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THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

The Prime Minister and Equal Franchise.

The deputation of women's organizations to urge upon the Prime Minister the necessity of conferring the franchise upon women on the same terms as men at the earliest possible opportunity, was received by him at the House of Commons on Tuesday, the 8th instant. The deputation was introduced by Lady Astor, and the speakers were: Viscountess Rhondda, representing the Six Point Group; Miss Eleanor Rathbone, C.C., J.P., representing the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship; Mrs. Hood, J.P., representing the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organizations; Dr. E. Knight, representing the Women's Freedom League; the Hon. Mrs. Franklin, representing the National Council of Women; Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, representing the St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance; Miss E. S. Froud, representing the National Union of Women Teachers.

We are informed that the speaking was all on an exceptionally high level. A most delightful speech was made by Miss Nancy Parnell, an "under-thirty," on behalf of all the younger voteless women, which showed the Prime Minister the strength of the feeling among many of them. Miss Rathbone, whose main theme was the danger of delay, read out also the pledges given by the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary, and expressed the conviction that these pledges would be carried out. Mrs. Hood, J.P., who spoke from intimate knowledge of the lives of working mothers, showed the need they felt for the vote in order to improve conditions in the homes and for their children. Mrs. Franklin championed the cause of the two million voteless women over thirty, while Miss Froud gave a series of most impressive and interesting figures relating to the small proportion of voters in the teaching profession. Miss Froud, on behalf of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, had undertaken the organization of the deputation with great success. All important women's organizations were represented, with the unfortunate exception of the Conservative women. We deal elsewhere with the Prime Minister's reply.

The League of Nation's Union.

We offer our congratulations to Dr. Stresemann on the first occasion of his presiding over the League, and we share in the satisfaction felt by his country that they should at such a moment have found so distinguished a representative. And we believe that in the whole of Great Britain, there are no thinking people who disagree with us. The camps into which Europe is divided are no longer national or racial, they are composed, on the one hand, of people who will work and fight for peace, and on the other, of those who, if put to the test, will acquiesce in war. The nation that will agree to a peaceful and impartial settlement of disputes, and will loyally adhere to that settlement, however deep the difference may have been, is our friend. The nation that threatens force or brings force into its reckoning, even though it be to defend some interest of ours, is our enemy, and the enemy of every other nation.

The Washington Convention.

It is said that votes are never—almost never—affected by speeches made in the House of Commons. This is natural, for probably very few speeches are taken in by any Members but those who are going to oppose them. A special defensive apparatus in the mind of the listener receives their impact and lets them glance off again without any serious attempt to consider their truth or importance, while the opinions of the owner of the device sun themselves peacefully. This is why new Members in opposition, as yet imperfectly protected, are as a rule leaner and less cheerful than old Members supporting governments. But some good is sometimes done by whole debates, and apparently good has been done by the attitude taken by the House towards Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland and his speech on the ratification of the Washington agreement. We are delighted to learn that Lord Cecil of Chelwood has agreed to become Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on ratification. No appointment could be more welcome, either in this country or abroad. His name is a guarantee of sincerity, and in his hands the obstacles of which so much has been made will, we are certain, assume their most modest and negotiable form. Laurels have been here for some time, waiting to be gathered; we congratulate the wreath, and ourselves, on its predestination.

Unity in Disunion.

The late Master of Balliol (Dr. Caird) was sometimes thought by his pupils to be over fond of a certain Hegelian phrase "the unity between those two principles transcends their difference." We may paraphrase this by saying that the unity as to essential principles which remains in the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship far transcends the differences which have arisen between them on questions of interpretation or adaptation to particular hypothetical circumstances, such as the possible choice to be made between two methods of achieving equality in relation to unspecified measures of factory legislation. Of course, a section of the Press *more suo* has said, and will say, that there is "a split in the woman's movement," or at least in the National Union. There has been, and we will venture to predict, there will be no split. Resignations from the Executive Committee, however deplorable, do not amount to a split; merely

'Keep fit on
cocoa'

BOURNVILLE
SEE THE "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE
OF CHOCOLATE

Write
Cadbury, Bournville
about Gift Scheme

to a shedding of foliage, such an evidence of changing times and seasons as is perhaps inevitable in the history of all living organisms. To drop metaphor and descend to fact, we advise our readers to study closely the detailed record of this "regrettable incident." We make no apology for devoting a great deal of space to it, as we believe that many of our readers, both inside and outside the above-mentioned organization, are anxious to understand the principles involved. Next week, Miss Eleanor Rathbone will contribute an article entitled "The Economic Man and the Equalitarian Woman," which may throw further light on the position held by herself and those who agree with her.

The Mining Disasters.

Those who are familiar with mining areas can perhaps realize better than others the desolation and horror of the scenes at Cwm last week. The pictures in the daily and Sunday papers of long lines of willing rescuers waiting to risk their lives in the bare hope of saving their companions, the waiting women, and the last sad scenes have served to stimulate our torpid imaginations to realize what such calamities mean. The Lord Mayor of London has opened a fund for the families of those who have perished in both disasters, and no doubt other local efforts have been announced. These two tragedies following so soon after the long drawn out dispute of last year must fill every one with the deepest sympathy and desire to help. THE WOMAN'S LEADER does not propose to open a fund, though any donations sent through its medium will be gladly received and forwarded to the Mansion House Fund.

The Women's National Liberal Federation.

