

# THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS

## JUS SUFFRAGII

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### NOTES OF THE MONTH.

**Status of Women.** The League of Nations has published the Communications from Governments and Women's Organisations on this question, as a sort of interim report pending full discussion at the Assembly's ordinary session of 1937. This document (A.33. 1936.V) contains replies from seventeen Governments, a brief note from our Alliance notifying our intention to submit a full Memorandum at a later date, and a communication from the Pan Pacific Women's Association suggesting that Governments be asked to include in their communications a summary of the laws affecting women in colonies, protectorates and mandated areas, together with information on native customs affecting women in regard to marriage, sales or arbitrary disposal of the persons of women or their property. This seems to be a very pertinent request, as certainly no survey of the status of women would be complete which left out of account the position of 'native' women.

The replies from the Governments contain a varying amount of detailed information, and in a few cases include 'observations' which consist in pointing out that this whole question is one of internal national policy, unsuitable for international regulation. On the whole, all the Governments seem to desire to prove that women in their countries have a status which if not yet equal to that of men, is a high one which is steadily improving. But in spite of this desire to create a good impression, what is striking is that when it comes down to details even in the countries which claim that they have given equal rights, there are very many evidences of women's subjection. We do not propose to review the replies in detail but a few observations may be of interest.

In Brazil, for instance, where the new Constitution lays down that no privileges shall be granted and no distinction made on the ground of birth, sex, race, the occupation followed by the person concerned or his parents, social class, wealth, religious beliefs or political ideas, the long extracts from the Civil and Criminal Codes reveal some startling facts. For instance, it appears that it is still necessary for a wife to obtain her husband's consent to engage in an occupation; certain restrictions on female labour are provided with a view to the protection of the race; and most striking

of all, adultery on the part of a married woman is punishable with a term of imprisonment of from one to three years, while the husband is only to be punished if he keeps a concubine.

In Turkey: "The right to represent the conjugal union is given to the husband; in the absence of agreement in regard to the joint exercise of paternal power, the father's decision is effective; the domicile of a married woman is deemed to be the same as that of her husband; a married woman cannot carry on any trade or profession without the consent, either express or implied, of her husband." It is true that this information is followed by a statement that "All this does not confer on the husband any kind of marital guardianship." Well, well, it certainly does confer on him some very special rights.

We take these two countries because in both it is claimed that women have equal rights. There is much that is just and progressive in the information supplied, but *there is not equality.*

The reply from Colombia states that "in view of the character of the Colombian woman" it may be asserted that she would regard political rights as useless if not as a positive drawback. It is perhaps a little surprising to read later on that it is an important task to give women self-confidence and the certainty that they can compete with men in all the fruitful fields of human endeavour. Evidently in Colombia politics do not offer such a 'fruitful field.' In Europe women may consider that the fruits of politics are rather bitter, but for that very reason may be the field calls for a more intensive cultivation on their part.

**The Air.** The achievement of Jean Batten in establishing a record for a solo flight to Australia and on to New Zealand is in itself a fine one. The absolute equality of women in flying did not need further demonstration, it just is a fact. What seems of particular interest is not merely that women are technically capable, are brilliant navigators, possess pluck and stamina, but that they have the independence of mind and character to undertake and carry through these lonely adventures. In this newer field, the spirit of adventure has been open to women as to men, and the women have been there ready to take advantage of it, to

face the risks, to plan the finance, to cast themselves with the right mixture of daring and foresight into exploits where they have had to depend on themselves alone. Here at any rate, the opportunity won by pioneer women in other and less spectacular fields, has been used. These young women must first of all have had an emancipated spirit, and it is that which makes their achievements have an importance far beyond the merely spectacular and popular.

**Women and Unhealthy Work.** The issue of "Industrial and Labour Information" of October 5th, has an article on the report of a Government Committee in Belgium to study women's work. The recommendations state that any employment likely to have a deleterious effect either immediately or ultimately on the capacity for normal child-birth should be considered unhealthy for women and should be specially regulated for them, while any employment which is equally unhealthy for both sexes should be the subject of general regulations for all workers. Whether or not we agree with the principle that potential motherhood is a reason for special legislation for women only, we can see that there is a danger that it might be used as an excuse for the most wholesale prohibitions and all sorts of hampering regulations on the work of all women. But what we find particularly interesting in these recommendations is the following, quoted in full: "In the personal opinion of the chairman, the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work would also be an effective means of keeping women away from work in excess of their strength. The Committee also observed that all the dangers to health enumerated above, as well as excessively long hours of work, were found not only in industry and commerce, but also in the so-called feminine occupations among such workers as saleswomen, washerwomen, women workers on farms, housekeepers, etc."

There is a pleasant breath of realism about that. In fact what women want in order to protect their health is equal pay, equal opportunity to obtain the skilled work which is generally so much better paid and performed under much better conditions than the low grade work to which at present they are so largely confined, and better conditions of housing, etc. So-called protective measures for women in industry on the grounds of potential motherhood are a bitter farce when we all know the home conditions in which the great majority of women bear and bring up their children.

