more effective. The Ruler of Bharatapur, in a recent Proclamation, has forbidden early marriage in his State. In Travancore and Cochin, women can vote for and sit in their Legislative Councils, and they actually do so. In Travancore a lady is a member of the Government. In Mysore, recently, the proposal to give women the right for voting and membership of the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council was adopted by a majority after "a full-dress debate" for over two hours. The measure received "support from unexpected quarters," in spite of the opposition of the usual kind. It is expected in all quarters that Srimati Parvathi Ammal Chandrashekarai will soon be nominated to the Council, and we can assure the State that she will be an acquisition to it. Mysore has, in the meanwhile, nominated her to the District Board of Bangalore; Mrs. Madurabai Uchgvarkar (Lady Surgeon) to the Kadur District Board; and Mrs. Mandyan, B.A., and Miss Lewis (Lady Surgeon) to the Kolar District Board.

IRELAND.

Democracy—as Interpreted in Ireland.

The two Irish Governments—that of Northern Ireland and that of the Irish Free State—came into being during a period of acute civil disturbance. The first duty that each had to fulfil was the restoration of order. As one consequence, each Government tends to adopt the attitude of dictatorship. In their opinion, they are the ultimate judges of what is best for the community. In the case of Northern Ireland, the fiat goes forth, "Thou shalt not have it"—whether the "it" be Local Option, or Equal Guardianship of Children. The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland informed the Temperance party, of which body the women's section forms the fighting force, that during his tenure of office no further Temperance measures should be carried. Sad to say—so far has the "spirit

of revolt" spread, the Temperance party, backed by the Churches, continues to organise its campaign for Local Option. Next it is the turn of the Ministry of Home Affairs to encounter "those uppity weemen." A strong deputation from the Belfast Women's Advisory Council waited on the Ministry on March 31st. As stated in the last issue of this paper, five measures were demanded. The Ministry promised three. The other two including the very important Equal Guardianship Bill, were refused. Differences between the law in England and that in Northern Ireland were, under pressure, "admitted." The pledge that equal treatment with England should be secured for Northern Ireland was admitted. But, in the opinion of the Ministry, these special measures would not be to the advantage of Northern Ireland—no reason for this statement being given—and that closed the matter. The fact that the deputation represented 5,000 women voters was not relevant. There will be a general election in 1929, probably under Equal Franchise.

The Burden of Citizenship. Meanwhile in the Irish Free State, the Minister of Justice has also his trials with "the militant minority who wish to dragoon their weaker sisters" into liability for jury service. Under pressure from the aforesaid minority, otherwise known as the Irishwomen's Citizens' Association, an amendment to the Women Jurors' Bill, under which women would retain the privilege of jury service, was carried in the Senate by a considerable majority.

The Minister frankly told the House that he would have this amendment thrown out when the Bill came back to the Dail. The Government, he said, "had no intention of imposing the burden of citizenship regardless of sex." Again, the fact that organised women—the Women Citizens have formed a Joint Committee representing practically every woman's organisation in Dublin—demand these equal burdens is not relevant. In this case, the general election will be on June 8th, and the Minister of Justice has given valuable help to the candidature of Mrs. Noel Guinness, who is standing for County Dublin on the women's programme.

DORA MELLONE.

NEW ZEALAND.

A few words are due from this far out post. New Zealand won a belated victory in the last days of 1926—the appointment of women Justices of the Peace. Eighteen were appointed as a beginning, the Department wisely selecting women already holding municipal honours or in Government positions in works of social betterment, or in the van of feminist organisation. In this matter, as in others, the Hon. F. J. Rolleston, our new Minister of Justice, has well maintained the traditions of his name, his father, William Rolleston, having been one of the most distinguished of our first New Zealand statesmen.

The National Council of Women has just finished its conference held in Christchurch this year. It had the inspiration of the presence of our veteran Suffrage leader, Mrs. Kate W. Sheppard, now the wife of Mr. W. Sidney Lovell-Smith, author of "Female Franchise in New Zealand." For health reasons Mrs. Lovell-Smith has had to relinquish active participation in public work, but her sympathy is as keen as ever, her home remaining a centre of social thought and women's achievement.

A few lights on the feminist thought of the country are obtained by a glance at some of the newer remits dealt with in Council. For example, in emphasising the question of mental deficiency and degeneration, it was urged that the Government should reserve a special prison farm for all sexual offenders, and appoint a psychiatrist to attend the Court. The Minister of Health was urged to set up a Eugenics Board, of whom one member should be a trained psychiatrist, with power to build up the necessary machinery for the classification and care of all mental defectives.

Our fine pension system, it was urged, should be supplemented by a pension where an invalid husband is

dependent on his wife. Strong resolutions were passed on the equal pay and opportunity for women, and on the position of married women who desired to retain British nationality and not acquire that of their alien husbands. A practical request was made that when a man is committed to gaol payment of his labour in prison should be made to dependents after the first fortnight following committal, instead of after three months as at present.

The vexed question of immigration, as touching the abnormal continuance of unemployment during the last nine months, was cautiously but earnestly considered, and the temporary cessation of immigration decided upon from next May was approved.

The most spectacular pronouncement in view of the times was the triumphant reaffirmation of the Council that the third issue (State Control) be taken off the liquor ballot-paper, leaving a straight-out fight between Continuance and Prohibition. It was shown that State Control was not a possible solution, was never supported at the highest by more than one-eighth of the voters, and that its place on the ballot-paper was only a concession to anti-social interests.

A hopeful spirit prevailed as to the spirit and success of women's work for 1927.

JESSIE MACKAY.

Christchurch, March 12.

TURKEY.

On March 28th, 1927, the Turkish Woman Suffrage Society held its first Congress. After the election of the Secretary, the Vice-President and the President, who took the chair, the Congress was opened.

Naziya Mouheddin, as president, gave a brief report of the activities and aim of the Kaden Birghili (Union des Femmes) during the last three years. In spite of tremendous difficulties and all sorts of troubles, Kaden Birghili has achieved a great deal of success. The report of the Executive Committee was then read and discussed and it was decided, after much discussion, to admit men as auxiliary members of Kaden Birghili.

The new Executive Committee was then elected, including many very distinguished Turkish ladies. Naziya Mouheddin was unanimously re-elected as president.

Emin Ali Bey, one of the prominent men of Turkey, proposed a vote of thanks, in the name of the Society, to Mademoiselle Stès, who has been the support of the Society through the difficult years. This proposal was carried with eager enthusiasm and the Society is very proud to have Mademoiselle Stès continue as its most active and interested friend.

This first Congress was so well arranged that most of the sister societies would have been proud to have seen it. It lasted till late in the afternoon and groups were formed to forward the work of the Society in connection with such matters as International and health questions, etc.

U.S.A.

Jury Service for Women in the United States.

The state of Rhode Island is the first to report victory in the jury-service-for-women campaigns that many state Leagues of Women Voters are waging in their 1927 legislatures.

The Nineteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution giving women the franchise neither directly nor indirectly removed all undesirable legal inequalities between men and women. Thus in many states it did not operate to make women eligible or liable for jury duty.

In the states of Utah and Washington jury service has been open to women since 1911. In some counties of California women were eligible in 1912 and in the whole state in 1917. Since 1920, by new statutes or by construction of those already existing, women have been made jurors in eighteen additional states.

In nine of these twenty-one states the service of women is compulsory, that is, they render service upon exactly the same terms as do men. In two states there are special exemptions relating only to women—

in Iowa for "registered nurses"; in Maine for "nurses." In the remaining ten states service for women is permissive—that is, women may serve if they wish, but the law does not make their service mandatory as it does that of men.