Without departing from our neutrality, we may wish a safe and pleasant passage to some resolutions on the agenda for the approaching council meetings of the Women Liberals. A resolution put forward by the Executive Committee on family allowances points to the increased length of dependency made necessary by modern education, and asks (i) that the system should be extended to State and municipal employees; (ii) that when industrial wages are re-adjusted the opportunity should be taken to form a pool from which children's allowances could be paid. Our readers will remember that both Mrs. Layton and Mrs. E. D. Simon are members of the Liberal Family Endowment Committee. The second and third are two resolutions on birth control. That moved by the Manchester W.L.C. points out the dangers of the inaccurate information, which is handed about in default of scientific instruction, and emphasizes the importance of securing that advice shall be given to women by their own doctors in the centres, who are familiar with their medical history. We are glad to see too that the Liberal Council, of which Lord Grey is president, has appointed a woman secretary, Miss Barbara Bliss, and that six women are serving on its executive committee.—The Lady Henley, Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, Mrs. Walter Runciman, Lady Currie, Mrs. Basil Herbert, and the Lady Emmott.

The Women of India.

In her presidential address to the All India Women's Conference held at Poona in January last, H.H. the Maharani of Baroda placed first on her list of aims the increase of education. At present, though educated men are now comparatively numerous, 98 per cent of Indian women are still illiterate. As a result of this, while in nearly every country in the world the position of women is rising towards that of men, in India they are losing ground, falling out of touch, and finding their programme of emancipation increasingly difficult of achievement. The chief problems confronting them—child marriage, the abolition of purdah, the age of consent, the adoption of modern hygiene and physical culture, are all of a kind, as Her Highness pointed out, to need both knowledge and judgment for their wise solution. In the meantime the foundations of more widespread education are lacking—training colleges to provide women teachers, medical schools where women nurses and doctors may be trained. It is not necessary in THE WOMAN'S LEADER to stress the medical aspect of the case and remind our readers of the mass of unrelieved misery which weighs upon women in purdah, fellow-citizens of our Empire. We know it. And we know, too, how vital it is to our own self-respect, and to the success of every women's movement that these vast swamps of physical disability and intellectual servitude should cease to exist. As long as there remains in the world a body of women tied to a hopeless sex inferiority, so long will there remain men and women, and English men and women, who regard this condition as woman's natural state. We are glad, therefore, to state that a campaign is at present being under-

taken in this country on behalf of Indian university women, to raise money for women's colleges and call attention to the general gravity of the position. Its headquarters are at 12 Palmer Street, Westminster, where the secretary will welcome inquiries.

Manners and Etiquette.

It is doubtful whether a week ever goes by without our modern manners being attacked, either from above by Dame Madge Kendal or from below by "A Mother of Daughters." Our modern manners are described as free, easy, careless, non-existent, as if this were an evil, whereas in fact it is the sign of a great good. All through the history of man, real good manners and prescribed good manners have run in an obverse ratio. Among savages the social talents can so little be trusted that conduct in the important occasions of life, such as courtship, has to be regulated in the minutest detail. Dialogues lasting for hours may have to be learned by heart; every gift, act, and attitude is determined for both the parties. With the growth of civilization this relaxes, at any rate among ordinary people. It will tighten again in crises, and where human beings are least to be trusted, round the persons of kings and in the relations between the sexes, it remains rigid. The children of men, after all, are cautious creatures, who avoid more than a certain degree of risk, and when all allowance has been made for secondary motives—snobbishness, love of the past, or on the other hand impatience of control—it remains true that the decay of formal manners is almost a measure of the growth of kindness, tolerance, and self-control.

Family Endowment in New South Wales.

We read in *The Times* that "the government of New South Wales has introduced a Bill instructing the Industrial Commissioner (Mr. Piddington) to declare without delay what shall be the living wage of adult male employees based upon a standard of living sufficient for a man, his wife, and two children under 14. Hitherto the basic wage has covered the requirements of a man, wife, and one child. This Bill is the substitute of the Premier (Mr. Lang) for the family endowment measure which the Select Committee of the Legislative Council is holding up."

Questions in Parliament.

Monday, 7th March.

WOMEN (NATIONALITY LAW).—In answer to a question by Mr. Briant as to whether the Prime Minister would consider the introduction of a Bill to facilitate the British-born wives of aliens resuming their British nationality in the event of the decease or desertion of their husbands, Captain Hacking replied: I have been asked to reply to this question. In the case of a woman who was a British subject before her marriage to an alien and whose husband has died or whose marriage has been dissolved, fresh legislation is unnecessary; special facilities for the resumption of British nationality are already available under the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914. My right hon. friend the Home Secretary has previously announced the intention of the Government to propose the provision of somewhat similar facilities in the case of a woman who is or may be presumed to be permanently separated from her alien husband, and a recommendation to this effect was adopted by the recent Imperial Conference.

FEMALE PRISONERS (SEARCH AND SUPERVISION).—In answer to a question by Sir Robert Newman as to how many city and borough police forces there are in England who have no full-time police matron in their police force; and whether in those cases he is satisfied with the arrangements made for the searching and supervision of female prisoners, Captain Hacking replied: On 29th September, 1926, the latest date for which details are available, there were in England and Wales 77 city and borough police forces where full-time police matrons are not employed. In all these cases, however, arrangements are made for matrons or police women to be called when necessary. On the information at present before him, my right hon. friend sees no ground for considering these arrangements unsatisfactory.

Ourselves.

We regret that owing to exceptional pressure on our space, some of our usual features have been unavoidably crowded out. These include the next instalment of Dame Adelaide Anderson's series on industrial problems in China, Miss Mason's article on County and County Borough Councils, not to speak of paragraphs of interest, reviews of books, and some interesting correspondence. Perhaps some of our admirers will send us cheques to cover some twelve page numbers!