**Once upon a time.** The British press has given tremendous prominence to a dinner given by some of the old "Suffragettes" to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the arrest of Mrs. Pankhurst, Christabel Pankhurst and Mrs. Drummond—the well-known "General," and also the arrest of Mrs. Pethick Lawrence in 1906. Ex-Inspector Jarvis of the Metropolitan Police was a guest and there have been amusing pictures of Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Mrs. Drummond "clinking glasses" with the man who arrested them so many years ago. There was even then no malice on either side, and Mrs. Drummond says "He had a most charming way of arresting us." That would not have been a true thing to say about all the police, but the suffrage pioneers can afford to forgive and forget more unhappy experiences, since after all they got what they wanted.

**The Skull and Crossbones.** "La Française" quotes some extracts from the life history of two English women of the 18th Century who gave evidence of reckless courage in a less worthy cause. Mary Read and Ann Bonny both were among the most audacious lieutenants of the well-known pirate Rackam. The first named had a most extraordinary career having been a private in the British Army, returned to civil life

as a—perhaps!—respectable married woman, gone back to the army and been captured by the pirates whom she then joined. Both of these intrepid and swashbuckling ladies were captured with Rackam and sentenced to be hung, but were reprieved because they were both pregnant. Ann Bonny's reply to the last farewell of her pirate lover were: "If you had fought like a man, you would not now be hung like a dog." There is not much evidence of female sympathy in this remark, but no doubt she had a lofty professional standard which had been outraged. Women are nothing if not thorough!

## Change of Address.

Please note that after Nov. 11th, 1936, the address of Alliance Headquarters will be:  
12, BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

## NORWAY.

As we go to press we learn that in the elections which have just taken place in Norway one woman has been elected to the Storting.

## A TOUCHING LEGACY.

Some years ago the late Mr. Jaakoff Prelooker told us that he was going to leave a legacy to the Alliance, and that legacy has now come to us in a way which makes it in some sort a gift also from Mrs. Prelooker. A Codicil to Mr. Prelooker's will contained this bequest, but he never put his signature to it and therefore it was void in law. Mrs. Prelooker, however, with the agreement of her daughter, desired to give effect to his wishes as she knew them, since for her as for all generous souls it is the spirit and not the letter which is vital. There are no conditions attached to this doubly generous present of £200, but the Board hopes that its decision to use part of the money to provide a somewhat better office and equipment for the Alliance, which is in any case shortly compelled to find a new office, would have seemed to him, as we know it will be to us, a practical and a constant reminder of a goodwill which was very real and very faithful.

The Codicil referred to above is a remarkable document, and we regret that it is impossible to give it in full. It speaks first of the universal desire for some form of immortality, of how everyone can by his life and what he does to help humanity in one way assure that immortality or continuity. But even death may also be a contribution to those who have the grace of spirit and fullness of heart to think of posterity. If all men and women trained themselves in the thought and duty to leave a legacy, no matter how small, for some humanitarian object, the sum total would certainly surpass by far anything that all the rich people combined could ever bequeath to posterity. Of course ideas, sympathies, tastes and interests vary infinitely and every individual must decide for himself what public body to benefit.

Personally I have believed from my youth and hold now (at the age of seventy) more than ever that the protection of the Mother of the Race and the improvement of her condition stand out foremost as the very beginning and starting point for all race improvement. For she who gives life at her own peril and suffering will do her best to preserve it from all wanton forms of destruction. It is a truism that they who have themselves suffered can more fully realise the sufferings of others. Ergo, Woman, suffering more than man, physically and

morally, is more capable than he to rise to an Altruistic Ideal which alone can lead to Universal Peace. As a matter of fact there is plenty of evidence showing that women are by far more sincere, active and enterprising supporters of Universal Peace than men have ever been. And the criminal statistics of various countries at various periods clearly show that women on the whole form only between 5 and 15 per cent. of the whole prison population, most eloquent figures as to which sex is the most desirable both as legislators and administrators of the law.

Happily there exists a great institution which has already done a noble work for more than twenty-five years, and which stands for the protection of the Mother of the Race in all countries without the distinction of colour, religion or political creed, namely, "The International Woman Suffrage Alliance." It stands for the best solution of all human problems and its tremendous organisation embracing the whole civilised world and guided by unselfish loving souls, entitle it to our profound sympathy and complete confidence in every respect. To this Woman's International Alliance it gives me great satisfaction to bequeath the sum of Two Hundred Pounds, the highest I can afford to one public organisation.

The Codicil goes on to allot a further bequest in equal shares to a very long list of religious bodies, political organisations, scientific and art associations, and peace, feminist and social service movements. It is explained that the inclusion of organisations in direct opposition to each other may appear illogical and contradictory. But it was Mr. Prelooker's desire to show his sympathy for every effort to benefit humanity, to refrain from attempting to judge which of them is right, or most right. We can only quote one more paragraph:

May my last hours be comforted by the thought that as I have striven in my life to be useful to the race, human and sub-human, and to improve its future, so may my very death serve the same purpose, and the influence of my earthly existence thus continue everlastingly. This is the only rational form of Immortality attainable to every human being in proportion as he attunes himself to the Infinite, and consecrates and adapts his whole practical life with a view to benefitting the future of Mankind and of Nature generally.

