

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### Parliament Reassembles.

Parliament reassembled after its long adjournment without any formalities, and settled down at once to unspectacular necessary business. The leading members both of the Cabinet and the Opposition were greeted by their followers with rousing cheers, but there was a special note of exaltation and triumph in the welcome accorded to Mr. Snowden and Mr. Henderson. Of the Bills which closely concern readers of this paper those for Widows' Pensions and Unemployment Insurance are the first to be tackled. The Government refused to commit itself as to when they would introduce the promised Bill dealing with slum clearance, but it seems almost certain that this will not come on before Christmas. At the time of going to Press the result of the Private Members' Ballot is not known, but we hope that either through this means or through a Bill introduced under the ten minutes' rule or through a resolution which can be balloted for monthly an early opportunity of bringing forward the nationality of married women will present itself.

#### Vote!

This issue will reach the majority of its readers on 1st November, the day on which one-third of the membership of the Boroughs and County Boroughs of England and Wales present themselves for election. That is to say, round about 350 municipal elections will be in full swing. Last year it is estimated that something less than 40 per cent of potential electors cared enough for the government of their cities to take the trouble to go to the poll. Yet large matters of policy were at stake and a vast area of human welfare was directly susceptible to their electoral decision. But if there were good reasons for awaking to the realities of municipal politics on 1st November, 1928, there are still better reasons for doing the same thing on 1st November, 1929. In the first place we stand on the eve of large changes in the potential activity of local governing authorities in the sphere of education, housing, and, in all probability, health. New policies are about to take shape, and their effective scope as well as their ultimate success will depend upon the vigour and ability which local bodies put into the business of their administration. In the second place the large and difficult legacy of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's Local Government Act remains to be translated into administrative practice. In determining the personnel of County Boroughs on 1st November, 1929, the electors will be determining

at the same time, and for the first time, the personnel of the bodies which will in future be responsible for the administration of poor relief. Here is an added reason why they should not merely vote, but vote wherever circumstances render it possible, for competent women candidates. Never has the presence of such candidates been more urgently needed in the field of local administration.

#### Voting Rights in the City.

The question of the extent of voting rights of women in the City of London is at present under discussion by the law officers of the City Corporation—the Recorder, the Common Serjeant, the Remembrancer, and the Solicitor, and a decision is expected shortly. It is pointed out that if wives of occupiers are to be placed on the Ward Lists they would be eligible for election to the Common Council and to the Court of Aldermen and if a woman were so elected she might in the course of time become Sheriff or even Lord Mayor. Women occupiers in their own right are in this position already, but they are relatively very few in numbers. It is clear that some definite principle in regard to the interpretation of the Equal Franchise Act is required to ensure uniformity of treatment and we shall await the ruling of the law officers with interest.

#### An Irish Illegitimacy Bill.

A Bill has been brought forward in the Irish Free State which aims at a considerable tightening up of the father's responsibility for illegitimate children. According to its proposed terms, the District Justice may make an affiliation order which requires the putative father to pay the expenses of confinement, funeral expenses up to £5 where necessary, and a weekly allowance not exceeding £1 for the child up to the age of 16. This may under certain conditions be commuted for a lump sum. If the child is found at the age of 16 to be mentally or physically defective, further weekly payments up to any age may be required by the District Justice. The father may also be made liable for a payment up to £50 for the purpose of an apprenticeship premium. These payments are recoverable as a civil debt, for which the income or pension of the father is attachable.

#### Busybodies and Women Police in Hull.

At a recent meeting of the Hull Watch Committee a resolution recommending the introduction of women police was rejected by nine votes to three. The Chief Constable had prepared an adverse report on the subject, which included a resolution in opposition from the local branch of the Police Federation, which aroused some criticism from the mover of the resolution, who, supported by Councillor Mary Anderson, put up a strong plea for the reform. Even sillier things than usual were said on this occasion; one City Father is reported to have said that in his experience of women not one in a thousand exercised correct judgment. Another declared that the agitation for women police came largely from an interfering set of busybodies who have nothing to do but nurse "pom" dogs. Still another referred to the disgraceful scenes he had witnessed of women pulling other women's hair out, saying no women could cope with such situations. What a terrible place Hull must be! The recent civic week celebrations led us to expect something quite different, though one very distinguished speaker at the public dinner slyly suggested, in joke we thought, that another

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vowel was sometimes substituted for the "u" in the name of the City. We shall be interested to hear how the women voters of Hull react to the sort of nonsense that was uttered by the members of their Watch Committee and we sincerely hope for their sakes that the City Council will have something to say on the subject. We ought, perhaps, in fairness, to state that an amendment to appoint additional police matrons was carried, but that in no way, in our opinion, affects their decision.

#### Women Jurors Excused.

At the Autumn Sitting of the Glasgow High Court held last week women jurors were excused by Lord Pitman on account of the disgusting character of a case which was to come forward. So far as we can judge from the Press notices the case for which an all-male jury was empanelled consisted of an offence against a girl of eighteen, the niece of the wife of the offender. We assume, we hope rightly, that the women were back in their places before the next charge, which was one of lewd practices and assault on two little girls of six and eight years of age. In all probability the women concerned imagined that they had no alternative but to retire and in any case they were placed in a very difficult position. If the facts reported are correct a strong protest should be made. Though Lord Pitman's intentions were good it is insulting the citizenship of women to assume that they cannot face the more unsavoury aspects of jury service and in this particular instance where apparently a young girl was involved there was no possible excuse for the withdrawal of women.