THE RIDDLE OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

The Prime Minister's reply to Tuesday's deputation on Equal Franchise may seem to have left the whole of the Women's Societies marking time. It amounted, in fact, to little more than a promise that a definite statement would be made in the House before Easter. Nevertheless, we gather that on the whole the impression left on the minds of the deputation was not uncheerful, and that their optimistic mood was not wholly due to the well-deserved compliments paid by Mr. Baldwin to the remarkable effectiveness and conciseness with which the case had been presented. To fit into thirty-five minutes no less than eight speeches, each presenting a different facet of the equal franchise diamond, was, indeed, a feat which not many even of the "strong silent sex" could have accomplished, and the achievement reflects credit on the organizers of the deputation as well as the speakers. The truth is that no one who has studied in detail the pledges given by the Prime Minister himself and others on his behalf can possibly doubt that the former's promised statement in the House will contain a definite promise of legislation. Often as they have been quoted we make no apology for quoting them once more:—

During the election campaign in October, 1924, Mr. Baldwin made the following statement in the Press: "The Unionist Party is in favour of equal political rights for men and women, and desire that the question of the extension of the franchise should, if possible, be settled by agreement. With this in view, they would, if returned to power, propose that the matter should be referred to a Conference of all political parties on the lines of the Ullswater Committee."

In the House of Commons on 20th February, 1926, the Home Secretary said: "There is no dispute whatever as to the Prime Minister's pledge or its meaning and intention, and we do mean to carry out that pledge. We do mean to give equal political rights to men and women, but we desire to do it by agreement. . . . The Prime Minister adheres to his statement. It will be carried out. (Hon. Members: 'When?') It will be carried

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.

There have been two events of importance in the week, and perhaps it is best to deal with them first. The most far-reaching was the discussion on Russia, which took place on Thursday, 3rd March. The occasion, of course, was Sir Austen Chamberlain's dispatch to the Soviet Government, and this, in itself an incident bound to have wide repercussions, was worthy of careful debate. This it received, but more interesting than the actual discussion was the light it threw on the orientation of parties. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who incidentally made one of the best speeches of his life, and Mr. Snowden showed that they had definitely taken an attitude towards the Soviets to which they have been gradually approximating. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald said he was glad that the Foreign Secretary had sent his Note to Russia, and his only regret was that it had not been sent two years earlier. He did not seek to condone her actions. He pointed out, however, that if Russia had been provocative, some British Ministers had hardly been conciliatory. And he urged the Government to specify their grievances, and in fact have a general explanation, and he hoped a clearing up with Russia. Mr. Snowden carried this somewhat further. You have three courses open to you, he said: Either you go on as you are, which is impossible, or you break off relations, which is foolish, or you try and improve those relations. He evidently believed that the last alternative is not impossible, and it is to be hoped that he is right.

Sir Austen Chamberlain made his case to the general acceptance of the House, though there was a feeling that the lack of definiteness that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald complained of did in fact exist. Still, it was an acceptable speech. Sir Robert Horne, however, was in a more difficult position. He was the author and begetter of the Trade Agreement of 1921, and yet he went the whole way in asking the Government to declare it at an end. Mr. Lloyd George joined in the chorus of general approval of Sir Austen Chamberlain, and indulged in some excellent jests against the "die-hards". These latter did not come very well out of the argument. True, Commander Oliver Locker-Lampson spoke with his usual incisiveness and Mr. Lloyd George, who disagreed with every word of his speech, congratulated him upon it; but the previous thunder against the Government for their so-called cowardice and turpitude in not breaking with Moscow called for a more vigorous attack. Either the language was too strong or the action was too weak. In fact, to sum up, the truth is that there is no large body of opinion who want to break off relations.

out by this Parliament. . . . The Prime Minister's pledge is for equal rights and at the next election. I will say quite definitely that means that no difference will take place in the ages at which men and women will go to the poll at the next election."

The real danger ahead, as several speakers pointed out, is not that no Bill will be brought forward, but that one may be introduced so late in the lifetime of this Parliament that the dissolution may come, as is the way of dissolutions, like a thief in the night, and once more filch away from us the promised jewel. There are some cynics who apparently think that this is the consummation that the Prime Minister is playing for. We emphatically do not believe this. We believe that Mr. Baldwin's intentions are always honest. Moreover, we believe that he is genuinely, though not enthusiastically, on our side. But in this, as in other matters, there is grave danger that the reactionary forces behind him will prove too strong for his good-will, and that he may be persuaded to bring forward his promised measure in such a fashion or at such a date that nothing will come of it. This may happen, for example, if the question is mixed up with any other highly contentious issue, or if it be preceded by a Conference so conducted that opponents who are deliberately playing for time are allowed to work their wicked will.

Reactionaries in Mr. Baldwin's party may easily juggle him into such a position that all his opponents at the next General Election, and innumerable women who are not otherwise his opponents, may have grounds for charging him with bad faith. But such tactics bring their revenge both upon those who originate and those who are duped by them. On the whole, however, we continue to cherish our optimism, and to believe that this deputation marks one more milestone on the road to the promised land.

The other debate of interest was on the Washington Hours Convention, and took place on 28th February. The Government spokesman, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, was in dire difficulty. The House believed that he himself was in favour of our ratifying this instrument, to which we had put our hand as long ago as the year 1919 and which, while doing us no harm (since 96 per cent of our organized trades were upon an eight-hour day or better), would lessen foreign competition by bringing European rivals up to our standard. In fact, the case for ratification was so strong that hardly anyone opposed it. The unlucky Minister, however, had to do so, presumably by Cabinet orders. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland made the best of a bad job, but the job was one of which the best was bad, and he was assailed from all sides of the House by arguments which he found it impossible to answer. What the result will be no one can say, but after such a debate, when support for the Government, in spite of its immense majority, was hardly visible, it is difficult to see how they can delay adherence.