In two other states it is apparently an open question as to whether or not women are liable for jury duty. The uncertainty arises from the language used in the statutes describing jurors. In North Carolina the word used is "persons." In Vermont the words used are "legal voters." In these two states the question has not been settled, either by opinion of the Attorney-General or by court decision, whether or not these words should be read to include women as well as men. In Vermont the League is preparing a test case in order to secure a decision on the point from the state Supreme Court. In other states where the same ambiguity occurs in the language of the statutes the question has already been settled either one way or the other.

Within the last few months an interesting situation has developed in the state of Minnesota which has a compulsory jury service for women law. The Board of Commissioners of Renville County decided that they would nullify the law by omitting the names of women from the list of jurors. Citizens of the county took the matter to Court asking that the County Board be compelled to rescind its list of male jurors. The Court ruled in favour of the women and issued a writ of mandamus to compel the County Commissioners to include the names of women without discrimination.

In the last days of the short-session of the Congress the Senate passed a Bill making women eligible for jury service in the district of Columbia. The Board of Trade asked the President not to sign it, saying, "Entirely aside from women's physical and nervous structure which is not calculated for service in the jury room, as distinguished from the jury box, the Board of Trade feels that extended service in trials requiring jurists to remain out for a considerable period of time would impose an unnecessary strain and obligation upon women." Credit is due to President Coolidge for signing the Bill promptly.

That many experienced and influential people hold an entirely different view from that of the District of Columbia Board of Trade is shown by the opinions of judges, lawyers, and laymen that come frequently to the League favouring the service of women on juries. A few typical comments are: "The presence of women on the jury elevates the tone of the Court"; "They can sift out a great deal better than men the witnesses that are lying on the witness stand"; "They are attentive to the evidence, quick to catch the facts in a case, remember them well, and follow the instructions of the court with strict fidelity. They have a high sense of justice and are very solicitous that right should prevail in their verdict. Unlike some men who serve as jurors, they are not inclined to favour a litigant just because he is an influential person in the community or has great political influence."—"From an experience of twenty-eight years on the bench as trial judge I give it as my unqualified conviction that when our legislature adopted the law making women eligible to jury duty it took a long stride in the line of progress toward improved administration of the law."

Like all of Gaul the public power of our state and of the United States is divided into three parts: the executive, the legislative and the judicial. Everywhere in the country (except in Oklahoma) women are eligible to hold executive offices—offices that range from member of school boards to governor. Everywhere women are eligible to enter the legislative field. Everywhere also women are eligible to become members of the bar and judges. But just here there is a difference. Technical, professional training is necessary before a person can become a lawyer. In the states that keep women off the jury there is no place in the judicial system for the laywoman, for the woman with no special training but with sound common sense and intelligence. Her contribution is accepted and considered valuable in both the executive and legislative branches of the Government. The League of Women

Voters does not consider the judicial branch less important than these that it should be deprived of what women have to contribute.

JULIA MARGARET HICKS.

A Plea for Woman Suffrage in Porto Rico.

Women of Porto Rico have demonstrated their capacity to share in economic, professional and civic affairs, and are entitled to become voting citizens, Miss Belle Sherwin of Washington, D.C., declared, in communications addressed to the President of the Senate and the President of the House of Porto Rico.

In urging legislative approval of the petition for woman suffrage, Miss Sherwin voiced the sentiment of the Inter-American Union of Women, of which she is vice-president for North America. She is also president of the National League of Women Voters. Miss Sherwin's letter follows:

It gives me pleasure to support the petition of the women of Porto Rico and the recommendation of your governor in behalf of the measure which I understand is now before you to extend the suffrage to women.

This petition is not based upon abstract principles of right and justice of women alone. The desire of women for the privileges and responsibilities of voting citizenship follows naturally upon their increasing participation in community activities.

In Porto Rico women have demonstrated their capacity to share in economic, professional and civic affairs and have shown a public spirited and intelligent interest in questions affecting the general welfare. In the establishment and building up of the public school system, which is responsible for the rapid reduction of illiteracy and has contributed more than any one factor to the capacity for self government, women have had the leading part. The majority of the teachers of the public schools are women, and among the pupils girls and boys enjoy equal opportunities for education and preparation for citizenship.

The Inter-American Union of Women, in addition to its general object of promoting understanding and friendship among the American nations, has the more specific purpose of advancing the status and welfare of women. Particularly it seeks to obtain their full civil and political rights.

By granting the vote to women, Porto Rico will at once place itself in a position of leadership in the western hemisphere and will serve as an example for countries of Central and South America where the movement for enfranchisement is increasing in hope and vitality.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

The following paragraphs are largely taken from miscellaneous press sources and their accuracy is not vouched for by our National Auxiliaries.

China.

Miss Soumi Tchong, LL.D. (Paris), China's first woman barrister, has been made by the Nationalists Chief Judge in the Shanghai District Court, if we are to credit a trustworthy contemporary.

Great Britain.

Woman Lawyer's Distinction.

Miss Kidd, the daughter of the member of Parliament for Linnithgow, added to her honours recently by being the first woman counsel to appear before a Parliamentary Select Committee. She had already the two claims to distinction of being the first woman member of the Faculty of Advocates and the first woman to appear as counsel before the House of Lords' tribunal. She is acting as junior to three K.C.'s, who are representing Greenock in support of their scheme to bring within their boundaries the burghs of Port-Glasgow and Gourrock.

Persistence.

The Young Suffragists are keeping on. Every day they send a letter to Mr. Baldwin. The first communi-

cation asked whether he had yet considered the question of the vote they mean to have. In all the other letters they keep on asking him.

Russia.

Greater participation of women and the increased number of women elected is an interesting aspect of 1927 elections for the town Soviets in Russia, states the "Soviet Union Monthly."

Women elected in the 122 towns from which information is available form 22.2 per cent. of the elected members, compared with 19 per cent. in 1926.

The percentage of women members to men on public bodies is probably greater, it is stated, in the Soviet Union than in any other country.

Turkey.

At a meeting at Constantinople of the Union of Turkish Women a resolution was passed demanding equal political rights for Moslem women, reports the Exchange.

The first woman ever to be appointed as a steamship agent is a German educated in France and England, who married a Turk, and then set out to make a career for herself. She is Mme. Maria Haidar Bey, and has been made manager of the Paris office of a steamship line.

Her first start was given her by General Harington, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army of Occupation in Turkey, who secured for her the management of a military club that was formerly Enver Pasha's cavalry club. Here she was served by a mixed staff of Greeks, English, French and Germans, but as she speaks seven languages fluently their control presented no difficulty.

Later she moved to Athens, where she undertook relief work for the League of Nations, going afterwards to Paris to study diplomacy in the Ecole des Sciences Politiques.

British United Press.

U.S.A.

Annabel Matthews, an attorney in the office of the General Counsel of Internal Revenue, sailed March 30 for London, where she will be the American representative of the Treasury Department of the International Conference on Double Taxation, to be held under the auspices of the League of Nations. She has been chosen out of the 150 lawyers in that Government agency because of her outstanding knowledge of income tax law.

Women Delegates for Geneva.

The Joint Standing Committee of Women's International Organisations for the Representation of Women on the League of Nations has been informed from Geneva that Dr. E. C. van Dorp, Dr. M. E. Luders, and Mrs. Barbara Wootton have been invited to attend the International Economic Conference as full delegates. The conference will open on May 4 at Geneva.

Bolivia.

Señorita Maria Josefa Saavedra, daughter of Dr. Abdon Saavedra, Vice-President of the Bolivian Republic, has passed her final law examinations, and has become a Doctor of Law. She is the first woman to qualify as a lawyer in Bolivia.