#### "The Protection of Children of Tender Years."

The remarks of the judge in passing sentence of three years penal servitude on the case alluded to above of assault on two little girls calls for some examination. "Young children of such tender years cannot protect themselves and it is the duty of the court to see that they are protected." The imprisonment of the offender has not "protected" the two child victims; it is at best locking the stable door after the horse is stolen. The appointment of women police in adequate numbers is the best way to protect helpless children in the parks and streets of our cities. Yet the City Fathers of a great seaport like Hull turn down such a proposal as an agitation organized by idle busybodies.

#### Below the Surface.

We print in this issue an article entitled "A Land of Drugs", with the knowledge that it will probably cause distress to a certain number of our readers. Some years ago we should have hesitated to print it. It is so terrible, so melodramatically and startlingly terrible, that we should have been tempted to regard it as an unnecessarily sensational presentation. But since then much hard-won knowledge has come our way, and we have had access to the personal experiences of persons who work in the darker recesses of our social system. We know well enough that it is no sensationalism, but a glimpse of something that lies below the surface of civilized life, causing widespread unhappiness, nerve strain, ill-health, and economic exploitation. Recent investigations into the causes of maternal mortality have thrown some light on its physical destructiveness. The world of social science still awaits the enterprising research student who will broaden and co-ordinate existing knowledge of its economic aspects, by systematic investigation of the dimensions and destination of the considerable sums that pour from the pockets of the very poorest working mothers into the coffers of the druggists and the rubber stores. In the present instance, our contributor, O. A. Merritt Hawkes, is content to indicate the nature of the evil. No remedies are suggested. For our own part we can see no remedy other than the substitution for ignorant and mercenary advice, of disinterested and expert medical instruction, and we can visualize no more satisfactory channel for such instruction than the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres where married working women are normally brought into touch with persons who know their conditions and their individual needs. Therefore on balance, and because no reform comes without enlightened discontent, we take the risk of causing distress to our readers. It is a distress which, as enfranchised citizens, with the responsibilities of Government and local government on their shoulders, they must bravely face.

#### Exeter and a Birth Control Clinic.

A public meeting was held in Exeter on 21st October, for the purpose of establishing a voluntary birth control clinic for the supply of expert medical advice to working class mothers in the area. A section of the meeting engaged in vigorous, and at times hostile, criticism of the project. The Chairman, Lady Acland, however, was able to report that many of the most experienced social workers of the poorer parts of the city were behind the scheme. They were, she said, convinced that mothers living under difficult conditions "should be able to order their lives, often a very hard struggle, in a more intelligent way." We shall watch with deep interest the further progress of this courageous and far-sighted project.

#### Road Accidents.

In his charge to the Grand Jury at the Suffolk Assizes last week Mr. Justice Horridge had some very strong things to say about the appalling number of motor accidents. The papers are full of discussion as to the causes; but whether the pedestrian, the professional or amateur driver, or the motor-cyclist is the most frequent culprit, the lives of helpless and innocent persons—in a painful number of cases old people or children—are daily imperilled. It will be remembered that no less a person than Viscount Cecil raised the subject in the House of Lords last year, with the result that a Royal Commission was appointed, which has issued two reports, including one on the control and safety of the road. We do not expect women citizens to try to set the whole world right like Hamlet, but this is a matter which affects every man, woman, or child who uses the King's High Road, as driver or pedestrian. It is surely time that women gave this wholesale slaughter some attention. We propose in the near future to publish some articles on the present position with regard to possible legislation, with suggestions for united action which may be taken locally.

#### The Princesses of the Oneidas.

How little we know about our own Dominions! How many of our readers knew that the Oneidas on the Muncey Indian Reserve in Ontario on the banks of the Canadian Thames are ruled by women? Nine Princesses with hereditary rights are in sole authority and jointly nominate nine tribal chiefs who in turn elect their president, known as the "Firekeeper." It appears that other Indian tribes have more democratic methods and elect their own chiefs, and the supremacy of the Princesses has been challenged.

#### The N.C.W.'s New President.

We referred last week to the Annual Conference of the National Council of Women held at Manchester. We would like to say a word of welcome to the new President, Mrs. Keynes has been well known on account of her work in Cambridge, both as Chairman some years ago of the Cambridge Board of Guardians and as an active member of the Cambridge Council since 1924. It is fortunate at this time, when the position of women in local government has been so seriously threatened by the abolition of the Board of Guardians, that there is one at the helm of a large and important body of women who has an intimate knowledge of its problems.

#### Penal Reform.

The Howard League for Penal Reform began its winter's work with a meeting on Thursday of last week at which the Home Secretary presided. An interesting programme, carefully planned at hours to suit every variety of busy person, has been arranged. We advise readers likely to be in London during the winter to send for a copy of this programme and fit in one or more of the meetings or monthly Pinoli luncheons, which have now become a feature of the League.

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

### WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS.

It is now ten years since the inception of the League of Nations, and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, with their theoretic acceptance of sex equality; and it is a little more than ten years since women in this country secured partial enfranchisement and the right to sit in the House of Commons. Surely then, it is time that women should take their place in the councils of the League on the same footing as men—as human beings and representative citizens. It was certainly in that spirit that Mrs. Swanwick and Mrs. Hamilton joined the British delegation to Geneva this year, and those of us who were privileged to hear them speak at the private reception which the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship held in their honour last week were convinced that they each represented far more than "the woman's point of view" in the narrow sense of the word. While there may be other women as splendidly representative, there is no doubt that the two British women members of this year's Assembly were as well fitted as any could be to justify our claim for a full share in all the many aspects of the League's work and responsibilities.