The rest of the week can be dismissed briefly, for there is a more important matter than Parliamentary proceedings. There was a debate on Tuesday, 1st March, upon necessitous areas, a debate of a kind which it would not be impolite to describe as "stock"; and on the following night the House was taken back to coal mining, when the Labour party moved a resolution calling attention to the number of miners who were still out of work. On Friday, 4th March, the House gave a second reading to an improved Moneylenders Bill but allowed a Measure which enabled a man to marry his niece by marriage or his aunt by marriage to be talked out.

But what is really of greater interest is the resignation of Dr. Haden Guest from the Labour party and the reflections that arise therefrom. Dr. Haden Guest spoke and voted against the China policy of his party. Now this is a thing which many members of other parties have often done. No doubt, if a man continually opposes his leaders, he had better find a seat on other benches, but a certain amount of latitude and flexibility has always been allowed, even on large questions. The Labour party, it is understood, is organized on a different principle, and more exact obedience is required of its members. Now this is of course a perfectly conceivable system upon which to construct a party, but it is doubtful whether the loss of men such as Mr. Haden Guest and Mr. Spencer (for the cases are similar) is not greater than the advantage of strict discipline. You cannot

(Continued on page 39.)

THE RENAISSANCE OF CHINA.

By MOSE ANDERSON.

The most dangerous spot in the dangerous world of to-day is China. And, at the same time, China is the seat of what may be the most far-reaching movement of our time. Fifteen years ago, Sun Yat-Sen preached the gospel of social and national regeneration. The Kuo-min-tang ("People's National Party") which arose in Canton, is the heir to his doctrines. Why is it that city after city has fallen before the Kuomintang, or Nationalist, armies as they advance northwards from Canton? It is because the gospel of Sun Yat-Sen has taken root. The message preached everywhere by the soldiers and the propagandists who accompany the armies, is acclaimed by the people as the expression of their own aspirations. Military prowess is not needed. The gates are opened by the power of the spoken word.

The students flock to a banner under which they feel that they will be able to work for the spread of learning, and the overthrow of worn-out traditions. "Intellectuals" more or less conscious that China could boast of an advanced art and literature and system of government in the days when Moses was still leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, and Europe was still shrouded in savagery, look forward to the rebirth of a vigorous Chinese civilization. Women see hopes of liberation from their age-long servitude. The workers trust that the days of their ruthless exploitation are over. All classes alike, suddenly aware of their Chinese citizenship, are stirred by the thought of a free and united China, a country governed by the people for the people, and free from military tyranny.

Disappointments are almost certainly in store for these overjoyed and confident people. It will only be with much help from the democratic countries of the world that China will attain to good government. Hitherto this help has been offered mainly by Russians, with the perhaps natural result that a section of the Kuomintang sees in Communism and co-operation with Communist Russia China's only hope of regeneration.

It is important to realize that the Kuomintang is not so much a political party as a political movement, the only political movement in China. In fact it comprises at least three sections, which are willing for the moment to sink their differences, until they liberate their country from its militarist oppressors, but which will then probably take distinct form as three separate parties.

Considerable provincial self-government, educational progress, industrial development, are part of the programme of the Kuomintang. Freedom to carry on their business is promised to nationals of countries which will respect China's sovereign rights. Whatever the difficulties and dangers, the world can ill afford to spurn the prospect of co-operation in ideals of progress with a great people like that of China.

THE MARCH SESSION OF THE LEAGUE COUNCIL.

By HEBE SPAULL.

On 7th March, the forty-fourth session of the Council of the League of Nations met at Geneva. For the first time, the deliberations of the Council are presided over by a German—Herr Stresmann, the Foreign Minister.

There are twenty-nine items on the agenda, one of the most important of these relating to the Private Manufacture of Arms. The Council will fix the date of an international conference to discuss this matter which is, of course, closely related to the whole question of the reduction of armaments now before the League.

The question of China does not figure on the agenda, but that does not necessarily preclude the matter from being raised. Sir Austen Chamberlain's letter to the Secretary-General of the League on Great Britain's attitude to the Chinese question will, of course, have to be reported.

Amongst the humanitarian problems figuring on the agenda, one of the most interesting is the report of the special body of experts appointed to inquire into the extent of the international traffic in women and children.

Mandates, health questions, opium, and the settlement of refugees are other matters figuring on the agenda. The Council has also to appoint the Chairman and members of the Governing Commission of the Saar Valley.

Such are some of the more outstanding matters that are being discussed at Geneva this week.

TO OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Dear Sir or Madam,

You may have seen from the Press that at the closing meeting of our Annual Council, on Saturday morning, eleven members of the newly elected Executive Committee tendered their resignations. These were:—

- Lady Balfour of Burleigh (Honorary Secretary),
- Mrs. Soddy (Honorary Treasurer),
- Mrs. Abbott,
- Miss Beaumont,
- Mrs. Bethune-Baker,
- Miss Helen Fraser,
- Miss Chrystal Macmillan,
- Miss Merrifield,
- Mrs. Phillips,
- Mrs. Robie Uniacke,
- Miss Monica Whately,

and immediately after the announcement had been made by Lady Balfour of Burleigh, she and the other resigning members left the platform. The Council received this heavy blow with admirable good temper and dignity. But consternation was expressed at the fact that the resigning members, without having communicated their decision to their colleagues, should have announced it to the Council in the presence of the Press on the eve of the deputation to the Prime Minister on Equal Franchise. It was feared that this might give rise to misconceptions, a fear subsequently justified by the paragraphs which appeared in several newspapers, ascribing the action taken to dissensions on the subject of Equal Franchise. Our late colleagues had doubtless overlooked this danger in arriving at what must have been an anxious and painful decision, for we know that their zeal for Equal Franchise is as great as our own. After some discussion, the following resolution was moved from the Chair, and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:—

"That this Council, warmly appreciating the valuable services given to the Union by the retiring members of the Executive Committee, asks them to reconsider their resignation, and in view of the critical stage in the fight for Equal Franchise, to continue their services on the Committee for the ensuing year."