## PEACE.

I.P.C.—R.U.P.

It is our misfortune as a monthly paper that the "news value" of much of the material that comes to us has been largely lost by lapse of time since an event happened, so that we feel fairly sure that all our readers will feel like crying out the taunt of our childhood "Stale news!" It seems in this way far too late to publish any of the different accounts of the deputation of the I.P.C. to the Assembly of the League of Nations in special session. There were a number of speakers representing some of the many interests taking part in the Brussels Congress, but we will only give one short quotation from the speech of Miss Mary Dingman, who spoke specially in the name of women. She said "We women are deeply in earnest about this question of war or peace. . . . We believe that moral laws govern the universe; that if we work in harmony with them there will be political security and economic plenty for all."

We quote that particular sentence because we think that it does to a very large extent formulate the point of view of very many women towards politics in general. They love their country not less than men, but they are not obsessed with ideas of national grandeur, they are not oppressed by the force of vested interests. They

have a natural comprehension of the rightness and value of harmony and good order.

The work of the I.P.C. is going on. Its National Committees and its special Commissions have the task of carrying out the resolutions and suggestions of the Brussels Congress. Heaven knows that "Peace is still in Danger" and that the efforts of every society and every individual caring for this tremendous issue are as vitally necessary as ever. The address of the International Secretariat is: Palais Egmont, Brussels.

## WORLD YOUTH CONGRESS.

As this Congress closed on September 6th we are certainly late again, and can only give a few words as to its results. There were 740 delegates and observers, representing the youth of 36 countries and a number of international organisations. It was determined to carry on the work through a Youth Continuation Committee (Avenue de France 1, Geneva). After speaking of the remarkable diversity of views—political, religious, economic and cultural—represented, the report we have received says that there was a determination to reach the widest possible measure of agreement as a basis for common action, and adds: "This could not have been achieved without a common belief in the power of youth united for common action, or without much preliminary study and preparation and admirable restraint, coupled with frankness on the part of all the delegates which might well set an example to older statesmen in the League of Nations itself."

## STATUS OF WOMEN.

A letter has been received by Mrs. Corbett Ashby, as President of our Alliance, from the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, stating that the question of the "Status of Women" will be placed on the agenda of the Assembly's ordinary session of next year.

In these circumstances the Secretary-General has the honour to inform the women's international associations to which his letter of October 22nd, 1935, was addressed that any statements which they may wish to submit for consideration by the Assembly in accordance with the Assembly's resolution of September 27th, 1935, should reach the Secretariat not later than June 1st, 1937, in order that they may be distributed to the Assembly before the opening of its session.

## ELLEN HAGEN.

Mrs. Ellen Hagen, who has just been elected President of Svenska Kvinnors Medborgarförbund, one of the Swedish Auxiliaries of the Alliance, is a very well-known feminist both in Sweden and outside her own country. She was closely connected with the organisation of the Suffrage cause in Sweden and has always been an ardent supporter of any movement which aimed at justice and liberty for women. In 1931 she was Swedish delegate at the Disarmament Conference in Paris, and as President from 1902-1923 of the Upsala Suffrage Society and a member of the Central Board of the Swedish Suffrage Federation she also attended as delegate many International Congresses for Suffrage. Mrs. Hagen was President of the International Club of Stockholm from 1925 to 1930 and at the moment is President of the Women's Popular Party Club in Stockholm and Vice-President of the Federation of Swedish Liberal Women. She has written several books and for two years was editor of the paper "Tidevartet." Mrs. Hagen also has the distinction of being the first woman to speak in the Aula of the University of Upsala in 1918, and was the first woman member of a Select Vestry in Sweden.

## NEWS IN BRIEF.

**Belgium.** We learn from "*Le Féminisme chrétien*" that there are now five women in the Belgian Parliament: in the Chamber Mme. Blume (Socialist) and Mme. Degeer-Adère (Communist); in the Senate Mme. Spaak (Socialist), Mlle. Baers (Catholic) and Mme. Maréchal (Frontist).

There are 8 women members of Provincial Councils, 185 in Communal Councils, 16 women Burgomasters, and 13 Echevins—as to which we are not sure whether they are what are called in England "Aldermen" or "Sheriffs."

**Canada.** The United Church is the first of the Canadian Churches to admit women to ordination as ministers. This measure was voted almost unanimously, and when the question was submitted a year or so ago to the presbyteries, an overwhelmingly favourable vote was returned. We owe this information to our old correspondent, Mrs. John Scott, and we are glad that she has seen the achievement of a victory to which she has greatly contributed.

**France.** The resignation of Mme. Joliot-Curie from the post of Under Secretary of State for Scientific Research, gave rise to some misrepresentation so that "*La Française*" has published in full her letter of resignation. This shows that her reason is simply that she desires to be able to give her whole time to the scientific problems connected with radio-activity to which she and her husband together have already made such valuable contributions.