Unfortunately, the general attitude at Geneva towards any woman who has the courage—one would almost think it were audacity—to address such an international gathering is one of wonderment. As any who have attended the public sessions know, many of the men delegates are obviously amazed when some of the women rise to speak. That ridiculous attitude, which places the women at such a tremendous disadvantage, can best and perhaps only be combated by the presence of women as patently competent as Mrs. Swanwick and Mrs. Hamilton. Their attendance and undoubted success at Geneva this summer will encourage, we hope, other countries that so far have not done so, in future to include representative women in their

#### THE MIDWIFE

By EDITH M. PYE

The Report of the Departmental Committee on the Training and Employment of Midwives goes much further than its title would imply, and outlines a complete scheme, organized on a national basis, to insure proper maternal care. To this scheme are added far-reaching administrative changes concerning midwives and their profession.

The scheme is not the first of its kind, and some form of social insurance which will bring within the reach of every mother skilled care and attention throughout the whole ten months of pregnancy and lying-in is a long overdue measure of reform. The fact that maternal mortality does not diminish in spite of all the sporadic efforts made is the basis of an agitation to take action that appears very widespread, and there is no doubt that considerable public support would be given to legislation that would really grapple with the problem.

In June of this year the British Medical Association published a scheme for a maternity service, and it is clear that the proposals of the Departmental Committee for Maternal Care are largely based upon the excellently worked-out details given there. Both that Committee and the British Medical Association recognize the important place that midwives as independent members of a responsible profession must take in any such scheme; that they are capable of attending on and carrying through successfully a natural process, and that they are trained to recognize and hand on to medical responsibility any case of abnormality or disease.

The statistics published as an appendix to the British Medical Association scheme effectively dispose of the theory that maternal mortality is higher in midwives' practice, and the returns of the Queen's and village nurse-midwives' cases for 1928 give a maternal mortality rate, including all cases booked by them in which responsibility was handed over to doctor or hospital, of 1.9 per 1,000 in 65,077 cases (as against 4.4 total maternal mortality rate for England and Wales).

It is said that of the mothers of this country a very large proportion are delivered by midwives, and it is proposed in these schemes that all should have the additional security of examination by a doctor both before and after the birth of the child.

The scheme as outlined in the Report of the Departmental Committee makes available the services of a certified midwife throughout the whole period before, during, and after childbirth, with the services of a doctor for any abnormality, together with a consultant and institutional treatment when necessary, and suggest further financial assistance if the mother prefers to have both a doctor and a midwife or to go into an institution

delegations, for the number of women at the Assembly is still miserably small. The example alone of other countries will not be sufficient, however, to bring them all into line: their own women must exert their full influence on their defaulting governments, and press for the appointment of women in the delegations.

Many who have not realized the full meaning of the woman's movement consider the continual demand of women for representation by their own sex to be weak, in that it acknowledges a distinction between the sexes which at the same time is claimed to be absent. It certainly is as humans and as citizens, and not just as women, that women wish to be present at the League, and as such to share in all its deliberations. But as the world is still suffering from being "man-made," there are problems which both particularly affect women and also towards the right solution of which women's special experience—accentuated by the "man-madness" of the world—can largely contribute.

Women delegates, therefore, have double responsibilities, and that these are undertaken ungrudgingly was fully evidenced by what Mrs. Swanwick told us of her efforts in connection with a number of special matters on which she was asked to take action by a representative conference of women's organizations held towards the end of July. It is still very necessary for a most watchful eye to be kept on the activities of the League and its organization to see that the fullest interpretation of its Covenant is given in the matter of equal status and opportunity as between men and women. As in the suffrage days, however, we believe this to be a "Common Cause," and that wherever the League is able to assist towards the attainment of that World Peace we all desire, that help can be completely effective only if carried out with the full co-operation of women.

for her confinement, even if hers is a normal case. It includes one or possibly two examinations by a doctor before the confinement, and one after. This latter examination is given great weight both in the British Medical Association scheme and in that of the Departmental Committee, as it is felt that much subsequent illness and disability might be avoided by this means.

The principle of free choice by the mother of medical practitioner and midwife is safeguarded as far as possible, and the formation of local panels of independent midwives, coupled with such a maternity scheme, is held to obviate the necessity of whole-time municipal midwives for uninsured necessitous cases. For these latter it is suggested that the local authority would provide those sterilized outfits, extra nourishment, etc., which insured mothers could provide for themselves out of the cash benefit it is proposed should still be paid to them by the Approved Society. It is recommended that the "midwifery benefit" as outlined above should be administered by the local authority, though details of payment to doctors and midwives and the question of transference of funds from the insurance authorities to the local authorities are not given.

The basis of such a scheme must necessarily be sound finance, but the report is extremely vague on this point. It does, however, go into the question of adequate remuneration for the midwife and makes various suggestions for improving her conditions of employment with a view to attracting more of the better educated and most responsible type of woman to the midwifery service, an essential element of success.

But the inadequate representation of practising midwives on the Departmental Committee was unfortunate. Two members who signed the Report dissociated themselves entirely from that part of it which advocates transferring the control of the teaching, curriculum, and training schools to the Minister of Health, with an advisory committee, and the breaking up of the Central Midwives Board. The stand taken by these two members has the entire support of the Incorporated Midwives Institute, representing organized midwives throughout the country, and of all the important voluntary associations concerned with the midwifery service.

The Board as at present constituted has functioned since 1902, and like all bodies that govern a developing profession needs reorganization, but on it organized midwives have direct representation and powers, and obstetricians of great experience of teaching give their assistance. This body, like the General Medical Council for doctors and the General Nursing Council for nurses, controls the conditions of training and entry, and is responsible for the professional conduct of midwives.

To take the backward step of placing midwives under a government department, and removing from them all power of professional self-government and self-development—a process that has been going on slowly but surely as those who are in contact with them know—would work against the entry into it of well-educated and capable women who in all other professions have a voice in the conduct of their own affairs. It however could be changed without affecting the great advantages of the scheme.