The majority of the members concerned have already replied in the negative to this invitation, but we are glad to learn from a circular sent to the Press, that the resigning members intend to remain within the Union, though not as members of the Executive Committee.

Pending the full report of the Council, you will naturally wish for some account of the position in which the Union is left by this regrettable occurrence, and also of the events which led to it.

To take the immediate position first:—We do not wish to minimize the loss of so many valued colleagues, some of whom have given devoted service to the Union for so many years. But we would reassure you as to the ability of the remaining members to carry on the work of the Union, by appending the result of the election ballot, with the names of the members who remain with us in small capitals.

Executive Committee.

(Elected at the Annual Council Meeting, 1927.)

- President Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE.
- Honorary Treasurer Mrs. Soddy.
- Honorary Secretary The Lady Balfour of Burleigh.

- 1. Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY 136
- 2. Miss MACADAM 127
- 3. Mrs. STOCKS 121
- 4. Miss WARD 121
- 5. Miss COURTNEY 120
- 6. Mrs. Bethune-Baker 110
- 7. Mrs. Abbott 103
- 8. Miss Macmillan 103
- 9. Mrs. JAMES TAYLOR 98
- 10. Mrs. ANTHONY 93
- 11. Miss PICTON-TURBERVILL 84
- 12. Mrs. VAN GRUISEN 82
- 13. Mrs. BLANCO-WHITE 81
- 14. Miss Fraser 80

- 15. Miss Beaumont 76
- 16. Miss Whately 76
- 17. Mrs. LAYTON 71
- 18. Miss Merrifield 65
- 19. Mrs. Robie Uniacke 65
- 20. Mrs. Phillips 53
- 21. Mrs. RYLAND 53

You will note that four out of the first five names on the list (after those of the officers) are those of members who have been officers or Chairmen of the Executive Committee for long periods. Of the others, some have had intimate experience of the work of our Societies in London, Scotland, or the Provinces, or wide administrative experience in other bodies. We also retain our Parliamentary Secretary, Mrs. Hubback, who for nine years has carried out the executive work of the Union with brilliant success, and her able lieutenant, Miss Hancock, and the rest of our loyal and devoted staff.

With such helpers we need have no fears for the future, provided only that the Societies of the Union remain steadfast and present a united front at this critical time.

As to the occurrences which led to the resignation of our colleagues:—It was grounded, we believe, mainly upon two resolutions passed by the Council at preceding meetings, viz. Resolution 9 (Protective Legislation for Workers) and 40 (Programme: Guiding Principles).

Resolution 9 proposed by the Executive Committee, ran as follows:—

PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION FOR WORKERS.

"That this Council reaffirms its conviction that legislation for the protection of workers should be based, not upon sex, but upon the nature of the occupation, and directs the Executive Committee when any protective or restrictive regulation affects, or is proposed to affect, one sex only, to consider and decide according to the merits of each case whether to work for the extension of the regulation to both sexes or to oppose it for both sexes."

Miss Rathbone moved the following amendment:—

Add the following clauses:—

"In considering the merits of each case the Executive Committee shall take the following factors into account:—

- (a) Whether the proposed regulation will promote the well-being of the community and of the workers affected.
- (b) Whether the workers affected desire the regulation and are promoting it through their organizations.
- (c) Whether the policy of securing equality through extension or through opposition is the more likely to meet with a rapid and permanent success."

After prolonged debate, the amendment was carried by 81 votes to 80. Three counts were taken, the final count being by the method of a lobby vote, which left no possibility of error.

Miss Macmillan then moved an amendment to delete all words after "occupation" (line 2). This was lost by 79 votes to 75. The resolution as previously amended was then put, and carried.

As to the import of this decision:—You will note that the resolution as carried re-affirms the conviction of the Council "That legislation for the protection of workers should be based, not upon sex, but upon the nature of the occupation." It recognized further that there are two alternative ways of carrying out this principle, viz. either by working for the extension of any proposed legislation to both sexes, or by opposing it for both sexes. So far, there was no difference of opinion. The difference arose upon the question of what factors should be taken into account in choosing between the above alternatives. The view of the resigning members (as subsequently defined in their circular to the Press) was that:—

"Since equality is our object, the merits on which the Union is bound to consider any proposal are whether or not that proposal does or does not promote this object."

The view which carried the majority was that factors (a), (b) in Miss Rathbone's amendment, adopted by the Council, should also be taken into account. That is to say, the Council held that in a matter such as protective legislation, on which the well-being, health, safety, or even life of industrial workers may depend, the Executive should not be pledged to ignore every other consideration except that of immediate identity of treatment for men and women. Occasions may arise when it may be necessary, in the interest of the common weal to work for the inclusion of both sexes, even at the risk of that proving the longer road to equality. Further, the Council held that the view of the workers affected by the legislation, so far as it can be ascertained, should not be left wholly out of account.

The other decision which, we understand, influenced the action of the resigning members, was as follows:—

RESOLUTION 40. PROGRAMME—GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

That this Council declares that the primary function of the N.U.S.E.C. is to secure a real equality of liberties, status, and opportunity between men and women; that its secondary function is to secure such reforms (as may from time to time be adopted by the Council) as are necessary to make it possible for women adequately to discharge their functions as citizens.