We regret to learn—also from "*La Française*"—of the death of Juliette Delagrangé, the well-known social worker. In September there occurred the death of Mme. Juliette Adam, one of the "grand old ladies" of France. She was universally known as a writer and the centre of a salon where for many years some of the best-known names in France were gathered together.

**Greece.** Mme. Parren has just been celebrating a Jubilee—not the jubilee of her birth, but the fiftieth anniversary of her entry into public life. It was a life devoted to the interests of women, and to her is largely due the opening to women of the Greek Universities.

**Peru.** Dr. Rebecca Carion Cachot is the first woman to be appointed a Professor at the San Marcos University of Lima, the oldest in South America. She is to hold the Chair in Ethnology.

## PEACE COMMITTEE OF THE I.C.W.

The Peace Committee of the I.C.W. at the Dubrovnik Congress recommended that work should be carried on to urge the Governments of the countries to support all measures to strengthen international organisation and to prevent private interest from interfering with the common interests, notably in all that concerns the manufacture, sale and exportation of arms. The Committee expressed its agreement with the protest of the Medical Association against the use of poison gas in warfare, and asked that the League of Nations should be urged to set up necessary preliminary investigations as a basis for renewed international discussions on the economic problem regarding the access to raw materials and markets, so as to provide a more equitable distribution of the world resources. A further resolution was passed suggesting that the present situation should be utilised to establish an effective peace settlement by means of energetic support of the League of Nations, and the redressing of grievances, national, economic and political, by pacific means. The way would thus be prepared for drastic reduction and limitation of armaments and united responsibility for collective action to prevent a breach of the common peace, and the restoration of the sanctity of Treaties.

M. WOLFOVA.

## REVIEWS.

A.B.C. DES FRIEDENSBEWEGUNG, by Anna T. Nilsson, Arbeitsgemeinschaft österreichischer Friedensvereine, 1, Zeidlitzgasse, 8, Vienna. 1. Schilling.

This is the German version of the well-known booklet which has now been issued in Swedish, Esperanto, English, French, Estonian, Finnish and Serbian. We have frequently referred to it in our paper as new editions appeared and we need do no more than to commend to all German readers this up-to-date text of what is an extremely practical guide to the international peace movement.

## CONFERENCE REPORTS.

(1) British Commonwealth League's Twelfth Conference, 17, Buckingham Street, London, W.C.2. These Conferences are always interesting and the Reports manage to contain what is practically the full text of the many interesting addresses made by people who are experts. The subjects were: Women's Progress towards Equality in Government Services, and some very illuminating addresses were given though perhaps the effect was not so much of progress as of the still enormous obstacles to progress; Changing Africa, which was perhaps the most interesting because it was the most unfamiliar section; and a general section on different questions concerning the Status of Women.

(2) The All India Women's Conference Report, and Annual Reports from the Constituencies. These are quite substantial volumes, and they need to be since they cover in one way or another most of the complicated problems of that huge country of India. The miracle of these gatherings cannot readily be realised. The emergence of a common sentiment in an international Congress is to some of us an ever touching and encouraging experience. But though it may sound paradoxical it is easier to find agreement on general principles among peoples of different countries, in each of which those principles can be applied with a difference, than to find women of different races, creeds and cultures agreeing on resolutions which are intended for a more or less universal and practical application in all their communities.

UNITY OR SUICIDE, by Dr. Lucie Hoesch-Ernst, Orell Füssli, Zurich. 1.30 Frs. Swiss.

This is described as "A Film in Writing" and is designed to bring home to people in a vivid way that war will mean the suicide of the human race, under modern conditions. It meets the argument that war is necessary, that "there have always been wars: therefore there will always be wars," by showing that whereas in the earlier stages of development war could and did serve a biological purpose, that in the process of evolution war is no longer necessary but definitely fatal to humanity. Humanity is now reaching as a whole the stage where recognition of common interests is as necessary for survival as a similar recognition has proved necessary successively for the smaller groups, the family, the tribe, the nation.

A DIRECTORY OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, 1936. Joint Committee on Planning and Co-operation, 3 bis rue de la Régence, Brussels, 30 Belgian francs.

The "Joint Committee" which has prepared this book was formed primarily to work out a plan for closer co-operation of two existing international bodies concerned with problems of administration with a view to providing up-to-date information for the use of administrators and scholars.

The present volume is their first production and is an alphabetical list of a great variety of international bodies, with a summary of their membership, activities, publications etc. A very wide view was taken as to the

definition of the term "public administration," and our own Alliance, the International Council of Women and most of our women's international organisations are included. As the compiler points out the book owes much to the "Handbook of International Organisations" issued last in 1920 by the League of Nations, and since that date completed by several supplements. To all international workers this new volume, coming some seven years after the last edition of the very valuable League Handbook, will be a great boon. Its simple arrangements and its smaller scope, since many categories of organisations which do not concern general international work (such as sports bodies) are not included, make it an extremely valuable book of reference.