The free provision through a national scheme of the visits of a midwife throughout pregnancy and until the mother's health is re-established after childbirth; a doctor at any time if the former is uneasy about her patient; and in every case the assurance of a second opinion that the case is a normal one, should lighten the anxieties of both mother and midwife and should eliminate that source of danger, the untrained handy-woman. If the ideal team-work suggested between midwife, general practitioner, consultant, and institution is arrived at, maternal mortality will really diminish throughout the country, as it has already in places where such team-work exists.

The extra funds needed must either be found by means of an increased burden on the insured worker, the employer, and the State, or be provided entirely by the latter. What an opportunity for a Government pledged to disarmament, to consecrate to the service of the mothers of the nation the savings on the cost of a battleship or a cruiser!

### INDIA AND EDUCATION

The Interim Report<sup>1</sup> of the Indian Statutory Commission, which reviews through an Auxiliary Committee the growth of education in British India, has been well described as a "gloomy document." In comparatively small compass it gives a vast amount of depressing but fascinating information.

The keynote of its criticism of the present system of education is waste and inefficiency. In a country where the shortage of teachers, schools, and funds, as compared to the needs of the population is so marked this fact is all the more deplorable. To attain, and to retain literacy appear to be unusual accomplishments amongst scholars, and actually achieved only by a small proportion. The Gilbertian impression is given that the more schools there are the less education is provided. "In one province, despite a very large increase in the number of primary schools and pupils, and in the expenditure, the number of pupils who reached class IV (in which the attainment of literacy is expected) was actually less by nearly 30,000 in 1927 than it was ten years previously." "For British India as a whole . . . out of every hundred pupils (boys and girls) who were in Class I in 1922-3 only 18 were reading in Class IV in 1925-6." "The losses due to wastage prevent all but a few pupils from becoming literate, but even of these few it is not possible to say with any confidence that many will not rapidly relapse into illiteracy." "Throughout the whole educational system there is waste and ineffectiveness."

What are the causes of this inefficiency?

We read in the Report that "approximately over 60 per cent of the primary schools in British India are single-teacher schools," and many of these are unstable and ephemeral in character. Again, only 44 per cent of the total number of teachers in primary schools for boys have been trained at all, salaries are "incredibly low" in some provinces, and primary schools are unevenly distributed. School provision caters either for the small villages with a population of under 500, or for the large villages and the towns; some comfort is given by the statement that "the vast majority of the towns and larger villages are already provided with primary schools for boys," but the problem of the smaller villages is a serious one. Barriers of race, religion, and caste add yet further complications. The inspectors, the "eyes and ears" of the Ministers and responsible officials, are hopelessly inadequate in number, in many cases it is "physically impossible" for them to cope with the extent of their duties. The Report stresses the fact that though more money is needed, a better policy and improved organization is even more essential. As regards control it is stated that "the divorce of the Government of India from education has been unfortunate," and the responsibility of Ministers, instead of being increased by greater Provincialization, has in its turn been reduced by a devolution on local bodies. The recommendation is made that the Central

Government should be a centre for educational information and a means of co-ordination, and that it should assist certain Provinces in cases of financial deficiency. In the majority of the Provinces in which Elementary Education Acts have been passed power has been given to the local authority to levy an educational cess. To this Provincial Governments usually contribute at least an equal sum, but in several Provinces "the resources of the Government have proved unequal to the payment of their statutory contributions," and therefore local schemes for compulsion have been held in abeyance.

A chapter is devoted to the question of Muhammadan education. The desirability of Muhammadan children attending ordinary schools is stressed, special arrangements being made for religious instruction. In the chapter dealing with the Depressed Classes the mixed school is advocated as the right course to pursue, but it is suggested that where large majorities of the Depressed Classes exist special schools should be provided.

When we turn to girls' education the position is even more staggering. The disparity between boys and girls in school is a growing one, increasing as it mounts the educational ladder. The wastage is even greater amongst girls, and a much smaller proportion of literates are produced owing to the still greater inefficiency of the schools. The main obstacles to girls' education are the conservatism of parents, the purdah, and early marriage. Co-education, in spite of its disadvantages, is reported to have done much to promote girls' education, and if adequate separate provision is to be made for girls, approximately 160,000 additional schools will be required. The shortage of women teachers is partly due to the lack of adequate training facilities. Progress in high schools and colleges is essential as the "recruiting ground for highly qualified women doctors, teachers, supervisors, etc." The inadequacy of the inspecting agency is far greater for girls than for boys. As regards the representation of women on local boards, the Province of Madras is described as almost alone in possessing this most necessary requirement.

Strong emphasis is laid in the report on the general importance of women's education. "It affects vitally the range and efficiency of all education . . . a literate woman is a far better and surer guarantee of the education of the coming generation than a literate man. . . . The education of Indian women . . . will make available to the country a wealth of capacity that is now largely wasted through lack of opportunity."

A. R. CARTON

### THE FIDDLER.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Millin has already made a mark on her generation as a South African novelist, and readers of her latest book<sup>1</sup> will be sharply reminded of how she came to make it. She can tell a story with considerable skill, vigour, and self-confidence. Let us admit that it is the story of two very trivial, not to say vulgar, lovers, who forsake respectable and devoted spouses at the call of a sudden gust of physical passion, only to find that the new nexus is insufficient to weather the disintegrations and misfortunes of an illicit and fugitive existence. Yet it remains a well-told story, which the reader will not readily abandon unfinished. Nor is it by any means so commonplace a tale as its bare human plot would suggest, since its events are played out in the unfamiliar setting of South-East Africa, a setting which comes vividly to life under the skilful hands of an author who clearly knows her ground, and her atmosphere, and her thin crust of material civilization imposed upon the multifarious indigenous discomforts of the Dark Continent. But does she really know how vulgar and trivial her lovers really are? It is probable that she does—but not altogether certain.