This Council is consequently of the opinion that, in view of the increased pressure upon organization and Parliamentary work, and particularly upon the time of the Executive Committee, occasioned by the widening of the N.U.S.E.C. programme, the principle guiding the deliberations and decisions of the Executive Committee shall be that under every heading of the Immediate Programme those reforms which directly involve equal liberties, status, and opportunities between men and women shall be given precedence; and that since the need for other social and ameliorative reforms which may be deemed necessary to make it possible for women adequately to discharge their functions as citizens is in large part occasioned by the inequality of liberties and opportunities, the unequal citizenship and the low status of women—in law, thought, and custom—such reforms shall be dealt with secondarily.

That this Council further declares that the same guiding principle shall be adopted with regard to all matters upon the General Programme of the N.U.S.E.C.

This was moved by Lord Balfour of Burleigh on behalf of the Kensington and Paddington S.E.C.

Miss Courtney, on behalf of the Executive Committee, moved an amendment:—

Further, this Council is of opinion that the following points on the Immediate Programme involve the principle of equality of liberties, status, and opportunities, between men and women:—

5. (a) Family Allowances, including provision for Married Women and Children under the National Health Insurance Acts.

(b) Freedom of Married Women who desire it to obtain information on Birth Control at Welfare Centres in receipt of Government Grants.

6. The League of Nations and the practical applications of the principle of equal opportunity for men and women within it.

After a long discussion, this was carried by a large majority. Lord Balfour of Burleigh then moved a further amendment:—

"After the words 'Equality of liberties, status, and opportunities between men and women' add the words: 'to a lesser degree than the first four points on the Programme, and therefore, relate rather to the secondary function of the Council referred to above than to the primary.'"

This amendment was lost by a large majority.

The resolution as previously amended was carried with ten dissentients.

The substance of the Council's decision on this tangle of amendments was that while emphasizing that the primary function of the Union concerns equality it refused to declare that those reforms on the immediate programme which concern Family Allowances, information concerning Birth Control, and the League of Nations, are an inferior brand of equality. From the great importance attached by the resigning members to this refusal you might naturally suppose that an excessive proportion of our work during the past year had been devoted to these reforms. The very opposite is the case. The order of work at Headquarters is in fact necessarily dictated largely by consideration of political opportunity. During 1926, it was mainly concentrated on Equal Franchise (which invariably receives priority over all other reforms), and on questions of Protective Legislation arising out of the Government's Factories Bill and Lead Paint Bill. On Family Allowances practically nothing was done, except the issue of one or two circulars, the finding of speakers for meetings, etc. The chief political opportunity of the year in connection with the reform arose out of the recommendations of the Coal Commission Report, and seemed to be more fitly dealt with by the Family Endowment Society. On information concerning Birth Control, there was a brief period of very intensive work preceding and following the motion carried in the House of Lords by Lord Buckmaster. In this matter both Lord and Lady Balfour of Burleigh gave enthusiastic help. On the League of Nations some organizing was done in connection with the Peace Pilgrimage, but the strain of this effort, so far as it fell upon our Union, was borne chiefly by our Societies.

For the future as in the past, we believe that political considerations, coupled with the rough indication afforded by the order on which reforms have been placed on the immediate programme by the Council afford adequate "guiding principles" as to their claim to priority. We could not accept Lord Balfour of Burleigh's amendment, relegating points 5a and b and 6 on the programme to an inferior status, partly because in so far as it was in accordance with our existing practice it was unnecessary, but chiefly because it implies what to many of us appears a fundamentally false view of equal citizenship. So far from our policy with regard to Family Allowances, Birth Control, and International Peace affecting the status and liberties of women in an inferior degree, many of us hold that these reforms lie

at the very heart of our equality movement. The Council, by an immense majority, only twelve months ago confirmed this view and has again this year re-affirmed it. We are aware that many of our members do not agree. But the strength of the National Union has always lain in the fact that it combines a tolerance of differences and complete liberty of action for individuals, with a loyal acceptance of the decisions of the majority as guiding the activities of the Union in its collective capacity.

We are confident that you will remain true to this spirit, which has kept the Union together through many a crisis during past years, and will, we trust, continue to sustain it until our object is accomplished.

We are,

Your faithfully,

ELEANOR F. RATHBONE
(President),

MARGERY CORBETT ASHBY
KATHLEEN D. COURTNEY
MARY D. STOCKS

(Acting Chairmen of Council).

Saturday, 5th March.

STATEMENT BY THE ELEVEN RESIGNING OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

It has been stated in the Press that our action in resigning from the Executive Committee of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship was due to a division on the question of Equal Suffrage. This is emphatically not the case. We wholeheartedly support the demand for Equal Franchise at the age of 21 which is to be put forward by the deputation to be received by the Prime Minister on Tuesday.

In our opinion the time has come to make an effort to recall the Union to first principles. It is not our intention to leave the Union, but to work within it for its return to right lines. We

do not do that as members of the Executive, bound to carry the policy laid down by the Annual Council. That is why we resigned. Several decisions of the Council show an increasing tendency to overlook the fundamental object of the Union—equal status of women with men.

We wish to see the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, in fact as in name, remain a body to work for equality. Its function is to secure reforms in any and every sphere political, social, and economic, in so far as they conduce to such equality, but giving precedence always to equal franchise, equal moral standard, equal pay and opportunities, and the removal of disabilities of married women. The Union represents every shade of political thought and opinion, and is united only by the desire to establish equality between the sexes.

Since equality is our object, the merits on which the Union is bound to consider any proposal are whether or not that proposal does or does not promote this object. The new policy, by setting up additional tests, modifies and qualifies our object, and if persisted in will further weaken the driving force of the Union.

Equal Citizenship, the object for which the Union exists, is in itself essential to the well-being of the community. The new policy by implication denies that our object does promote this well-being.