Women Police.

The Women's Auxiliary Service, 51 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1, is publishing early in May the first number of a monthly paper giving the national and international position of Women Police. This paper will be called "The Policewoman's Review" and will include articles by well-known men and women on the question. The yearly subscription will be 3s. 6d. post free.

SECTION FRANCAISE

LES CONGRES DE L'ETE.

Le Conseil International des Femmes tiendra à Genève du 7 au 17 juin prochain les réunions de son Comité Exécutif et de ses Commissions permanentes. Nous en publions le programme ci-après.

MARDI 7 JUIN :

9 h. : Réunion du Bureau. (Salles de l'Athénée.)
14 h. : Conférence sur le travail de la Commission d'Hygiène de la S.d.N. et sur la coopération à ce travail du Conseil International et des Conseils Nationaux. (Athénée.)

16 h. 30 : Séances des Commissions des Finances, du Suffrage et de la Presse. (Athénée et local de l'Union des Femmes.)

MERCREDI 8 JUIN :

9 h. : Séances des Commissions des Finances, de l'Unité de la Morale, et du Suffrage. (Mêmes locaux.)

14 h. : Conférence sur le travail de la S.d.N. en matière de coopération intellectuelle. (Athénée.)

16 h. 30 : Séances des Commissions du Travail féminin et de Protection de la jeunesse. (Mêmes locaux.)

20 h. 30 : Séance publique (Aula de l'Université) : Discours d'ouverture de la présidente de l'Alliance nationale de Sociétés féminines suisses; discours de la présidente du Conseil International des Femmes; présentation des présidentes et des représentantes des Conseils nationaux. Sujets traités : *Ce que le C.I.F. a fait pour la jeunesse. Ce que le C.I.F. a fait en faveur de l'entente internationale.*

JEUDI 9 JUIN :

9 h. : Séances des Commissions de la Presse, des Lois, de la Paix et de l'Arbitrage. (Mêmes locaux.)

14 h. : Conférence sur l'activité du B.I.T. (Athénée.)

16 h. 30 : Suite des séances des Commissions de la Presse, des Lois et de la Paix et de l'Arbitrage. (Mêmes locaux.)

Soir : Conférence sur l'œuvre sociale de la S.d.N.

VENDREDI 10 JUIN :

9 h. : Séances des Commissions d'Education, d'Hygiène et d'Emigration. (Mêmes locaux.)

14 h. : Conférence sur la Conférence Internationale Economique de la S.d.N. (Athénée.)

16 h. 30 : Suite des Séances des Commissions de la Presse, des Lois et de la Paix et de l'Arbitrage. (Mêmes locaux.)

20 h. 30 : Séance publique (Salle Centrale) : *La participation de la femme à l'application des lois et au fonctionnement de la justice* (femmes juges, agentes de police, membres du jury, etc., etc.). Diverses oratrices internationales.

SAMEDI 11 JUIN :

9 h. : Séances des Commissions de Protection de la jeunesse, du Cinéma, d'Education, et de la Paix.

Après-midi : Réceptions particulières, promenades, visites d'institutions genevoises et internationales, etc.

Soir : Réception offerte par les Sociétés genevoises.

DIMANCHE 12 JUIN :

Après-midi : Excursion en commun organisée par la Commission de réception.

LUNDI 13 JUIN :

Matin et après-midi : Réunions du Comité Exécutif.

20 h. 30 : Conférence sur l'œuvre de la S. d. N. en matière d'arbitrage et de sécurité. (Athénée.)

MARDI 14 JUIN :

Matin et après-midi : Réunions du Comité Exécutif.

20 h. 30 : Séance publique (Aula de l'Université) : 1. *Notre croisade contre la traite des femmes.*—2. *Ce que le C.I.F. a fait en matière d'emigration.* (Diverses oratrices internationales.)

MERCREDI 15 JUIN :

Matin et après-midi : Réunions du Comité Exécutif.

JEUDI 16 JUIN :

Matin et après-midi : Réunions du Comité Exécutif.

Soir : Diner d'adieux.

VENDREDI 17 JUIN :

Matin et après-midi : Réunions finales des Commissions permanentes.

Ce programme est naturellement susceptible de modifications.

Parmi les autres Congrès et réunions nationales ou internationales prévues pour cet été, nous signalons :

7-8 MAI : LAUSANNE : Assemblée générale de l'Association suisse pour le Suffrage féminin.

25-28 MAI : PRAGUE : Réunion du Comité Exécutif complet de l'Alliance internationale pour le Suffrage des femmes.

31 MAI-4 JUIN : NEUCHÂTEL : Cinquantenaire de la fondation de l'Union Internationale des Amies de la Jeune Fille.

19-26 JUIN : BAVENO (Lac Majeur) : Cours de Vacances international de l'Association pour l'amélioration des conditions du travail.

27-30 JUILLET : GENEVE : Congrès du Conseil International des Infirmières. —Le Mouvement Féministe.

LA FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES AMIES DE LA JEUNE FILLE.

Neuchâtel s'appête à célébrer le cinquantenaire de la fondation de la Fédération internationale des Amies de la Jeune Fille, et organise, à l'occasion de ce grand anniversaire, un Congrès qui durera du 31 mai au 3 juin 1927. Celui-ci débute par une cérémonie religieuse qui se déroulera à la Collégiale de Neuchâtel. Présidée par M. le pasteur Schloesing, qui occupe à Mulhouse le poste de pasteur français, cette manifestation sera rehaussée par de la musique d'orgue et des chœurs de circonstance. La présidente internationale de la Fédération y prendra également la parole.

Mercredi 1er juin sera rempli par des travaux sur des sujets d'ordre moral et social, et cette journée se terminera par une manifestation officielle, à laquelle prendront part tous les invités au Congrès, délégués d'associations internationales, et représentants de nos gouvernements. Une soirée familière au Palais Rougement clôturera cette journée.

Les travaux reprendront jeudi matin, et, dans l'après-midi de cette seconde journée, tous les congressistes seront dirigés sur Grandson, où ils visiteront la Maison vaudoise d'éducation pour jeunes filles retardées. Le soir de ce même jour, il y aura une réunion publique avec projections lumineuses, où l'on verra défiler toute l'activité des Amies, sous forme de homes, de maisons hospitalières, etc.

Les séances du Congrès se termineront vendredi 3 juin. Excepté deux séances administratives réservées aux membres, elles sont toutes ouvertes au public, qui est cordialement invité à y prendre part.

(Communiqué par le Bureau central international des Amies de la Jeune Fille.)

ROUMANIE.

La Ligue pour les Droits et Devoirs de la Femme.
Nous avons l'honneur d'envoyer un compte-rendu résumé au sujet de l'Assemblée générale de la Ligue,

qui a eu lieu le 6 mars dans une salle de l'Université.

Conformément au programme, on a donné d'abord lecture au "Rapport moral de l'activité pendant 17 ans," en établissant le travail au cours des années, à savoir : Ecoles d'adultes et horticoles, co-opératives féminines, enquêtes pour les paysannes. L'élevation de la statue d'un grand poète roumain, la présentation d'un mémoire à la Chambre, l'obtention pour la paysanne, veuve de la guerre, d'une pension exceptionnelle, etc.

2. Le compte-rendu financier et le bilan de l'an 1926.

3. La réforme du Comité en retrécissant le nombre des membres de 40 à 20, comme le suit :

Présidents : Mme. Eugénie de Reuss Jancoulescu, M. le Dr. N. Minovici.

Vice-Présidents : Mme. Olympia Ciurcu, Mme. Henriette Gavrilescu, Docteur en droit; M. Caius Brediceanu, député; M. Alexandre Mavrojany, député.