M. D. S.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Fiddler*, by S. G. Millin. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)

### A LAND OF DRUGS.

By O. A. MERRITT HAWKES.

The mountain tops lean against the sky; they are green with grass, brown with last year's bracken, ornate with patterned trees. Above the mountains is the clean sky, where clouds wander freely across the narrow valleys.

But down below everything is grey or black, great heaps of rubbish from the coal mines, grey masses of broken stone and miles and miles of slate-covered houses. They are like huge chicken pens, made for intensive breeding. They are close together, straight and utterly ungracious, but once in a while the sun catches the slates and turns them into long lines of silver. A little silver and much dinginess.

Even the bright catkins of the willows are ugly with dirt, the fine hairs matted with dust. Here and there are woods of white birches, but on the sides of the valleys they are not ladies of the forest, but soiled, bespattered slatterns. Sometimes they stand feet deep in the rubbish of the pits or have fallen, like the drunken loose women of the grimy towns on a Saturday night.

Along the streets of the valleys and small towns men wander, men linger, all day long, even at meal time. They turn and look at anything that passes, for they are bored. They are thankful to be asked the way to Granville Street, to Bryn Mawr, to the Post Office. They even go gladly up the narrow steep roads, roads cut into gullies and wrought with stones, just to guide a stranger; and yet their boots are thin, mis-shapen, up at toes, down at heels.

One man was taking two geese for a walk, and on the worn grass plot in front of a house three forlorn sheep were feeding. Other sheep were wandering from rubbish-heap to rubbish-pail. Even thin geese and sheep provide a little food.

The women are in the houses or buying the little bits of food which will keep the family going, or the cheap cups whose handles are made to come off, cheap plates that crumble, cheap brushes that can hardly hold the fibre until they reach their destination. The women are more unhappy than the men, but they are not bored, for they have more work than usual. One cannot wash without sufficient soap, and perhaps there is only money to buy one piece, where two or three are needed. The comfortably off, the rich, do not know that cleanliness is an expensive way of getting next to godliness, and yet, many of those brown-eyed women still try to keep their homes and men clean.

Up the roads, along the narrow valleys, come men black as sweeps, stinking of sweat and coal. They want much soap and hot water to make them clean and then a great deal comes off on the towel.

The younger women are worried lest another baby should come to want food, clothes, room, and soap; and women who look old as grandmothers are still young enough to have children.

These people come from big families. Says one: "I'm one of twelve; we all got jobs. See how we can help one another now that bad times is come"; but she says to her daughter: "Annie, I had nine, and love them all, every one, but don't you do the same. Morning to night, and night to morning, fear and tiredness and hungry so as none of 'em should go without."

And because so many men have no work the women go in even greater terror of their creativeness. The men do not want another mouth to feed, but that is not very much their affair, for, without imagination, prospective fatherhood, even actual fatherhood, is so small a thing. They do not even go hungry when there is less and less coming into the house, for it is clear that to win bread the man must eat bread and even meat.

It is hard work in the mines, but it is eight hours a day. It is not such hard work in the house, but it is sixteen or eighteen hours a day, and childbirth and anxiety. So there are many herbalists and chemists' shops which have a drawer just under the main counter filled with pills; some are little and some are as big as cherries. There are boxes and boxes coming to the chemists filled with salts, and month by month women go without food to save money to buy the pills and the salts. First they pay 2d. for a pill; then as the days go by and their anxiety increases they pay 6d.; more days, and the next pill is a shilling; and one day, because the future is so full of fear they pay half a crown. The women go from the herbalist to the chemist, and back again. Sometimes the pills make them very sick, sometimes they catch colds making journey after journey down into the yard with only an old coat or a shawl thrown round their nightgowns. And they must be up at 5.30 to get something to eat for the boy of sixteen, the only one working in the family, so that he can be at the mine at 6.30.

"You best take no more of them pills, Bessie. I heard you up half the night," said a neighbour. Walls are thin down in those valleys. Bessie, white skinned and blue under her eyes, answered fiercely: "I'll take a whole chemist's shop before I have another baby to starve."

But even a chemist's shop cannot always stop the abundance of Nature's productiveness, and Bessie knows that there will be a number five.

She talks to all her neighbours, she seeks help at the clinic. But no one can do anything, so Bessie goes home and there she skips until her heart beats furiously. She rests, then she skips again until she faints. But still number five grows day by day. Then Bessie does the only thing that is left, she visits a woman in the next street who is said to do her operations better than anyone else. Mrs. Davis is still in gaol because Mrs. Thomas died, but this woman is more careful. But the visit is not successful, for she wants 12s. 6d. down and the other 12s. 6d. when she has finished, or 15s. in three instalments.

So Bessie goes home and finds a knitting-needle. It is a little rusty, but perhaps that will be all the better. She is terrified that she may hurt herself, but everyone in her row knows that Mrs. Hughes managed very well that way, and was only a week in bed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then Bessie did what she had to do.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two days later she was taken to the hospital. Some people said she was plucky, and some said she was bad.

\* \* \* \* \*

But now there are four children without a mother.

The Bristol Women's Aid Association has been for some time considering the advisability of offering to students, anxious to take up social work, a practical training in order to pass on the valuable experience gained by their officers in the Bristol Police Court.