COLLECTIVE SECURITY, edited by Maurice Bourquin, League of Nations International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, Paris. 16/-

This book contains Reports and Memoranda submitted by a number of countries to the Seventh and Eighth International Studies Conferences, Paris, 1934 and London, 1935. It is a long book, and from its nature it is not one to be skimmed through so as to pick out quickly the main drift of its arguments and conclusions. You must be prepared to listen to discussions between some very eminent thinkers from many countries, and to a large extent you must form your own conclusions. These Conferences were not organised for the adoption of resolutions or policies. In the final report, presented by the General Rapporteur, we have a summing up which resembles that of the Judge in that it is intended to help those who have listened to the evidence to take their decision, but without formulating what that decision should be. There is here much matter for thought, much that is illuminating in regard to what individuals and whole peoples are thinking and feeling about the major problem of the world today—the organisation of peace. But here is no easy reading, no simple panacea; the reader will find here support perhaps for views already held, or be ready with an open mind to re-consider those views where they are weightily challenged.

MOEURS ET PROSTITUTION, by Marcel Rogeat. Nouvelles Editions Latines, 7, rue servandoni, Paris. 10 frs.

We have not seen this book and so we cannot review it. But we call the attention of our readers to an admirable article on it by C. L. Dickins in the July issue of the "*Shield*" the organ of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, Livingstone House, Broadway, London, S.W.1. This book has been published by the "Syndicat des Tenanciers" and the fact that there is a kind of Trade Union of brothel-keepers is the first fact to take away the breath of those who can with difficulty realise that this is a recognised and legally protected profession. It is impossible to summarise the article but it is well worth reading because it is useful to come face to face with the perfectly cold-blooded attitude of the "trade" and to realise that they are prepared to defend it as a necessary and beneficial service to the public!

"THE FUTURE OF WOMAN" by Anthony M. Ludovici, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 68-74, Carter Lane, London E.C. Price 3/6.

Some years ago Mr. Ludovici contributed to the "Today and Tomorrow Series" a short book about women called "Lysistrata." Apparently he intended to make this a revised edition, but on studying the question came to the conclusion that he must set down his view afresh as the previous booklet had been "too moderate, too timid, and, as an indictment of Feminism not damaging enough." He says that the earlier book was greeted in feminist circles by howls, and the present

reviewer looked hopefully back through the old issues of this paper thinking how pleasantly easy it would be to repeat the same "howls." But alas, the short cut did not seem to be available, so though we do not feel very much in the mood for howling, we must set down a few remarks about this book which, since they can hardly be favourable, will no doubt by the author if he ever sees them, be regarded as at least a "miau" of fury from the cat tribe.

The main thesis is that the first essential for the happiness of the individual woman, for the welfare of the race and the general good of society is for every healthy girl to marry young, so young that she must be debarred from going to a University because apparently that would prevent her from marrying before 25. It is the duty of all parents to make sacrifices of their peace and their purse in order to help their daughters to an early marriage. This early marriage is necessary for the swift and continuous production of children, for woman is physically so elaborately equipped for this function, that apart from every other consideration, it is the only occupation that can make her happy and healthy. It is true that in England this is impossible owing to a surplus of women, but if only the country could be "regenerated" the young men would choose exclusively the girls able to produce a large family, and what was left over would be the "rubbish of the female sex."

Mr. Ludovici says hopefully that one day he will be recognised as women's best friend, and we will do him the justice to say that he has one sentence to which we shall all of us agree—with the letter, that is, I am not sure of the spirit in which it was written: "A long book could be written on the harm that has been done to women and the race by making masculine standards whether in respect of ideas, occupations, pastimes, morphology or sexual habits the only standards."

To those who have to take part in debates etc., it may possibly be useful to read this book.

## SLAVERY.

The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society (Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1.) has published as a pamphlet an article by Sir John Harris. It is a survey with outspoken comments of the information produced before the League of Nations Committee on Experts at its meeting last July. There is assuredly little here to encourage the hope that at a time when there seems to be a positive "revival" of cruelty and brutality, in this one field progress is being made. The number of areas where slave owning or trading in one form or another still exist is over twenty, many of them being territories under British administration.

Sir John dealt first with the system of Mui Tsai, the system of so-called child adoption prevalent in China and Hong Kong. "Bought at the tender age of say three years for 5s. apiece, bought for lucrative appreciation, schooled and 'broken in' to degradation by drudgery and oppression so as to be ready for the purchaser at an enhanced price at about eight to ten years... the system stands out as one of the most revolting and cruel systems of slavery the world has yet witnessed." And it is estimated that there are between two and three million of these child slaves.

There is then a sinister reference to a request by the Committee to the Government of India that some of the Indian States should be asked to declare their intentions in regard to the suppression of slavery, to which the Government replied that it had not "found it possible" to adopt this course. Why was it afraid to do so?

The pamphlet then turns to Africa. In speaking of the action of Italy in Abyssinia, it is pointed out that there appear to be no legal or financial measures adopted

to put the emancipation of the slaves into real effect. Figures are given for the cost of emancipation in different areas: £28 per slave in the East Indies, £4 per head in Nepal and in Kenya. If the estimated number of slaves in Abyssinia is correct, the cost of emancipation would be enormous, not counting the cost of courts or tribunals.

