

THE
WOMAN'S LEADER

IN POLITICS IN INDUSTRY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN THE HOME IN LITERATURE AND ART IN THE PROFESSIONS

AND

THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS

Separation and Maintenance Orders Bill.

We are glad to be able to announce that the Government has undertaken itself to bring in a Bill incorporating a certain number of the points of the above Bill. It undertakes that this Bill shall have a second reading this session, and that it shall pass through all its stages in the autumn session. Although the Bill will, in all probability, not contain some of the clauses on which women's organizations have laid great stress, such as the possibility of a woman being able to apply for a Maintenance Order without at the same time applying for a Separation Order, it will, nevertheless, introduce many much-needed reforms, including the provision that a wife need no longer leave her husband *before* applying for a Separation and Maintenance Order, although once an Order has been granted they will have to be separated in not more than fourteen days. The new Bill will also contain many of the provisions in the old Bill for enforcing the payment of Maintenance Orders, and in the case of the non-payment of an Order will allow a warrant for the arrest of a husband to be issued, instead of only a summons as at present. In many ways, of course, it is disappointing to the N.U.S.E.C. and the Members who had supported the Bill that a larger proportion of the whole Bill as originally drafted cannot become law. At the same time, the Government offer should be gladly accepted, in view of the fact that the Bill, as a Private Member's Bill, contained many clauses which were regarded as contentious, and it is doubtful whether time would have been allowed for its later stages.

Lord Birkenhead and Lady Rhondda.

Lord Birkenhead made a final statement in the House of Lords last week, trying to justify to the minority in that House and to the country at large the position of the Committee of Privileges and its two opposite declared views on the question of Lady Rhondda's petition. He said the earlier view taken by the Committee had been ill-founded. The petitioner, he said, had been making inconsiderate animadversions on the course which had been adopted in the House. Why, when there was to be reform of the House, they should choose the particular moment to agree in their legislative capacity to admit peeresses

in their own right he had never been able to imagine. The matter, however, was put in a different way. It was said the Government had been guilty of a breach of faith. There never was a more idle charge. Whatever else there was, there was no breach of faith. When the women's Removal of Sex Disqualification Bill was before the House they expressly rejected a specific amendment designed to enable peeresses in their own right to sit in that House. If there was a breach of faith the House must have been accomplices. That frontal attack having failed, it occurred to some over-subtle mind that an amendment was not necessary, because the power was already contained in the four corners of the Bill. That attempt, so jesuitical, had met with the discomfiture it deserved, and no one could read the report without concurring morally and legally in the view expressed by the Committee. That sort of cheap oratory may convince some of the curious people who sit in the House of Lords, but it does not raise the Lord Chancellor in the eyes of intelligent men and women.

The Legitimation Bill.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain told Sir John Baird that the long delay in bringing forward the Bill dealing with the legitimation of children by the subsequent marriage of their parents, is giving rise to very grave doubts among persons interested as to whether the Government really mean business. Sir John Baird said the Government was endeavouring to come to an arrangement to introduce a Bill as soon as possible. But still no definite date was given.

The British Nationality and Status of Aliens Bill.

The British Nationality and Status of Aliens Bill, which the Government has been urged to introduce for so many months, was read a second time last week and committed to a Standing Committee. The Bill is a simple one and the discussion was not prolonged. It provides that every child born abroad of a British father shall be a British subject, if two main conditions are fulfilled. These are (1) that the birth of the child is at the time registered at a British Consulate, and (2) that the child, on obtaining majority, asserts his British nationality by a declaration

THE PALESTINE MANDATE.

By Mrs. Henry Fawcett, J.P., LL.D.