Mrs. Young is Probation Officer for Women and Girls, as well as agent for the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, and the Church of England Temperance Society, Women's Branch. She and her staff undertake all the affiliation work for the Bristol Board of Guardians, besides the many independent cases which come to the offices of the Association. From the latest report it will be seen that last year £3,488 11s. 5d. was collected for separation work, and/or from the fathers of illegitimate children for payment to mothers and foster-mothers, and while some of these latter cases were settled by private agreement in the office, many were taken through court, this entailing an amount of preparation and collecting of evidence which can only be successfully done after long experience.

The Bristol Magistrates are very sympathetic with the work, and the officials from the Home Office speak in high praise of Mrs. Young's methods, and gave it as their opinion that in starting the proposed training scheme the Association would be rendering a valuable service.

The fee for training will be five guineas for a course of three months. This course would only be long enough if the student had already some training or experience, and wished to specialize. Longer periods will be arranged.

A copy of the Report, and full particulars of the course can be obtained from—

Miss I. Stirling, Hon. Sec., B.W.A.A.,  
5 The Paragon,  
Clifton, Bristol.

### THE INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE NEWS

(Jus Suffragii)

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**THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FOR  
SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP,  
190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, England.**

### A CONFERENCE ON OPIUM AND DANGEROUS DRUGS.

A Conference on the international control of Opium and Dangerous Drugs is to be held (by kind permission) at the London School of Economics on Wednesday, 13th November.

This Conference is being arranged by the Women's International League, which has taken up the study of the question of opium in response to an appeal from the Chinese Anti-Opium Society. This Society, backed by the new National Laws, is making great efforts to get rid of opium smoking and production, but these efforts are seriously hampered by the flood of dangerous drugs that is being poured into China and the Far East. The Women's International League is organizing a series of conferences in different European countries through its national sections, and the importance and value of these is increased by the step forward taken by the Assembly of the League of Nations this year. The object of the conferences is twofold: (1) To get instruction from experts, and (2) to educate public opinion to insist on the carrying out of the decision of the Assembly on the limitation of the production and manufacture of opium and its derivatives to medical and scientific needs. At the Conference on 13th November there will be speakers from India, China, and Egypt, including Mr. P. J. Noel Baker, M.P., and Mr. Lyall, Chairman of the Permanent Central Opium Board of the League of Nations. The sessions of the Conference will be as follows: 10.30 to 1 o'clock, Present Position; 2.30 to 4.30, Possible Remedies; 5 to 6.30, Discussion. Admission is free to all sessions and seats will be reserved on request to the Secretary, Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, W.C. 1.

### FAMILY ENDOWMENT AND THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTIONS.

It appears likely, to judge from a communication from a Sydney correspondent to the *Observer* of 27th October, that the recent Australian Federal Elections may prove to have complicated reactions on the movement for family endowment. Our readers may remember that some time ago, thanks largely to the efforts of Mr. Piddington, the New South Wales State minimum wage machinery was remodelled on the basis of family endowment, the basic rates being adjusted to the needs of man and wife, subject to the additional payment of children's allowances raised by a percentage tax on wage bills. This State wage policy was developed in sharp contrast to the existing Federal minimum wage legislation, which continued to adjust wages with conventional reference to the needs of a "standard," or five-member, family. Now the event which precipitated the recent election was a proposal by Mr. Bruce, arising out of the disadvantages of an overlapping system of State and Federal wage awards, to scrap the machinery of the latter, leaving the States to cover the field of minimum wage legislation. This was violently, and as the election shows, successfully resisted, one impetus to such resistance being the likelihood of a general reduction of wages were it left in the hands of the State arbitration courts. This fear now appears to have been justified in New South Wales by a majority decision of its Court which has decreed a very sharp reduction in the basic rate for man and wife: a reduction which Mr. Piddington, in a minority verdict, describes as a "catastrophe rate." It is now considered possible that the New South Wales State Government may refuse to sanction the award and at the same time scrap the family endowment provision, leaving Mr. Scullin, the new Labour Prime Minister, to introduce a federal family endowment scheme. But is he likely to do this? We sincerely hope so, for in our opinion the case for it has been proved up to the hilt both by Mr. Piddington's Basic Wage Commission and by the subsequent Commission which dealt specifically with this matter. But in the meantime the New South Wales scheme appears to be in danger.

#### Later News from New South Wales.

Since the above was written, its worst anticipations have been realized by the news which comes through as we go to press. The New South Wales Government—a coalition of the Nationalist and Country Parties—has indeed rejected the new wage award and referred it back to the Court for readjustment on the basis of a conventional standard family without the addition of children's allowances. Doubtless a number of young unmarried men and women, perhaps even the parents of single children, will be congratulating themselves on the prospect of small

additions to their weekly incomes. Different feelings will, however, prevail among the hard-working mothers of many-headed families. We can only reiterate our hope that the new Federal Labour Government will come to their rescue with a large and logical scheme of Federal children's allowances.

### A BILL TO ABOLISH CHILD SLAVERY IN HONG-KONG.

A Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council in Hong-Kong last week to abolish the iniquitous custom of Mui Tsai, which has often been deplored in these pages. The Attorney-General, in presenting the Bill, hoped that it would bring an end as soon as possible to the practice, though legislation without a better educated public opinion would be insufficient. The Mui Tsai is the girl child of poor parents, sold at an early age into domestic service; she is wholly at the mercy of her possessors; and, to call a spade a spade, becomes in fact a slave. By order of the Secretary of State the registration of all Mui Tsai will now be required, so that it should not be an impossible task to see that they are set free from slavery conditions and protected from any possible temporary difficulties which might arise. The Attorney-General hopes that the employers of Mui Tsai will accept the situation and act promptly, but should they not do so more drastic regulations will be enacted, as the Government has no intention of allowing the required registration to become a dead letter. We are not quite clear from the Press reports as to how far the proposed legislation goes. Registration as a first step is essential, but is only a first step. Proclamations declaring the Mui Tsai free issued in 1922 and more recently have not resulted in the abolition of the system. Readers of Miss Nina Boyle's articles in these columns last month must have been shocked by the extent to which this form of slavery still exists in British territory. She asks the enfranchised women of this country what they are going to do about it.<sup>1</sup> "Are they going to do for their sex what men did for theirs—set them free and make the Slavery Convention a reality? Or are they going to . . . abandon the child slaves to the long dreary process of *educating public opinion*." We trust that the proposed Bill will be drastic enough to make the Mui Tsai system illegal and that the Attorney-General's allusion to public opinion will not mean further delay—delay which spells ignominy and suffering to its victims.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOTES.