There is a survey of slave conditions in different British Territories, the difficulties are not minimised but there is some encouragement in accounts of successful measures for emancipation in some areas, and of the personal and devoted work of individual administrators.

#### I.C.W. CONGRESS.

Sept. 28th—Oct. 9th, 1936.

Over 300 delegates from 35 countries were present in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, for this Congress. The work was divided among the 13 Standing Committees, which prepared the material for the negotiation of the plenary meetings. After three days of diligent work in these Committees, the Congress was opened on October 1st, 1936. The International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship was represented by Miss Milena Atanatskovitch, Dr. Renson and Mrs. M. Wolfová. Mrs. Leposava Petkovitch, President of the National Council of Yugoslavia, opened the meeting, and the Government representative, Minister Juro Jankovitch, delivered the High Order of St. Sava—Class I—to Lady Aberdeen, President of the I.C.W., and other High Orders of St. Sava to three of the Vice-Presidents, in the name of the Yugoslav Government. Lady Aberdeen, having taken the chair, delivered a speech to the women of the whole world, in which she stressed the need to rid ourselves of FEAR, that factor paralysing to all nations of the world, and to unite together in all countries to protect and save the human race. Mme. Brunschvicg officially represented the French Government; Mme. Dreyfus-Barney greeted the Congress in the name of the Organisation of Intellectual Co-operation, and Mrs. M. Wolfová in that of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship.

The election of the new Board was carried through, Lady Aberdeen being elected as the Honorary President of the I.C.W., and as Hon. Vice-Presidents, Mme. Avril de St. Croix, Dr. Alice Salomon, Lady Cadbury, and Mme. L. Petkovitch. Baronne Pol Boël, Belgium, was elected as the new President, and the Vice-Presidents elected were: Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon, England; Mme. Plaminkova, Czechoslovakia; Mme. Berta Pipin, Latvia; Mme. Betzy Kjelsberg, Norway; Miss Elisabeth Zellweger, Switzerland; Countess Alb. Apponyi, Hungary; Dr. Ing. Palme, Sweden; and Miss Lena Phillips, U.S.A.

In the plenary meeting the following resolutions were passed on Nationality: to continue in the work for an international convention that shall embody the essential principle of equality between sexes in respect of Nationality, including the right of the spouses to independent nationality, and to proceed to make a special study of problems of nationality as they affect children. The Committee of Equal Moral Standard and against the Traffic in Women recommended that it should be considered what steps can be taken to secure the loyal adherence of young people to a high and equal moral standard, and that every effort should be made in order to obtain the abolition of State regulation of prostitution, and expressed its agreement with the Draft International Convention for Suppressing the Exploitation of Prostitution.

M. WOLFOVÁ.

(N.B. We regret that as Mme. Wolfová's report arrived late there was not room to print all the resolutions passed by the Congress, but others will appear in the next issue of our paper.—EDITOR.)

## SECTION FRANCAISE.

### MESSAGE DE NOTRE PRESIDENTE.

Chers amis et camarades,

Depuis 1904 l'Alliance a lutté pour établir l'égalité entre hommes et femmes, excepté pendant les 4 années où la nécessité nous appela à un service plus immédiat. Depuis 1923 nous avons travaillé à la fois pour le féminisme et pour la paix, car les deux sont nécessaires à l'humanité.

Cet hiver de 1936 va-t-il nous amener une autre crise, comparable à celle de 1914? L'Abyssinie, la Palestine, l'Espagne sont le théâtre de cruautés et d'horreurs qui ne le cèdent en rien aux plus sombres âges du passé. Va-t-on encore nous demander d'abandonner notre féminisme? Je pense que non. Car le féminisme est la foi des femmes qui croient à la responsabilité et à la liberté individuelle. Pour elles, cela équivalant à la liberté de pensée et de parole, à la discipline librement imposée, au service personnellement consenti, à l'assistance mutuelle, toutes choses qui, au siècle dernier ont amené un progrès remarquable en sciences, hygiène, confort et commodités. Parce que notre pouvoir sur la matière a dépassé nos conceptions spirituelles, les inventions ont apporté à l'humanité mort et tortures, pauvreté et tyrannie au lieu de bonheur, santé, richesse et liberté. Le féminisme est partie de cet effort qui empêchera le monde de retomber dans le despotisme. Des hommes, impatientement, rejettent les libertés qu'ils jugent inutiles. Les femmes, parce qu'elles les ont conquises récemment, ne sont pas prêtes à en faire fi.

L'hiver nous trouvera à la tâche, prêchant notre évangile, qui est le même par delà toutes les frontières. Que son objectif soit richesse, commerce, éducation, égalité de droits, il s'adresse à tous sans distinction de race, de religion, de nationalité. La paix ne reposera que sur l'organisation du monde en une communauté fraternelle. Notre grand ennemi est le manque de foi en face des gouvernements despotiques. Il faut opposer notre foi à leur foi, notre discipline à leur autorité, notre assistance mutuelle à leur militarisme; il faut chercher des remèdes à leurs griefs et répondre à la haine par l'amour.