After an active propaganda carried on for the best part of a year, followed by a furious rattling of the sword in the scabbard, the great Parliamentary attack against the National Home for the Jews in Palestine has been defeated in the Commons by 292 votes to 35. This is just as it should be, for the crushing defeat was particularly needed after the recent vote in a contrary sense in the House of Lords. For, after all, it is the representative House which really counts. Mr. Churchill conducted the debate with his usual skill, and fastened at once upon the true issue: Was this country to be true to the pledge given in 1917 when the issue of the Great War yet hung in the balance, to promote a *National Home for the Jews in Palestine, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done to prejudice the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities?*

In the debate an attempt was made by the attacking party to confuse this issue by mixing it with an attack on the Government for supporting what is known as the Rutenberg concession. But even here the leaders showed little capacity for leadership, and their newspapers showed even less than this little, for one of them had actually put forward the monstrous proposition that Jews should, as such, be excluded in Palestine from all executive offices. This, of course, gave an obvious opening for Mr. Churchill's retort: "If over the gates of the New Jerusalem is to be inscribed the legend 'No Israelite need apply', then I must ask to be relieved of my responsibility for Palestine."

Correspondence between the Colonial Office, the Palestine Arab Delegation, and the Zionist Organization has just been published as a White paper (price 6d.). We recommend our readers who are interested in the development of British policy in the East to study it. It sets forth the main principles on which that policy is based, gives definite facts and figures upon such matters, for instance, as the actual numbers of Jewish immigrants since the British occupation; and describes the steps by which it is hoped gradually to establish a full measure of self-government. The main principle on which the Government is acting is the gradual establishment of representative institutions with safeguards for the rights of minorities. The actual number of Jewish immigrants since the British occupation is approximately 25,000, and a pledge is given that the rate of immigration will be watched and not allowed to exceed that which the country is capable of sustaining. I believe there are no authoritative figures with regard to the relative numbers in Palestine of Jews and non-Jews. But the Arab delegation estimates the non-Jews as 700,000 and the Jews as 70,000. The fears, therefore, of the non-Jews being overwhelmed by the Jews are fantastic and based upon ignorance and prejudice. Self-government on the Colonial pattern will be developed gradually; the first steps have already been taken in the creation of an Advisory Council on which all sections of the community are represented. It is now proposed to follow this up by the establishment of a Legislative Council, containing a large proportion of members elected on a wide franchise. The next step will be the confirmation of the mandate by the League of Nations. The more than 8 to 1 majority in the Commons should make this a certainty.

Readers of this paper will already be asking What about women? Will they have the vote? Will they be eligible as members of the Legislative Council? No satisfactory answer can be given to these questions; but I would ask my fellow-suffragists to remember that we had free representative institutions in this country for 700 years before women were admitted to the franchise; that the Moslem inhabitants of Palestine are an immense majority of the population, and that they are infinitely less ready than Western peoples to recognize anything approaching to equality for women. Progress in this matter must therefore necessarily be slow and gradual. Probably the best route will be along the road of education, and here the progress being made is highly satisfactory. The Minister for Education in Palestine, Mr. Bowman, told me last April that there is now a genuine demand for education for girls as well as for boys among the Arabs. We have another source of encouragement. The Jews in Palestine have an elected assembly for the direction of their domestic concerns; they also have elected councils in their chief colonies, and an organization for the control and upkeep of their schools. For these women vote and are eligible. Suffragists in Palestine will therefore always have the great advantage of object lessons close at hand of the advantages of admitting women to responsible citizenship.

NATIONAL BABY WEEK

By NORAH MARCH, B.Sc.

National Baby Week has come and gone. For one week the sympathy of the general public has been wooed towards mothers and babies. The work of the National Baby Week Council is to cultivate sound public opinion on matters concerning the welfare of babies and because baby-life is crucially dependent upon the mother, the welfare of mothers falls of necessity within the National Baby Week Council's scheme.