Secrétaires générales : Mme. Liana Nicodem, Mlle. Catherine Tilinski.

Trésorière : Mme. Stephanie Brudariu, etc., etc.

On a élu aussi quelques nouveaux membres d'honneur.

On proposa la réforme des Statuts, conformément au Statut-type du Ministre de l'Assistance. On l'approuva et on l'a voté chapitre par chapitre.

On établit d'avance les activités nouvelles pour l'année 1927, en continuant, bien entendu, les oeuvres commencées. Mmes. Alexandrina Cantacuzene et Eugénie de Reuss vont organiser la "Section de la Paix" avec, comme activité immédiate "La Ligue pour la Bonté des Enfants."

En lignes larges, on agite l'idée d'un cinématographe pour enfants avec films spécialement et soigneusement choisis comme moyen d'éducation; d'une cantine gratuite pour enfants abandonnés, élèves pauvres et pour la classe ouvrière; expositions permanentes d'industrie nationale qui est admirable chez nous; Mme. Steliana Ciortescu, horticulteur, études spéciales, veut mettre en pratique le création du "Village-modèle" dans la commune "Progrès" afin de former le goût du peuple pour le beau et l'utile.

On annonce une série de conférences pour mars, avril, mai :

(1) La femme commerçante—M. Stelien Jonescu, Magistrat.

(2) La paix et la culture de l'humanité—M. Const. Brudariu.

(3) Les circles a influence politique en Sud-Est de l'Europe—M. C. Conta.

(4) La civilisation aux bouches du Danube—le même.

(5) La Ligue de la Bonté—Mme. de Reuss Jancoulescu.

(6) Le problème des minorités—M. le Sénateur V. Moldoveanu.

(7) Le féminisme et l'alcoolisme—Mme. Liana Nicodem.

On présenta ensuite un projet de budget pour l'exercice 1927, s'élevant à 705,000 lei, dont on approuva les points.

Au fur et à mesure que notre programme sera mise à exécution, nous aurons l'honneur de vous mettre au courant, surtout que, très heureusement, l'idée féministe commence à se faire une place importante chez nous.

La Secrétaire :

LIANA NICODEM.

SUISSE.

Association Nationale Suisse pour le Suffrage Féminin.

Le Comité Central de l'A.S.S.F. a tenu à Berne, le 13 mars, une séance qui, pour n'avoir pas un ordre du jour extrêmement chargé, n'en a pas moins été très remplie par une foule de questions d'ordre pratique: ne fallait-il pas, en effet, organiser l'Assemblée générale de Lausanne, décider de la façon dont l'A.S.S.F. exposerait à la "Saffa," et prendre connaissance de rapports

de Commissions sur diverses méthodes de propagande? toutes choses qui nécessitent une mise au point soignée de tous les détails. La date de l'Assemblée générale ayant dû être changée pour divers motifs, et notamment à cause de la réunion à Prague à la fin de mai, du Comité Exécutif de l'Alliance Internationale pour le Suffrage, à laquelle doit participer la présidente de l'A.S.S.F., le C.C. a définitivement fixé cette Assemblée au samedi 7 et au dimanche 8 mai, et a élaboré un ordre du jour fort intéressant, comprenant notamment les sujets suivants: campagne suffragiste à Bâle, allocations familiales, suffrage féminin ecclésiastique, pastorat féminin, propagande suffragiste dans les campagnes. La Section vaudoise, qui célébrera à ce moment son XXe anniversaire, se charge de l'organisation d'une soirée familière, le samedi soir, qui ne sera pas le moindre attrait de ces assises, et l'on prévoit encore un banquet officiel, et peut-être une promenade en bateau ou une réception à la campagne. Le Comité a accepté, quant à la manière d'exposer de l'A.S.S.F. à la Saffa, les propositions formulées par une Commission composée de Mmes Amsler (Schaffhouse), Leuch (Lausanne) et Gourd (Genève), sous réserve de l'établissement d'un devis approprié aux ressources financières de l'Association; si ces projets peuvent être exécutés le stand suffragiste remportera certainement un grand succès à l'Exposition. Quant à la propagande, le Comité a décidé de publier en brochure un beau travail de Mlle Porret (Neuchâtel), qui serait ensuite traduit en allemand; il a voté un crédit pour la confection d'un certain nombre de petits objets de propagande présentés par Mme. Leuch et Mlle Porret; et, prenant acte de l'excellent travail fait dans le Valais par Mlle Zwahlen, et notamment des heureux résultats d'une conférence du Dr Muret, à Sierre, il a chargé Mme Leuch de conférences de propagande dans les localités des Grisons qui ne comptent pas encore de Sections, et Mlle Dutoit de démarches en Thurgovie pour la fondation d'une Section. Le Cours de Vacances de juillet 1927 aura lieu à Macolin sur Bière, et l'on étudie la possibilité d'organiser un Cours dans le Tessin pendant les vacances d'automne. Le bulletin de presse continue à être envoyé tous les 15 jours à un grand nombre de journaux, et toutes les coupures de ces journaux seront reçues avec reconnaissance au Secrétariat de Berne, où peuvent également être adressées des commandes de cartes postales avec carte suffragiste de l'Europe en couleur (6 fr. le cent). Enfin, quelques questions d'ordre international, notamment la représentation des femmes à la prochaine Conférence Internationale du Travail (mai 1927), ont occupé la fin de cette séance si remplie.

E. Gd.
—Le Mouvement Féministe.

GRECE.

L'article 6 de la Constitution.

A la séance de la chambre du 2 Février la formule sous laquelle fut présenté l'article 6 par la Commission sur la Constitution a été acceptée à l'unanimité, ainsi que l'interprétation suivante :

"Le véritable sens de l'article est que dans les services de l'état sont seuls nommés fonctionnaires des citoyens Grecs à condition qu'ils possèdent les qualités prévues par la loi. Les étrangers ne peuvent remplir ces fonctions que si une loi spéciale le permet. Le mot citoyen dans cet article et dans les autres, implique le sens de sujet Grec, c'est-à-dire de celui qui possède la nationalité Grecque sans distinction de sexe ni d'âge. Les droits politiques peuvent être octroyés à la femme par une loi spéciale."

A la séance du 29 Décembre, après la discussion sur les mesures préventives contre les films cinématographiques immoraux l'amendement suivant a été voté.

"Une loi spéciale permet de prendre des mesures préventives contre la littérature qui offense la morale et de protéger la jeunesse contre les spectacles et les représentations indecentes."

FRANCE.

Le vote des femmes au Sénat.

La Commission sénatoriale du Suffrage féminin s'est prononcée contre le vote des femmes. Mais le vote de la Commission ne préjuge en rien de la décision du Sénat.

M. Marraud compte déposer un rapport avant Pâques et pense que la discussion aura vraisemblablement lieu au mois de mai.

La Commission du Suffrage féminin s'est réunie le vendredi 25 mars, sous la présidence de M. Pérès. Par 7 voix contre 5 elle repoussa la proposition de M. Louis Martin sur le suffrage intégral des femmes. Elle repoussa également la proposition de M. Henry Chéron d'accorder l'électorat municipal aux femmes.

M. Jenouvrier faillit rallier la majorité de la Commission en demandant le suffrage municipal pour les femmes non mariées ou veuves ayant plus de trente ans et à condition que le Conseil ne comprenne au maximum qu'un quart de femmes. Il obtint 6 voix contre 7, sept sénateurs restant hostiles et s'opposant à toute transaction. Enfin, à l'unanimité la Commission décida qu'en aucun cas la question du vote des femmes ne devait se trouver mêlée à la discussion sur la réforme électorale. M. Marraud fut à nouveau chargé du rapport.