In our view, one of the chief points of the Union's programme is equal opportunity for men and women, professionally and industrially, and in particular a demand that regulations of the conditions and hours of work shall be based on the nature of the occupation and not on the sex of the worker—a policy long established and fundamental. The new policy whittles down this demand.

To acquiesce in this change of fundamental principles would have been a betrayal of the women's movement, for which we have been working, some of us for more than thirty years.

DOROTHY BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH.
WINIFRED SODDY.
ELIZABETH ABBOTT.
FLORENCE M. BEAUMONT.
E. BETHUNE BAKER.
HELEN FRASER.

CHRISTAL MACMILLAN.
F. DE G. MERRIFIELD.
C. PHILLIPS.
J. ROBIE UNIACKE.
MONICA WHATELY.

6th March, 1927.

EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Last week delegates from all parts of the country assembled in larger numbers than ever before since 1919, for the annual council meetings of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. Special interest was attached to the meeting, owing to the forthcoming deputation of women's societies to the Prime Minister, and one of the most striking features of the week was the "mass lobby" at the House of Commons. Delegates to the Council flocked thither to interview their Members in such numbers that they could only be admitted in small groups as space permitted and a long queue, including the "Young Suffragists," reminiscent of past suffrage days, lined up outside. Subsequent events proved that though sharp dissensions existed in the Council on certain subjects, it spoke with one voice on an equal franchise.

The President's opening address, printed in this paper last week, was a critical analysis of the work of the Union and its Societies, ending with a strong appeal to bring more labourers unto the harvest. The annual report which was presented by the Hon. Secretary, Lady Balfour of Burleigh, was a record of solid Parliamentary and propaganda work. Eleven new societies had affiliated during the year, of which perhaps the most outstanding were the Central Council of the Scottish Women's Co-operative Guild, a great addition to the strength of the Union, and the Young Suffragists, a new body composed of women under 30.

It is impossible in a brief report to do more than touch on some of the resolutions on an agenda of appalling length. Next to Equal Franchise both in order of place and importance, came resolutions dealing with the Public Places Orders Bill (England and Wales), and the promised Committee of Inquiry. A resolution to urge the Government to introduce legislation for Scotland on the same lines was also passed. Affiliated Societies were urged to take more active steps to secure the return of women to local authorities and, what is still more noteworthy, a resolution proposed by Chester W.C.A. was passed by a large majority in favour of the method of Proportional Representation for local Government elections. This will be forwarded to the Royal Commission on Local Government which is now sitting. A careful summary of the conditions in selected towns which will be extended in the coming year was read by Miss Caton. An urgency resolution to protect the services of women in the event of the transfer of the functions of Boards of Guardians to county and borough councils was unanimously agreed to. Another urgency resolution which elicited much interest called upon the Government to support or adopt the Married Women (Employment) Bill, for which Sir Robert Newman had won a place in the Private Members' Ballot.

The resolutions dealing with protective legislation for workers have owing to circumstances achieved some notoriety, and as the conflict of opinion which arose will be dealt with elsewhere in this issue, they can be passed over here with one single comment. The Council by a huge majority reiterated its unalterable conviction that legislation for the protection of workers should be based *not upon sex*, but upon the nature of the occupation. A resolution calling upon the Government to amend the Lead Paint Act, 1926, in accordance with that principle was carried by a large majority. In this connection it is impossible to omit mention of a valuable piece of research, presented by Mrs. Aldridge, into Restrictive Legislation for Women.

Social insurance is destined to fill an ever-increasing place in the economic life of the country, and it was therefore fitting that the Council should submit recent developments and proposals to a microscopic examination from the feminist outlook. A special conference on this subject was addressed by Mr. T. J. Cohen and Mr. Kershaw and the Council heard an abstract of a very able report prepared by Miss Martelli which it is proposed to make the basis of a handbook on the subject. In view, however, of the change in the situation brought about by the Blanesborough Report, the agenda cargo was lightened by no fewer than seven hefty resolutions on the subject.

Resolutions on many other important subjects, including women police, women on agricultural wages boards, women jurors, women in the Civil Service, the recruitment of the municipal services, and the nationality of married women, were carried. It is impossible to do more than refer readers to the report which will shortly be issued.¹ A very important group dealt with the League of

¹ A full report containing all the resolutions with amendments lost or carried may be had on application to N.U.S.E.C., 45 Dean's Yard, after 15th March, price 5½d. post free.

THE COUNCIL AT PLAY.

The Council was not wholly all work and no play. On the evening of the first day the President and the Executive Committee gave a reception to the delegates and their friends in the large hall at King's College for Women, Campden Hill, kindly lent by the House Committee. The fact that Miss Reynard, now Warden of the College, was formerly a member of the Executive Committee and a leading worker of the Union in Yorkshire, gave an additional interest to this delightful gathering. Miss Jean Sterling Mackinlay, in giving a recital of songs, told a story of her mother, Antoinette Stirling, who when asked to sing at a suffrage gathering, selected a song at random, "A man's a man for a' that." The luncheon, which is now an established feature of Council week, was this year held at the Criterion Restaurant, and was larger than ever. It was fitting that as so much of the work of the Union last year was introduced in the Upper Chamber, the Chief Parliamentary guests on this occasion were Viscount Cecil and Viscount Astor, two of our best friends in Parliament. The chief woman guest was Miss Maude Royden, who has a very warm place in the affections of all suffragists. Their three speeches were each in its own way almost perfect examples of after-lunch speeches, each giving its blend of seriousness and wit peculiarly their own, which sent delegates back to work cheered and stimulated for the remaining work that lay before them.