### IRAN.

Discours de Mme. Fatemeh Seyah, membre suppléant de la délégation iranienne à la Société des Nations, à une réception à Genève organisée en l'honneur des femmes déléguées à l'Assemblée de la Société des Nations.

Je ressens vivement l'honneur de pouvoir faire un discours devant un auditoire aussi recherché, cet honneur m'étant d'autant plus précieux qu'en ma personne c'est la première fois qu'une femme iranienne aura l'occasion de s'adresser directement à ses sœurs rassemblées de tous les points du monde pour collaborer à la haute tâche du progrès et de la paix.

Malheureusement, la femme iranienne jusqu'au dernier temps était privée de contact non seulement avec la vie sociale et politique universelle, mais même avec celle de son pays. Le tchador qui nous voilait le visage, nous ravissait également notre droit à une existence libre, harmonieuse et sensée. Nous étions réduites à une vie strictement familiale et encore nous ne pouvions accomplir dignement notre devoir d'épouse et de mère, par le fait même que nous manquions d'instruction et de culture. Mais maintenant j'ai la grande joie de vous annoncer que tout a changé dans la vie de la femme iranienne. Le 17 dei 1314 de l'hégire, qui

correspond au 8 janvier 1936 de l'ère chrétienne, a été un véritable tournant dans l'histoire trois fois millénaire de notre pays, car c'est ce jour précisément que la première fois dans l'histoire de l'Iran son souverain apparaissait devant une assemblée—c'était une fête organisée par le ministère de l'instruction publique—accompagné de sa noble famille *sans voile*, de sa Majesté la Reine et de leurs Altesses royales, les princesses Chams et Achraf Pehlevie. Cette apparition a été un signal et un exemple que le peuple enthousiasme ne tarda pas de suivre, et au bout de deux mois, *pas une seule femme voilée* ne pouvait être vue sur tout le territoire du royaume de l'Iran.

Ainsi en deux mois fut abolie cette coutume qui datait du début de l'ère musulmane, c'est à dire de plus de 1300 ans, et ceci fut accompli sans que la moindre émeute vienne troubler la vie du pays, sans que la moindre goutte de sang soit versée! Vraiment, il faut convenir, que l'histoire de l'humanité connaît peu d'exemples où une réforme aussi radicale et aussi profonde soit exécutée avec autant de sagesse et de rapidité.

Pour tous ceux qui connaissent l'importance du rôle que jouait le tchador non seulement dans la vie privée de la femme, mais dans tout l'ordre social des pays de l'Orient, et de l'Iran en particulier, ce fait peut paraître d'un caractère presque miraculeux, et il le serait en effet, si notre grand souverain n'avait préparé d'avance le terrain où un pareil miracle puisse se réaliser. Des le début de son règne, il s'intéressa vivement à la question féminine, mais il savait très bien qu'il ne fallait pas brusquer les choses, qu'il fallait les laisser mûrir, les aménager scrupuleusement, afin d'obtenir un succès assuré. Il comprenait également qu'il serait peu que de libérer la femme, il fallait d'abord la rendre digne de cette liberté. Elle était ignorante,—il fallait l'instruire, et nous voyons, à la suite de cette idée, une série d'écoles de jeunes filles s'ouvrir dans toutes les localités importantes de l'Iran. Leur nombre s'accroît toujours avec une rapidité étonnante. Si la veille du règne de sa Majesté Riza-Chah Pehlevie, c'est à dire en 1922/23, le nombre des écoles de garçons, et de filles obtenait à peine le modeste chiffre de 612, à présent, d'après les données officielles publiées par le ministère de l'instruction publique, de l'année 1934/35, il s'est accru de plus de neuf fois, remontant au nombre de 5339 écoles gouvernementales, et il a été largement dépassé au cours de l'année 1935/36, pendant laquelle un grand nombre d'écoles, et en outre d'écoles primaires mixtes a été inauguré. Également, si le nombre des écoliers en 1922/23 était de 55,131, il atteignait en 1934/35 255,673, et ce chiffre est, comme celui des écoles, bien plus élevé pour l'année 1935/36, (dont les statistiques officielles ne sont pas encore publiées), ce qui n'est pas une quantité négligeable pour un pays de 15 millions d'habitants.

(à suivre.)

### NOUVELLES BRÈVES.

**France.** La démission de Mme. Joliot-Curie comme Sous-Secrétaire d'état à la Recherche Scientifique, a donné lieu à des interprétations erronées. La Française vient de publier sa lettre in extenso — d'où il ressort que Madame Joliot-Curie veut poursuivre avec son mari ses études sur la radio-activité et y consacrer tout son temps.

Nous avons regretté d'apprendre au mois de septembre la mort de Madame Juliette Adam, l'une des grandes dames du siècle dernier — et aussi celle de Juliette Delagrangé, une énergique travailleuse sociale.

**Canada.** L'Église Unifiée est la première des églises canadiennes à admettre les femmes dans les ordres. La mesure fut votée à l'unanimité.

**Belgique.** Nous lisons dans "Le Féminisme chrétien" qu'il y a maintenant cinq femmes au Parlement belge. Ce sont, à la Chambre: Mesdames Blume (Socialiste) et Degeer-Adère (Communiste), au Sénat: Mme. Spaak (Socialiste), Melle. Baers (Catholique) et Mme. Maréchal (Frontiste).