Nous avons vu depuis cette réunion quelques-uns de nos amis sénateurs qui paraissent fort émus de cette séance de Commission où la lutte fut chaude. A notre point de vue, elle ne préjuge en rien du résultat final. La presse déclara même que quatre des membres de la majorité ont indiqué que s'ils avaient voté contre l'amendement de M. Jenouvrier, c'était pour ne pas modifier les conclusions du rapport et qu'ils le voteront en séance. Nous n'avons donc aucune raison de nous sentir découragés. Certes, nous ne pouvons pas accueillir avec transport l'amendement de M. Jenouvrier qui oublie les femmes mariées et les mères de famille, et préconise un système d'éligibilité plutôt inattendu; l'ironie serait facile sur un tel amendement. Mais nos lecteurs comprendront notre réserve. Nous devons laisser à nos amis du Sénat toute liberté pour obtenir ce qu'ils peuvent. N'oublions pas que la Chambre des Députés doit décider en dernier ressort. Contentons-nous pour l'instant de faire quelques démarches personnelles auprès des sénateurs et de les documenter afin qu'ils puissent eux-mêmes nous défendre en s'appuyant sur des faits, sur des résultats déjà obtenus ailleurs.

On a trop de bon sens chez nous pour que nous ne triomphions pas finalement des résistances les plus obstinées.

MLE. LUCIE ACHARD.

Nous avons le regret d'apprendre la mort de Mlle. Lucie Achard. C'est une grande et noble figure qui disparaît. Petite fille de Charles de Constant, nièce de Benjamin Constant et fille du Syndic Rigaud, elle tenait de sa famille le goût de la vie intellectuelle et l'expérience des oeuvres sociales. En même temps qu'elle fondait à Genève l'Association pour la Protection de l'Enfance, qu'elle réorganisait la caisse de retraite des institutrices, qu'elle s'intéressait à toutes les organisations féminines de sa ville (comme membre de la Croix Rouge, elle prit aussi une grande part à l'oeuvre des prisonniers de guerre), elle écrivit des ouvrages qui furent appréciés pour leur érudition en même temps que pour leur valeur littéraire: "Rosalie de Constant, sa famille et ses amies, 1754-1834," "La Restauration de la République de Genève 1813-1814," de nombreux livres d'histoire pour les enfants; elle dirigea même, pendant quelque temps, une revue "La Lecture" pour les parents, elle publia des articles alertes et spirituels et fit des conférences dont une très remarquable, à l'Athénée, sur la fameuse hôtellerie de Sécheron. Elle fut, pendant plusieurs années, l'âme du Lyceum Club de Genève, où elle organisa d'intéressantes réunions. Lorsque le Congrès de l'Alliance se réunit à Genève, Mme. et Mlle. Achard reçurent les congressistes dans leur belle résidence

historique de Pregny. Elle vient de s'éteindre à l'âge de 75 ans après avoir gardé jusqu'au bout sa belle activité morale et intellectuelle. Sa mort laisse un grand vide dans la société genevoise.

MADELEINE RUDLER.

LA TRAITE DES FEMMES ET DES ENFANTS ET L'ENQUETE DE LA SOCIETE DES NATIONS

"Traite des blanches." Il est des personnes que ces mots font sourire ou hausser les épaules. Elles ont entendu raconter de vagues histoires concernant ce trafic tel qu'il existait il y a de nombreuses années; mais comme elles ont également entendu parler de lois et de conventions conclues en vue de réprimer la traite, elles en ont déduit que celle-ci n'est plus maintenant qu'un souvenir du passé qui persiste, sous une forme mélodramatique, dans le roman populaire ou au cinéma.

Il est vrai que, de nos jours, grâce aux précautions adoptées par les gouvernements, la traite a pris un caractère quelque peu différent. Il fut un temps où le fait de procurer des jeunes filles innocentes pour les livrer à la prostitution n'était que trop commun, alors qu'actuellement, il semblerait plutôt que la plupart des femmes emmenées à l'étranger sont des prostituées dans leur propre pays, bien que la traite ne soit nullement limitée aux prostituées. Mais il ressort clairement de l'enquête faite par la Société des Nations, que la traite internationale des femmes est une hideuse réalité, et qu'elle continue à défer les efforts entrepris pour sa suppression par les gouvernements ou par les initiatives privées.

Rappelons très brièvement les faits qui ont précédé l'enquête dont nous venons de parler. Lors de la création de la Société des Nations, il fut inséré dans le Pacte un article qui confiait à la Société le contrôle général des accords relatifs à la traite des femmes et des enfants. Dès juin 1921, une Conférence internationale, convoquée par la Société des Nations, se réunit à Genève: 34 Etats y étaient officiellement représentés. Cette Conférence demanda que les mots "traite des blanches," figurant dans l'instrument international fussent remplacés par ceux de "traite de femmes et des enfants," pour bien établir que les mesures adoptées devaient s'appliquer, sans distinction, à toutes les races. Puis, lors de la seconde session ordinaire de l'Assemblée de la Société des Nations, en Septembre 1921, une Commission consultative de la traite des femmes et des enfants fut instituée, conformément à la demande formulée par la Conférence. En 1923, cette Commission, des travaux de la laquelle le *Mouvement Féministe* a publié régulièrement des comptes-rendus, adopta la proposition de Miss Grace Abbott (Etats-Unis) de demander au Conseil de la S.d.N. d'instituer un Comité spécial d'experts composé de personnes choisies pour leur compétence et leur connaissance du sujet. Ce Comité a été composé de huit membres, parmi lesquels se trouvent Dr. Paulina Luisi, que les lecteurs du *Mouvement Féministe* connaissent bien, de même que M. de Meuron, de Genève, le protagoniste de la lutte contre la réglementation en Suisse. Ce Comité devait procéder à des enquêtes sur place avec le concours des gouvernements intéressés.

Aux fins de cette étude, la traite internationale a été considérée comme signifiant l'embauchage, direct ou indirect, et le transport, pour des fins lucratives et à destination d'un pays étranger, de femmes et de jeunes filles destinées à satisfaire les désirs sexuels d'une ou de plusieurs personnes. La traite des femmes est un genre de commerce qui permet de réaliser de larges bénéfices, et, comme tous les autres commerces, il est régi par la loi de l'offre et de la demande. Il existe où il se produit, pour des causes très diverses, une demande de prostituées dans une région. Le trafiquant se met délibérément en mesure de satisfaire cette demande.

Les questions principales qui devaient faire le but de l'enquête étaient les suivantes:

(a) Existe-t-il, dans l'un quelconque des pays visités, un nombre quelque peu important d'étrangères se livrant à la prostitution?
(b) Existe-t-il, dans un pays quelconque, une demande de

femmes étrangères, et quels sont, le cas échéant, les facteurs qui contribueraient à provoquer cette demande?

(c) De quels milieux viennent ces femmes étrangères? se rendent-elles à l'étranger de leur propre gré, ou leur déplacement est-il influencé par d'autres personnes?

(d) Quelles sont les personnes qui se livrent à la traite?

(e) De quels pays ces femmes viennent-elles? Par quels moyens les a-t-on persuadées de partir, et quels itinéraires ont-elles suivis?