Nations, and the council urged the appointment of women on the Commission on Disarmament. A second bone of contention revealed itself in the group of resolutions dealing with the immediate programme of the Union. It is sufficient to state here that with some additional subdivisions the immediate programme remains the same. During the last morning much useful if somewhat hurried work was done, and the Council was about to resolve itself into "A Committee of the whole house" to discuss matters of organization, when the Hon. Secretary, Lady Balfour of Burleigh, made the unexpected and regrettable announcement referred to elsewhere in this paper.

We cannot omit from this hasty survey an allusion to the message of deep sympathy with the relatives of those who lost their lives in the two recent colliery disasters, which was carried by the delegates standing. To sum up the events of the week is not easy. It was a deeply interesting, a stimulating, a thought-provoking, though at times a painful Council. Some criticisms must be levelled at the excessive proportion of speaking from the platform, though it must be admitted that some admirable speeches came from the floor of the House. The Council ended on a happy note, with warm thanks to the sorely tried Chairman, the officers and staff, and all who had laboured for the success of the Council, both at work and at play. L. H. S.

THE LAST SUFFRAGE DEMONSTRATION.

Will it be the last? There were the familiar banners of past campaigns mingled with those of a modern pattern. The music was equally reminiscent of similar events in past years. The hall was well filled with a gathering composed of representatives of a magnificent list of societies including practically all nationally organized women's organizations, as well as societies from different parts of England, Scotland, and Wales. One satisfactory feature of the meeting was the considerable sprinkling of young people. Students from several of the London colleges, representatives of the Young Suffragists and of other bodies, composed largely of young women, were conspicuous among those of an older generation. One feature alone essential to the complete suffrage meeting was wanting—the presence of Dame Millicent Fawcett, who, however, sent a rousing message from Palestine. The speaking was worthy of the occasion. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, a new and staunch friend, spoke as a member of the Conservative party, and made an eloquent and unanswerable case for immediate action on the part of the Government. Captain Evans brought a message from Mr. Lloyd George; Miss Margaret Bondfield in a brilliant speech represented the demand of Labour women. Mrs. Corbett Ashby spoke as one of the senior members of the Executive Committee of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, in contradiction to her youthful appearance, and also as one who in her capacity of President of the I.W.S.A. realizes to the full the inferiority of the British position. The Chairman, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, closed the proceedings by an expression of the determination of women to end the present injustice or "eight million British women voters will know the reason why." A vote of thanks was ably moved and seconded by two speakers, representing the great unenfranchised, one a girl of 21 and the other a student from the working women's college at Beckenham, who though she had passed the magic age, did not yet possess a vote. It was an enthusiastic and representative meeting. Will it be the last of its kind?

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER (continued from page 35).

expect that two hundred or three hundred men of strong views will always see eye to eye on every point; and though in many cases of disagreement they may be silent, there do come instances in which silence is impossible. Anyhow, Dr. Haden Guest is leaving Parliament, and Mr. Spencer has been expelled the party, and men of their stamp no party can lose without damage. The old Home Rule party was run on these lines. They succeeded and they failed. They created unity at the expense of quality.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: MISS ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P. Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HURBACK.
Offices: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.1.
Telephone: Victoria 6188.

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETINGS.

In spite of the regrettable incident on the last morning, this annual council meeting was one of the keenest and quite the largest held in recent years. An account of the business meetings and of the various functions in connection with the Council is given on another page.

An official statement with regard to the resignations is being printed and circulated to societies. Copies can be obtained by anyone sending a stamped addressed envelope to headquarters.

REPORT OF ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETINGS.

This report will be circulated to secretaries of societies and to local correspondents next week. Copies of this report (price 5½d. post free) can be obtained on application to Headquarters.

NEXT MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The retiring Committee decided that the next meeting of the Executive Committee should be held on Wednesday, 23rd March, at 11.30 a.m.

RESPONSE TO SPECIAL APPEAL AT THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING.

	£	s.	d.
Miss Alston	1	0	0
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Miss Deakin	2	2	0
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COMING EVENTS.

ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN.

MAR. 16. 10.30 a.m. Visit to Ideal Home Exhibition, Olympia.

GUILDHOUSE WOMEN CITIZENS' SOCIETY.

MAR. 21. 3 p.m. The Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Miss Margaret McMillan on "Poverty in the Modern State."

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

MAR. 22. 1 p.m. Informal Luncheon at Lyceum Club, 138 Piccadilly, W., to meet Princess Radziwill of the Information Section of the League of Nations Secretariat.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Edinburgh W.C.A. MAR. 15. 5.15 p.m. Study Circle, 27 Rutland Street. Mr. J. M. Munro Kerr on "Maternity as it should be."

MAR. 16. 8 p.m. Public Meeting, Gartshore Hall, 116 George Street. Mr. C. D. Carus-Wilson on "The Appreciation of Art, and its effect upon the lives of the Citizens." Chair: Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser.

SOCIETY FOR CONSTRUCTIVE BIRTH CONTROL AND RACIAL PROGRESS.

MAR. 17. 8 p.m. Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C. Mr. A. S. A. Ackermann on "Popular Fallacies connected with Birth Control." Chair: Dr. Marie Stopes.

FELLOWSHIP SOCIETY OF CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, NEWPORT.

MAR. 21. 7.30 p.m. Mrs. F. W. Hubback on "Current and Recent Legislation specially affecting Women and Children."

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Information Bureau. Interviews, 10 to 1, except Saturdays. Members Centre open daily. Restaurant open to 7.30. (Not Saturdays.)

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 13th March; 3.30 Music. Major W. Tudor Pole on "Universalism in Religion, with special reference to the Bahai Faith," 6.30, Maude Royden, "The Discipline of Body and Spirit."

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NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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