Following its usual plan, the National Baby Week Council, while giving attention to the whole maternity and child welfare problem, has again selected for special emphasis and discussion certain aspects of it. Not unnaturally, considering the present economic situation, the economic question has been well to the fore in the Conferences which took place last week at Carnegie House, 117 Piccadilly, London, W. 1. That maternity and child welfare work is essential to national health and welfare no thoughtful person denies; to cease national expenditure in this direction would be a short-sighted and ultimately extravagant policy. But the general public must realize the truth of this, otherwise the clamour for wholesale reduction in expenditure without discrimination may result in a policy prejudicial to infant and child life, and in the long run, to the nation. As a consequence "Child Welfare in terms of £ s. d." was the subject discussed at the public meeting, when the Earl of Onslow, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, referred to the Government's policy on expenditure. The Geddes Committee did not advise a "cut" in maternity and child welfare expenditure—an evidence that the value of this work to the nation is recognized. The Minister of Health is actually finding that the provision made for the current year's outlay on the same basis as last year's total expenditure would, owing to reductions in certain directions and lowering of certain costs, provide for extension in some directions. The Ministry had been able, for example, to promise assistance towards the running of four model infant welfare centres, which the Carnegie Trustees had presented to Rhondda, Shoreditch, Birmingham, and Liverpool. There would also be money available for new maternity homes in those districts, where the need for such institutions was urgent.

The question of the District Nurse and Midwife doing health visitor's work in rural areas was argued very fully from the economic as well as the qualification aspect. Some of the speakers advocated the employment of district nurses for the work of health visiting as a means of reducing outlay, while other speakers held equally forcibly that the district nurse who was not properly trained for the work of health visiting proved inefficient, and therefore to employ her in the capacity of health visitor was not an economy, but an unwise expenditure.

The economic note was heard also in the discussion on the place of the voluntary organizations and workers in a complete maternity and child welfare scheme. Councillor Margaret Beavan, J.P., of the Liverpool Child Welfare Association, said that voluntary work was particularly necessary at the present time, as local authorities had no longer the money to enable them to develop maternity and child welfare schemes on the ambitious lines which many of them adopted when the Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918 gave them their present extensive powers. Day nurseries and babies' hospitals were among those forms of maternity and child welfare work which she thought could best be undertaken by voluntary organizations, partly because they could be run less expensively, and partly because voluntary organizations were freer to test the real value of institutions than official bodies could be. When the voluntary organization had proved the value and discovered the best methods, then was the time for the local authority, if necessary, to take over and continue.

Dr. Edgar Collis, Mansel Talbot Professor of Preventive Medicine in the Welsh National School of Medicine, gave much food for thought when, at the public meeting mentioned above, he estimated the money value of each individual to the State and the amount of money the State could afford to spend on maternity and child welfare work, and compared that with the small actual expenditure. Child welfare work he showed to be a sound economic proposition—an observation with which all child welfare workers will agree, but which the uninitiated require enforcing by facts and figures such as Professor Collis presented.

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

The first article of the Constitution of the International Federation of University Women runs: "The purpose of this organization shall be to promote understanding and friendship between the university women of the nations of the world, and thereby to further their interests and develop between their countries sympathy and mutual helpfulness." It is a clear statement of the general policy of the Federation, which is explicitly enrolled in the group of associations of persons banded together to-day in a determined effort to substitute sympathy and confidence for the jealousy and suspicion that have usually dominated international relations in the past. But among these organizations the Federation of University Women has its own unique character. It is a league of women linked together not only by a common aim, but by a common experience. In all civilized countries groups of educated men and women are thinking and judging and generally reacting to experience in a way so deeply coloured by their mental training that when the barriers of ignorance are fairly down no mask of custom or language will disguise their real affinity with equally educated people in other lands. The chief aim of the Federation of University Women is to dispel that ignorance, to give to women who have had a university training the opportunity for meeting and knowing each other and rendering each other services; in short, to focus goodwill and energy which might otherwise be diffused and lost.

It seeks to realize its aim in various ways, one of the chief items on the programme being the provision of international fellowships and scholarships for women graduates. To the value of these opportunities of enriching experience everyone who has enjoyed the advantage of living and working in another country is ready to bear enthusiastic witness. And the Federation is now represented by branches in so many countries that it is easy to ensure for any travelling member, whether she holds a scholarship or not, that she shall be welcomed at once by the university women of the country she is visiting and placed in touch with the people she would like to meet, interested

in her own line of work. In various university centres hospitality committees are established, ready to look after travellers who come to them with introductions from the headquarters of their own national branch, and it is the intention of the Federation to organize clubhouses for university women in all the great cities of the world. Active steps in this direction have been taken by the American University Women, who not only maintain national clubhouses in Washington and New York, but have just opened a large house in Paris, given to their Association by Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, as a headquarters for international hospitality. The opening of this clubhouse coincides with the biennial Conference of the International Federation, and its first function will be the entertainment of delegates, representing about twenty different nations, who are meeting in Paris to discuss some of the problems with which university women are faced to-day, and to formulate a programme of work for the coming two years.