Les experts, qui ont tenu leur première réunion en avril 1924, viennent de déposer leur rapport juste avant la session de 1927 de la Commission consultative, qui se réunira le 25 avril. Jusqu'à ce moment, on ne savait que peu de chose sur le travail opéré par ce Comité, auquel on a même reproché ses façons d'agir un peu mystérieuses. Peut-être était-ce nécessaire, afin de ne pas donner l'éveil à ce monde spécial où les enquêteurs devaient pénétrer pour se renseigner, et où l'on se tient déjà sur ses gardes, ainsi qu'en témoigne cette remarque d'un souteneur: "Les voyages coûtent cher, et l'on peut aujourd'hui se faire prendre facilement. La Société des Nations s'occupe de la chose, et nous savons tous ce qu'il en est." Mais ce qui a davantage ému l'opinion publique, surtout en Angleterre, où plusieurs journaux ont manifesté nettement leur opinion, c'est le fait que, du rapport, qui est composé de deux parties, on n'a rendu public que la première. Dans celle-ci, les renseignements sont donnés d'une manière moins détaillée et plus générale, alors que, dans la seconde partie, les faits révélés par l'enquête sont classés par pays. Comme il est évident que la traite sévit davantage dans certains Etats, on s'est demandé si l'on a voulu ménager ceux-ci, ou bien croit-on, de cette manière, amener plus facilement les gouvernements à prendre les mesures qui s'imposent? Il se peut. Cependant, il semble que les anciennes méthodes diplomatiques ont fait leur temps et que la lumière devrait régner partout.

Avant de donner un aperçu des résultats de l'enquête, disons quelques mots sur la méthode suivant laquelle elle a été conduite. Une étude préliminaire a indiqué, à première vue, que la traite empruntait certains itinéraires en provenance de l'Europe occidentale, et à destination de l'Amérique Centrale et de l'Amérique du Sud. Les enquêtes sur place ont donc commencé par l'Amérique du Sud et se sont étendues à l'Amérique Centrale et à l'Amérique du Nord, aux pays limitrophes de la Méditerranée et à certains pays de la Baltique et de la mer du Nord. Des rapports détaillés ont été établis sur 28 pays, dans lesquels on a visité 112 villes et districts. Les enquêteurs ont consulté au moins 6500 personnes jugées susceptibles de pouvoir fournir des renseignements, y compris 5000 personnes impliquées dans la prostitution commercialisée, et dont un grand nombre étaient des prostituées ou des souteneurs. On a obtenu, en vue de pouvoir suivre les pistes révélées, les noms ou pseudonymes d'environ 600 de ces personnes.

Cette enquête a donc prouvé que, non seulement la traite existe encore, mais aussi qu'elle se pratique dans des proportions considérables. Dans certains pays, où le nombre des prostituées inscrites est très élevé, 70 per cent. de ces prostituées sont étrangères, donc des victimes de la traite. A ce chiffre il faut ajouter les prostituées clandestines. Ainsi s'effectue un mouvement continu de femmes étrangères à destination de certain pays.

Un grand nombre de ces femmes étrangères ont été interrogées, et de leurs réponses on peut conclure que la traite recrute principalement ses victimes parmi quatre catégories de femmes. La prostituée ordinaire, d'abord, qui a fait le tour d'un grand nombre de maisons de prostitution dans son propre pays, et dont les gains diminuent, est le type de femme qu'il est le plus facile d'envoyer à l'étranger. Quoique les femmes de cette catégorie ne soient pas en fait emmenées de force ou à la suite de manœuvres frauduleuses, l'histoire des cas de ce genre montre qu'elles sont souvent induites en erreur, quant aux perspectives qui s'offrent à elles, et dépouillées d'une bonne partie de leurs gains, de sorte qu'elles se trouvent à la merci de leur souteneur. Vient ensuite le groupe de femmes appelées "semi-professionnelles" ou "femmes faciles." Ce

sont habituellement des mineures qui aspirent au plaisir et aux aventures, et qui sont débauchées de bonne heure, parce qu'elles désirent des toilettes ou des bijoux qu'elles ne peuvent acquérir par leurs propres ressources. L'enquête a également prouvé que les bas salaires payés aux jeunes filles dans certains emplois les prédisposaient tout particulièrement à se livrer à la prostitution et à devenir finalement la proie de souteneurs et de patronnes. Il semble même que, dans certains cas, ces salaires insuffisants ont été offerts à dessein. Les femmes enrôlées dans des tournées théâtrales et qui jouent dans des music-halls et des établissements de nuit de bas étage deviennent aussi souvent la proie de trafiquants qui sont parfois affiliés aux directeurs de ces lieux d'amusement. Enfin, le cas le plus tragique est celui de la jeune fille innocente avec laquelle le souteneur contracte un mariage simulé ou réel. Ces jeunes filles proviennent généralement de milieux pauvres et ignorants, dont les parents sont faciles à tromper. Ce n'est que lorsqu'elle est séparée de sa famille par de grandes distances que la malheureuse victime apprend ce que l'on attend d'elle.

Un grand nombre de ces femmes sont des mineures qui procurent au trafiquant des bénéfices plus considérables que des femmes plus âgées. Il existe bien des règlements et des dispositions visant à empêcher l'embarquement de jeunes filles mineures, ou interdisant leur inscription comme prostituées, mais on a constaté, au cours de l'enquête, que ces restrictions sont fréquemment éludées. Les souteneurs interrogés ont affirmé qu'il est toujours possible d'amener des mineures dans certains pays.

Les causes qui provoquent la demande de femmes étrangères sont de deux sortes. D'une part, cette demande résulte de l'excédent, pour des raisons naturelles ou artificielles, des hommes par rapport aux femmes. Les mouvements de troupes et de navires, ainsi que les migrations de touristes, rentrent dans cette même catégorie. D'autre part, l'existence, dans certains pays, de "quartiers réservés" et le système des maisons de tolérance ont pour conséquence une forte demande de femmes étrangères, car il faut continuellement renouveler le personnel de ces maisons, et, en outre, dès qu'une femme se trouve en pays étranger, elle est à la merci de ceux qui veulent l'exploiter, donc double bénéfice pour les trafiquants. La vente sans contrôle de boissons alcoolisées dans les lieux d'amusement qui emploient des femmes comme artistes—celles-ci étant chargées, entre autres besognes, de pousser à la consommation—constitue nettement un stimulant pour la prostitution. Le commerce des publications obscènes est étroitement lié à l'ensemble du problème, ainsi que, mais à un degré moindre, le trafic des stupéfiants.

Les enquêteurs ont constaté que, dans la plupart des cas, les déplacements de femmes étaient dirigés par des tiers, en raison des bénéfices résultant de ces opérations. Celles-ci sont généralement caractérisées par des manœuvres frauduleuses ou dolosives, directes ou indirectes. Les personnes qui profitent de ce trafic sont les tenancières ou patronnes des maisons de prostitution, les souteneurs qui sont principalement chargés de procurer des femmes et de diriger leurs déplacements. S'en occupent encore les gros trafiquants qui ont des intérêts pécuniaires dans les quartiers réservés ou dans les maisons de prostitution, et qui prêtent de l'argent aux tenancières et aux souteneurs. Voici une preuve des bénéfices élevés que se font les trafiquants: "Quand je suis arrivé à Buenos-Ayres, déclare l'un d'eux, au début cela a été dur, mais il y a trois ans, on m'a fait une offre excellente. Ma femme s'est occupée de la maison elle-même et, en 14 mois, j'ai gagné 60.000 pesos. J'ai placé mes bénéfices dans plusieurs autres maisons de prostitution, et j'ai maintenant un revenu assuré."

Il n'existe pas d'organisations régulières des trafiquants, mais ces individus n'ont pas de secrets les uns pour les autres lorsqu'il est dans leur intérêt de s'entendre pour tromper leurs victimes. Dans les grandes villes, il existe des lieux où les souteneurs se rencontrent

avec leurs amis pour échanger des renseignements et des conseils.