Warwick will elect a woman Mayor on 9th November, the Countess of Warwick having accepted the Borough's invitation to take office. The Countess's father-in-law was Mayor of Warwick in 1894 and again in 1902.

Miss C. Keeling has been elected to the London County Council for South Kensington. She received 5,816 votes, her opponent, Mrs. M. L. Piercy, the Labour nominee, 943 votes. The total electorate in the division is 37,515, and it is the first time that a Labour candidate has contested a seat for the L.C.C. in South Kensington. Miss Keeling has been for many years a member of both the Kensington Board of Guardians and of the Borough Council.

We are interested to note that the Preesall Urban District Council has readmitted Miss Gladys Ashworth to membership of all Committees. Miss Ashworth was, a short time ago, excluded from all the Committees of the Council, having given offence to some of her fellow members. Ratepayers of all shades of thought and opinion signed a petition asking that Miss Ashworth should be in a position to do her work on the Council, and the petition was presented by the Vicar of Stalmine, the Rev. Dr. D. Schofield. Some members were anxious that the petition should be considered at a meeting of the Finance Committee, but this action was deprecated by the Vicar, who "objected to such a secretive method of conducting the business." In an interview Miss Ashworth stated that the publicity given to her case had helped her considerably as she had not expected the petition to be successful. We are glad that the only woman on a local council should not be debarred from co-operating in its work, and few instances have occurred when their co-operation has not been welcomed, especially in the work which closely affects the home life of the community. Whatever the circumstances, it is preposterous to exclude a member of an elected body from its Committees where the real work is done.

<sup>1</sup> See issue 27th September, "Slavery," Part III, by C. Nina Boyle.

### NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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

### "WHAT THE SIX MRS. GREENES THINK OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT."

RECEPTION—TUESDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, AT 3 P.M.

We are sure that all those who so much enjoyed the Tea Party last May, at which Miss Edith Evans spoke on "The Lady with a Lamp," will be interested to hear of the second Reception of this series which is being arranged for Tuesday, 12th November, at 3 p.m. The subject of discussion will be "What the Six Mrs. Greenes Think of the Woman's Movement," and Mrs. Lorna Rea, the author of *Six Mrs. Greenes*, and Mrs. Stocks will be the chief speakers. The party is being held at 25 Park Lane (by kind permission of Sir Philip Sassoon). Those who wish to attend should apply as soon as possible to Headquarters for tickets (price 5s. including tea).

### FACTORIES BILL.

On Friday, 1st November, the Home Secretary is receiving a deputation organized by the National Union on the subject of the Factories Bill. Representatives of the following organizations in addition to the National Union will be taking part in the deputation: London and National Society for Women's Service, National Council of Women, Women's Engineering Society, Women's Freedom League, Women's National Liberal Federation. The deputation will urge that in the promised Factories Bill regulations should be determined by the nature of the work and not by the sex of the worker, and will discuss the following points with the Home Secretary: The ratification of the Washington Hours Convention, which they warmly welcome; that regulations as to hours in different industries which will have to be drawn up in order to implement the Convention should, if incorporated in the Bill for women workers, be also incorporated for men; that the same regulations with regard to prohibition of night work should be laid down for men and women; that provisions regarding general safety, including protection from machinery, weight lifting, and lead processes carried on in places other than factories, and provisions and regulations for health, safety, and welfare should apply to all workers irrespective of sex; that in industrial legislation women should be classed as adults and not with young persons.

### RECEPTION TO WOMEN DELEGATES TO LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The Reception to Mrs. Swanwick and Mrs. Hamilton on their return from Geneva, held on Friday last, was a great success, and an audience of over 100 listened with keen interest to the accounts of the League's work as it particularly affects women, given by the two delegates. We should like to express our gratitude to the Hon. Mrs. Franklin for allowing us once again to hold the reception in her house, and to both Mrs. Swanwick and Mrs. Hamilton for giving representatives of women's organizations this opportunity of meeting them.

### "OUR WINTER'S WORK."

This useful pamphlet, which outlines the work to be undertaken by the National Union during the coming winter, is now ready. We commend it to the notice of Societies and members as being of particular value to those wishing to arouse interest in the work of the N.U.S.E.C. and to secure new members. Copies can be obtained from Headquarters, price 2d. each, 1s. 6d. for 12, 5s. 9d. for 50, 11s. for 100. Quantities of over 250 can be obtained at special prices.

### NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

MOULSCOMBE TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD.

The Moulscombe Townswomen's Guild, which is rapidly growing in popularity, had a most interesting meeting this month when Mrs. W. W. Grantham, one of its Vice-Presidents, gave a lecture on her tour round the world. The lecture was illustrated by lantern slides from photographs taken by Mrs. Grantham and other members of her party. An exhibition of rush-seated chairs made by the members of the Guild was held after the lecture.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### TRAPPED RABBITS.