Il y a huit femmes membres de conseils provinciaux, 185 membres de conseils communaux, seize femmes bourgmestres et 13 échevins.

**Grèce.** Mme. Parren vient de célébrer son jubilé, c'est à dire le cinquantième anniversaire de son entrée dans la vie publique, vie qui a été consacrée à l'avancement des intérêts féminins. C'est grâce à elle que les femmes ont conquis le droit aux grades universitaires.

**Pérou.** Dr. Rebecca Carion Cachot est la première femme nommée Professeur d'Université. Elle a la chaire d'Ethnologie à l'Université de Lima.

**Etats-Unis.** Une bataille de principes est en progrès au Collège féminin de Mount Holyoke fondé il y a cent ans par Mary Lyon. La dernière et non la moins distinguée d'une remarquable lignée de directrices, Dr. Woolley, vient de se retirer. Dr. Woolley est universellement connue pour la place qu'elle tint à la Conférence du désarmement. Or, le Conseil d'administration du Collège a décidé de nommer un homme pour la remplacer — et ceci en dépit de l'opinion exprimée par 86 professeurs sur 106 qui forment le personnel enseignant du Collège. L'objet du collège était de confier l'éducation des femmes à des femmes. Le nombre des étudiantes durant le principat de Miss Woolley était monté de 550 à 1017, ce qui est certainement une preuve du succès de son administration.

### LE STATUT CIVIL DE LA FEMME.

Mrs. Corbett-Ashby a reçu une lettre du Secrétaire général de la Société des Nations, la notifiant que la question du Statut Civil de la Femme sera placée à l'ordre du jour de la session ordinaire de l'Assemblée en 1937.

En conséquence le Secrétaire général a l'honneur d'informer les associations internationales féminines qui ont reçu sa lettre du 22 oct. 1935 que toutes communications, considérations ou résolutions de leur part devront être présentées au Secrétariat pas plus tard que le premier juin 1937.

La Société des Nations a publié un rapport intérim, qui résume les réponses de 17 gouvernements et des associations féminines sur la question du statut civil de la femme dans chaque pays. L'Association féminine Pan-Pacifique a suggéré que les Gouvernements devraient inclure dans leurs rapports un sommaire des lois affectant le statut de la femme indigène dans les colonies et protectorats.

Dans l'ensemble, les rapports manifestent le désir de chaque gouvernement de prouver que le statut de la femme dans leurs pays respectifs est, sinon encore égal à celui de l'homme, du moins, ascendant. L'affirmation d'égalité est souvent spécieuse comme le prouve l'étude de deux pays qui prétendent à l'égalité complète des sexes: le Brésil, et la Turquie.

Au Brésil, par ex. tandis que la Nouvelle Constitution établit qu'il n'y aura au point de vue civil aucune différence entre les sexes du point de vue, naissance, race, occupation, etc. — de longs extraits des Codes civil et criminel révèlent des contradictions. Par exemple, il semble qu'une femme ne puisse encore prendre un métier ou profession, sans autorisation maritale; il existe maintes restrictions au travail de la femme, et la chose la plus extraordinaire de toutes, c'est que l'adultère de la femme est puni d'un terme d'emprisonnement allant d'un à trois ans, tandis que le mari n'est puni que s'il vit en concubinage.

En Turquie: le droit de représenter l'union conjugale est donné au mari, ou au père; le domicile de la femme doit être celui de son époux. Elle ne peut exercer un métier ou profession sans son assentiment, etc. On ne peut nier que la législation de ces pays soit progressive; cependant il n'y a pas complète égalité.

Certaines réponses sont curieuses: le gouvernement de Colombie déclare—"que vu le caractère de la femme colombienne, elle considérerait les droits politiques comme inutiles et incommodes." !!

#### ESCLAVAGE.

La Société Anti-esclavagiste et pour la protection des Aborigènes de Londres, vient de publier un bulletin par Sir John Harris qui est une compilation commentée des rapports produits par la Commission des Experts au mois de Juillet.

Sa lecture n'est pas encourageante. Le nombre des

territoires où l'esclavage et la traite existent encore n'est pas moins de 20, dont plusieurs ressortissent de l'administration britannique.

Sir John s'élève contre le système de Mui Tsai — adoption de fillettes, achetées en bas-âge, élevées et éduquées à la maison, pour servir les desseins de leurs maîtres. Il existe de deux à trois millions de ces enfants.

Des Etats de l'Inde gardent encore l'esclavage et le Gouvernement britannique ne semble pas encore avoir osé poser aucune question à ce sujet.

Quant à l'Afrique et l'Abyssinie en particulier, si le gouvernement italien a proclamé l'émancipation des esclaves, il n'a absolument rien fait pour mettre la chose en pratique. Le coût de l'émancipation varie suivant les pays: 28 livres aux Indes orientales, 4 livres par tête au Népal ou au Kenya. Pour l'Abyssinie, le chiffre serait énorme.

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