Les principaux itinéraires de la traite semblent partir d'Europe, notamment d'Allemagne, d'Autriche, d'Espagne, de France, de Grèce, de Hongrie, d'Italie, de Pologne, de Roumanie et de Turquie, pour aboutir à l'Amérique Centrale et à l'Amérique du Sud, notamment à la République Argentine, au Brésil, au Mexique, au Panama et à l'Uruguay, ainsi qu'en Egypte et en d'autres points de l'Afrique du Nord.

Les trafiquants emploient toutes sortes de moyens pour éviter les interrogatoires embarrassants ou pour éluder les réglemens officiels. Ils voyagent par étapes, par exemple, et ne craignent pas de faire de longs détours pour déjouer les recherches. Ils ont à leur disposition de faux passeports et de faux certificats de naissance dont ils usent largement. Nous avons déjà parlé du subterfuge du mariage, qui est fréquemment employé. Enfin, il est prouvé qu'un grand nombre de jeunes filles sont attirées dans les filets des trafiquants, grâce à de fausses offres d'emploi à l'étranger. Les Experts montrent à quel point les femmes sont dépendantes des nombreux détails que donne le rapport du Comité des souteneurs et des gros trafiquants. Sans eux, elles ne peuvent absolument rien, et eux s'enrichissent à leurs dépens, tandis qu'elles, écrasées par leurs dettes, peuvent de moins en moins sortir de leur triste situation.

Maintenant, quels sont les remèdes à apporter à un tel état de choses? Il est très difficile de le dire, puisque les circonstances de la traite varient suivant les pays. Il n'existe donc pas de moyen unique de réprimer la traite. Il faudrait premièrement que tous les pays sans exception prennent part à la lutte pour sa répression, ce qui n'est pas le cas actuellement, car, malheureusement, l'enquête a révélé que plusieurs des pays qui servent de champ d'action aux trafiquants ne participent à aucune Convention internationale contre la traite. Il faut donc, d'une part, faire connaître largement, sans restrictions ni ménagements, les résultats de l'enquête, afin que l'opinion publique, renseignée, opère une pression énergique sur les divers gouvernements et les force à agir. C'est là, on l'a reconnu, un moyen efficace. En effet, ce n'est guère que depuis le moment où, grâce à l'action des sociétés bénévoles agissant en pionnières, l'attention a été attirée sur ce triste état de choses, que des mesures ont été prises. C'est en 1902 qu'une collaboration entre les gouvernements a commencé. En outre, le champ d'action internationale s'est déjà considérablement élargi depuis que la Société des Nations a assuré le contrôle général de ces questions. Il faut espérer qu'elle continuera son œuvre et agrandira de plus en plus ce champ d'action.

Mais le sentiment qui domine, après l'étude du rapport des experts, est que, si le mal est si grand, c'est surtout le système de réglementation officielle qui en est la cause. Tant que cette organisation subsistera, il en sera de même de la traite. L'existence des maisons de tolérance constitue incontestablement un stimulant à la traite, tant dans le domaine national que dans le domaine international. C'est un fait établi par des enquêtes antérieures et reconnu par de nombreux gouvernements, à la suite de l'expérience qu'ils ont acquise. Parmi les Etats qui ont aboli les maisons de tolérance, la Hollande, par exemple, où la fermeture de ces maisons remonte à plus de vingt ans déjà, déclare ne plus connaître la traite. Ajoutons encore qu'à Cuba, au dire d'un des enquêteurs, la situation s'est améliorée remarquablement en l'espace de deux ans seulement, grâce aux nouvelles lois sur l'immigration. La traite a été supprimée et la situation locale améliorée.

Le rapport du Comité des Experts va donc être soumis très prochainement à la Commission consultative de la S.d.N. Espérons qu'à cette occasion, une large publicité lui sera faite, et que le mot d'ordre sera alors partout: "Suppression des maisons de tolérance!"

JEANNE PITTET.

(d'Après le Mouvement Féministe.)

NOUVELLES INTERNATIONALES.

Les Femmes Dans L'Industrie.

La première conférence sur les syndicats féminins en Grande Bretagne s'est tenue à Bournemouth en septembre 1926, en même temps que le Congrès des Trade Unions. Sur la motion de Mr. Ogden (Textiles) une résolution a été adoptée déclarant que l'industrie devrait payer le travail féminin au prix fort pour maintenir les conditions générales de la vie et demandant l'établissement d'un salaire minimum sans condition le sexe. Un appel était fait aux Trade Unions pour qu'elles agissent en conformité avec la politique générale du mouvement travailliste en ce qui concerne l'égalité des sexes (Industrial and Labour Information).

La Fédération internationale des syndicats chrétiens de l'industrie textile a tenu son 6me Congrès à Anvers en avril 1926. Un rapport sur le travail des femmes mariées dans l'industrie textile et ses dangers a été présenté par Miss Woitasky, d'Allemagne. Son rapport est résumé dans la résolution suivante adoptée à l'unanimité par le Congrès: Le Congrès proteste de nouveau contre l'emploi des femmes mariées dans l'industrie textile. "Le travail des usines présente des inconvénients, non seulement pour la santé et la moralité des femmes mariées, mais aussi pour les générations futures; il met un obstacle à la vie de famille et à l'éducation des enfants."

En conséquence, le Congrès persiste à demander la prohibition du travail des femmes mariées dans les usines. Des exceptions ne seraient permises que pour les femmes vivant seules ou ayant une famille à entretenir.

Un accroissement de salaire ou une indemnité seraient accordés aux pères de famille. En attendant, le Congrès demande: (1) La prohibition du travail féminin pour plus de 44 heures par semaine ou plus de 8 heures par jour. (2) Le développement de la protection maternelle et la prohibition de tout travail 8 semaines avant et 8 semaines après l'accouchement, avec indemnité. (3) Alléger le travail pour les femmes enceintes, leur assurer des sièges et leur permettre un peu de repos, etc. Le congrès demande à l'office international du travail d'organiser une enquête sur l'extension et la nature du travail des femmes mariées dans les usines des différents pays et sur ses conséquences pour l'ouvrière, pour la génération future et pour la vie de famille et l'éducation des enfants; il lui demande aussi d'assurer une plus grande protection aux femmes et la suppression progressive du travail des femmes mariées. Les sociétés affiliées à la Fédération internationale agiront sur leurs gouvernements respectifs et sur l'opinion publique. (Industrial and Labour Information, 25 October, 1926.)

Une conférence des ouvrières textiles a réuni les 11 et 12 octobre 1926, à Gera, 400 déléguées, représentant plus de 600,000 ouvrières. Tout en s'associant à la demande générale du Congrès en faveur des femmes enceintes, (suppression du travail et indemnité, 2 mois avant et 3 mois après l'accouchement, limitation du travail jusqu'au 7e mois; périodes de repos, salles de repos, inspections par des femmes docteurs, etc.), elles protestèrent contre toute restriction de l'indépendance politique et économique des femmes et contre toute prohibition dans l'emploi des femmes mariées ou des femmes dont les parents mâles sont ouvriers sous prétexte de double salaire.

("Vorwärts" octobre 1926. Industrial and Labour Information, 22 November 1926.)

(d'après Fru Arenholt.)

L'Esclavage au Vingtième Siècle.