It is hoped that before long London may have an international clubhouse of a specially interesting character. The British Federation of University Women is organizing a scheme for incorporating the famous historical building of Crosby Hall, which was removed from the City to Chelsea Embankment in 1910, as part of a Hall of Residence for British and foreign women graduates studying in London. Every year increasing numbers of university women come to London to take advantage of the facilities for research offered by the British Museum, the University, and other institutions. Occasionally they are fortunate enough to be taken in by one of the residential colleges, but usually they have to find accommodation in boarding-houses or hotels. A suitable Hall of Residence is badly needed, and if the British Association is able to realize its project, Crosby Hall will become the headquarters of the International Federation and a club for all members visiting London. Full information about this plan and the other activities of the Federation may be obtained from the Secretary, 92 Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING TRAINED.

Being trained is, in these days, almost as important as being earnest—for whereas in the palmy far-off days before the war, it was an advantage to be trained, it is now a heavy handicap not to be.

A great deal of nonsense is talked and written about training. "If you are not trained," cries one, "you are half-fledged, half-baked, helpless, hopeless, and of no real use to either man or beast." "Preserve me," cries another "from the academic, pedantic, unpractical, unadaptable, and hopelessly useless, certificated creature. Give me a real active practical worker with common sense, and I will do without the paper qualifications."

What these critical folk overlook on the one hand is that no amount of drilling and instruction will entirely overcome innate stupidity and inefficiency; that it is, in fact, as impossible now as it was in the days of the Prophet to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear; while, on the other hand, nothing you can do in the way of stereotyped cramming can kill real genius and initiative.

The marketable value of a diploma is undoubted. It is a bold person who will *guarantee* in these days of economic depression, to place any pupil at the end of her course of training, but it would be a far bolder one who would undertake to find her work without it.

A diploma is, after all, an outward and visible sign of certain recognized qualifications. For instance, we do not choose our doctors and lawyers merely because they write certain symbols after their names, nevertheless, we avoid them like the plague if they have not got them.

If you would convince a committee that you are fitted to manage the affairs of an Institution, the certificate of a well-known training centre for household management will undoubtedly help you; if you apply for a secretaryship, the name of a good school behind you will go far; while, if you are a candidate for any teaching appointment worth having, the diploma

of an established teachers' training college is practically indispensable.

Those of us who are older and have passed through the strain of the war, to say nothing of the struggle for our economic freedom, are perhaps inclined to be depressed because so many doors that seemed to be opening for us now appear to be firmly shutting again; but it is just now, and on this account, that the vigorous young women of the country must press in an onward.

In reality women have moved forward with tremendous strides in a very short time. It is not very long since nursing and teaching were the only professions open to educated women, nor since those stout-hearted pioneers Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, and Sophia Jex Blake fought for and won the right to qualify for and practice the profession of medicine.

The gaining of the suffrage in 1918 has now opened a wider field of choice for the professional woman, and a few valiant trail-blazers who were alertly watching their opportunity have already taken advantage of this and are carving their way into such professions as Law, Engineering, Accountancy, and Estate Management, while in the business world women as directors of companies, company secretaries, insurance officials, and heads of business enterprises are not unknown.

There are boundless possibilities for the women who can afford first to equip and train themselves in the most complete way possible, and then to wait and seize their chances when they come, as many good men have had to do. There are the Vanguard who must capture the outposts and hold them for the generations of women to come.

But the way of the pioneer, strenuous, adventurous, with its set-backs and its guerdon, is not open to us all. The work-a-day routine of the world has to be carried on by ordinary folk, and they must be qualified and well qualified, too, for their work if they are to make a good job of it.