MADAM,—My attention has been called to a letter in your issue of the 18th, signed A. R. Caton, re rabbit trapping. May I say that the crux of the matter is the provision of a humane rabbit trap, no petition to Parliament can succeed until an efficient substitute for the diabolical steel tooth trap has been found.

The League for the Prohibition of Steel Traps, of which I am Hon. Director, have produced a painless rabbit trap, and believe that it is the solution of the rabbit trapping problem. I will gladly send particulars of it to any of your readers who may be interested.

May I take this opportunity of cordially inviting those who sympathize with the work we have in hand to join the League: our minimum annual subscription is one shilling only.

R. W. AUCOTT,

Hon. Director,

League for the Prohibition of Steel Traps.

"Denray," Wellesley Road,  
Cliftonville.

### FAMILY ENDOWMENT AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

MADAM,—In the admirable report of the Labour Party Conference by Mrs. Ayrton Gould in last week's *WOMAN'S LEADER* there are some figures relating to the answers from Trade Unions to the questionnaire sent out by the T.U.C. and Labour Party Joint Committee. I would like to know if those figures are correct, because I saw a report in the *New Leader* a week before the Conference which gave the figures as follows: 55 organizations representing 2,494,479 replied. Of these, 53 organizations representing 2,127,965 in favour of the principle; 2 organizations representing 336,514 against.

Methods of applying Family Allowances:—

19 organizations representing 1,146,774 expressed a preference for cash payments. 33 organizations representing 980,786 expressed a preference for social services.

ELIZABETH FREETH.

[Mrs. Gould assures us that the figures as quoted above by Mrs. Freeth are correct, and that those published in her article are based on an inaccurate report.—ED.]

### AN OUTWORN FALLACY.

"There are some persons," says Dean Inge, "nearly all of the female sex, who suffer from a chronic rush of words to the mouth." It is surprising that so eminent, and in some ways so realistic, a social critic as Dean Inge should have allowed so meaningless and inaccurate a "rush of words" to pass his own lips. We are aware that this repetitive fallacy concerning the greater volubility of women still survives in the baser type of music hall and in the more snappy sections of the syndicated Press. But we are at a loss to know how it can survive any concrete experience of the comparative volubility of men and women at public meetings, academic discussions, or indeed any place where verbal expression of opinion is open to men and women alike. We must confess to quite a peculiar regret when Dean Inge says silly things, because few people are more capable on occasions of saying wise ones. We await with difficult resignation his allied pronouncements on the horrors of mothers-in-law, the absurdities of curates, and the entertainment of policemen by cooks.

### THE SIX POINT GROUP

#### A Public Meeting and Open Discussion

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## COMING EVENTS.

## B.B.C.

Monday, 4th November. 10.45-11 a.m., "Common Sense in Household Work": Mrs. R. O. Raphael: "What Do You Want to Know?"

Wednesday, 6th November. 10.45-11 a.m., "A Woman's Commentary," Mrs. Oliver Strachey.

Wednesday, 6th November. 3.30-3.45 p.m., "How We Manage Our Affairs": Mrs. Rackham, J.P.: "How We Elect Our Councillors."

## ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN.

7th November. 3 p.m. Visit to Messrs. Shoobred, Ltd., followed by lecture, "Electric Light and Eye-sight Preservation." Chair, Mrs. Wilfred Ashby.

## FABIAN SOCIETY (WOMEN'S GROUP).

12th November. 8 p.m. 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W. 1. Mrs. Hubback: "Marriage, Divorce, and the Guardianship of Children." (First of series on "Women and the Law.")

## HOWARD LEAGUE FOR PENAL REFORM.

2nd November. Central Hall, Westminster. Conference on Mental Health (in co-operation with National Council Mental Hygiene and other Societies). Mr. W. Clarke Hall and other speakers. Particulars from 78 Chandos House, S.W. 1.

## MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.  
1st November. 8 p.m. J. J. Mallon, M.A.: "Education."

8th November. 8 p.m. Professor Seton Watson, "The Balkans." Chair, C. R. Buxton, M.P.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN (BIRMINGHAM BRANCH).  
15th November. 5.15 p.m. Medical Institute, 154 Great Charles Street. Dr. Alice Hutchinson, M.D.: "Report on the Manchester Conference on Child Guidance."

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Acton W.C.A.—7th November. 8 p.m. Municipal Offices, Winchester Street. Councillor Dench, M.A.: "Coming Changes in our Schools."

Bingley W.C.L.—7th November. 8 p.m. Ring of Bells. Mr. Boyce, Director of Education, Bradford: "Post-Primary Schools."

East Lewisham W.C.A.—15th November. 3 p.m. Courthill Schools, High Street. Mrs. Ryland: "Social Insurance."

St. Pancras S.E.C.—13th November. 8 p.m. 27 Grove Terrace, Highgate Road, N. 5. Councillor Tibbles: "The Future of Local Government." Chair: Miss E. Neville.

## SIX POINT GROUP.

6th November. 8 p.m. Mary Sumner Hall, Tufton Street, S.W. 1. Meeting on "The Equal Rights Treaty." Chair: Lady Rhondda.

## WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

7th November. 4.30. Minerva Club, Brunswick Square. Mrs. Archdale: "Women and the Upper House." Chair: Mrs. Dore.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Bedrooms now available for short periods not exceeding a fortnight, for House Members. Terms, including breakfast, 6s. 6d. per night, £2 2s. per week. Applications by letter only to the Secretary.

EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1, requires and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Holiday engagements. Registration: Employers, 2s. 6d.; workers, 1s. Suiting fee: Employers, 10s. 6d.; workers, 2s. 6d. (Victoria 5940.)

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 3rd November, 6.30 p.m., Maude Royden: "Our Beloved Beyond the Veil."

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