En 1925, le Foreign Office publia un livre blanc intitulé: correspondance sur les incursions et la vente des esclaves dans les territoires britanniques. Les razzias et le commerce des esclaves ont pris des proportions énormes en Abyssinie ces dernières années. A Addis Ababa, les formes les plus odieuses d'esclavage existent, sans que les Européens protestent et sans égards pour les remontrances des gouvernements

étrangers. On voit, au Sud de l'Abyssinie, des bandes d'esclaves, hommes, femmes et enfants enchaînés les uns aux autres et se traînant sur les routes. Un journaliste a vu un convoi de dix-mille esclaves marchant vers le grand marché d'esclaves de Jimma, et sur le trajet d'un convoi, après une journée de marche, il a compté une cinquantaine de morts ou de mourants abandonnés. Un rédacteur du "Morning Post" qui a vécu cinq ans en Abyssinie estime qu'il y a deux millions d'esclaves dans ce pays. Il y a de même un commerce croissant d'esclaves en Chine, dû à l'instabilité des conditions politiques. De plus, la commission sur l'esclavage, qui fait une enquête pour la Société des Nations, a publié son rapport. Il en résulte que les razzias et le commerce des esclaves existent sur 19 Territoires comprenant des provinces en Afrique, Arabie, Indes, et elle a découvert en Extrême Orient un nouveau trafic que tout le monde ignorait. Il faut compter en tout de 3 à 5 millions d'esclaves. D'après des renseignements exacts, beaucoup d'esclaves du Hedjaz sont des jeunes filles d'extrême Orient venues en pèlerinage à La Mecque.

A côté du véritable esclavage, il y a des systèmes de travail forcé, si proches de l'esclavage qu'on ne peut guère les distinguer. Il y a le système qui consiste à maintenir l'ouvrier endetté et insolvable pour le garder, ou à le mettre en gage, enfin il y a les divers systèmes de contrats et d'obligations qui assurent le travail de l'ouvrier à des prix inférieurs. Le système le plus récent, inauguré en Rhodésie, permet aux fonctionnaires d'engager de force des enfants abandonnés pour une période déterminée.

(d'après John H. Harris.)

Grande Bretagne.

Union Nationale des Sociétés Pour L'Egalité Civique.

Nous avons indiqué le mois dernier les raisons pour lesquelles certains membres du Comité exécutif ont donné leur démission. Voici les déclarations des membres restants: Miss Rathbone, Mrs. Corbett-Ashby, Miss Courtney, Mrs. Leyton, Miss Macadam, Miss Picton-Turbervill, Mrs. Ryland, Mrs. Stocks, Mrs. James Taylor, Mrs. Van Gruisen, Miss Helen Ward.

"La question qui a provoqué la démission de certains membres du Comité exécutif n'a rien à voir avec la question de l'égalité civique et politique des sexes. L'Union Nationale est absolument d'accord là-dessus et attend l'explication du Premier Ministre et la réalisation de ses promesses. La différence porte sur deux sujets discutés à la dernière réunion. (1) Interprétation du mot égalité: les membres démissionnaires semblent confondre égalité et identité. La majorité des membres s'est placée à un point de vue plus large, considérant que certaines questions telles que: Allocations familiales, droit des femmes à déterminer les conditions de leur maternité, paix internationale, etc., sont essentielles à l'égalité civique. (2) Attitude de l'Union Nationale relativement à la législation industrielle en matière de protection ouvrière. Toutes étaient d'accord que cette législation doit s'appliquer aux deux sexes; autrement, elle exclurait les femmes de certaines industries. Mais, en décidant s'il y a lieu de s'opposer à certaines propositions ou de demander leur extension aux deux sexes, la majorité considère que les mérites de ces propositions, leur action sur la santé et la sécurité et les désirs des travailleurs intéressés doivent être pris en considération. Les membres démissionnaires s'en tiennent strictement au mot égalité.

(d'après Eva M. Hubback.)

Le 13 avril, le Premier Ministre a décidé de présenter à la prochaine session un projet de loi donnant le vote aux femmes dans les mêmes conditions qu'aux hommes, depuis l'âge de 21 ans. Cette déclaration marque la fin d'une longue période d'agitation. Des rumeurs couraient dans la Presse que le Cabinet était divisé sur cette question, le parti opposé comprenant Lord Birkenhead et Mr. Winston Churchill. Un

barrage dans la Presse de Rothermere ("Daily Mail") et Beaverbrook ("Daily Express") s'était formé contre ce qu'ils appelaient "Votes pour poupées," l'existence de deux millions de femmes non-électrices au-dessus de 30 ans, était ignorée et même niée. Le jour précédant la déclaration, le Cabinet se réunit le matin, mais ne réussit pas à s'entendre; après le lunch, tout s'arrangea.

Les assurances et les précisions données par le Premier Ministre et par le Ministre de l'Intérieur nous enlèvent toute crainte de refus dans l'avenir. Le seul danger à prévoir est celui d'une élection générale venant interrompre les pourparlers avant le vote définitif de la loi.

En interviewant les directeurs de journaux, en inspirant les articles de tête, en écrivant ou faisant écrire des lettres et des articles, il a été possible de modifier le ton de la Presse. Des lettres personnelles ont été écrites aux membres du Cabinet et répandues dans le Parlement et la Presse, avec des copies de la promesse du Gouvernement.

Après les vacances de Pâques, on continuera la campagne en faveur des deux projets de loi: Bill contre le renvoi des fonctionnaires mariées, Bill de protection contre l'empoisonnement par la céréuse. Enfin, à la demande de l'Union Nationale, Major Hills et Lady Astor présenteront un bill pour élever l'âge du mariage de 12 à 14 ans.

Miss Kidd, qui a été la première femme de la Faculté des Avocats et Conseillers au Tribunal de la Chambre des Lords, est la première femme nommée conseiller à une commission du Parlement.

Indes.

Bill sur l'âge du consentement. Ce bill présenté par Sir Hari Sing Gour, avec l'appui des sociétés féministes, élève l'âge du consentement de 14 à 16 ans. A une réunion importante de Bombay, Lady Tata a fait ressortir "le mal incalculable fait à la nation par le mariage prématuré et la détérioration sérieuse de la race due à cette coutume ne sont pas des maux négligeables." Ahmedabad a suivi l'exemple de Bombay, d'autres villes suivent. Le bill doit être discuté le 27.

Conférence sur la maternité et le bien-être des enfants. Cette conférence, inaugurée par lady Irwin à Delhi, a été un succès. Elle a été suivie par 200 femmes dévouées à la cause. Il a été décidé d'obtenir une entente plus complète avec les corps officiels. La conférence a adopté deux résolutions: (1) faire élever l'âge du consentement; (2) obtenir une allocation de maternité pour les ouvrières.

Les Etats hindous et les droits des femmes. A Baroda, un Comité s'est réuni pour assurer l'application de la loi contre les mariages d'enfants. Cette loi existe depuis 20 ans. Le souverain de Bharatapur a défendu les mariages prématurés dans ses Etats. A Travancore et Cochín, les femmes peuvent voter et être élues dans les conseils législatifs. A Travancore, une femme est membre du gouvernement. A Mysore, le droit de vote et d'éligibilité à l'assemblée représentative et au conseil législatif a été accordé après un débat de deux heures.

Russie.

Aux élections de 1927 un plus grand nombre de femmes ont été élues, dans les Conseils municipaux. Dans 122 villes, le nombre des femmes élues est de 22.2 per cent. A l'Union des Soviets, il y a plus de femmes élues que dans tous les autres pays.

Chine.

Le Comité exécutif de la Ligue internationale des femmes, (section britannique), a passé le 5 avril une résolution insistant sur la nécessité d'une enquête impartiale faite par la Société des Nations ou par un tribunal spécial sur les affaires de Chine, avant qu'aucune réclamation ne soit formulée à l'égard de réparations ou de dommages. Elle estime cette procédure absolument nécessaire aux relations futures de la Grande Bretagne et de la Chine.

MADELEINE RUDLER.

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