

**THE NEW CHILDREN'S CHARTER.**

By C. G. AMMON, M.P.

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**Contents :**

	PAGE		PAGE
ONE UP FOR THE VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS!	282	"WHAT I REMEMBER." By Millicent Garrett	
THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. By Our Special Correspondent	283	Fawcett J.P., LL.D.	284
THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, ETC., BILL. By C. G. Ammon, M.P.	283	EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP	285
		WOMEN AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS	285
		OBITUARY: MARGARET ROSS	286

**NOTES AND NEWS**

**Margaret Bondfield.**

Very heartily do we congratulate Miss Bondfield upon her election as first woman Chairman of the Trades' Union Congress. The T.U.C. is incomparably the most important joint body in the trade union world; it is at the moment faced with a number of serious and stormy problems connected with the mutual relations of its constituent bodies, and during the year which lies ahead it will demand wise and energetic leadership as never before. Just as heartily do we congratulate the Trades Union Congress. There are few women in public life to-day who inspire the great measure of trust and admiration that Margaret Bondfield inspires in friend and foe alike. Whenever and wherever she is present, discussion is lifted on to the highest plane of idealism, and yet without any relaxation of practical common sense and grasp of administrative detail. And there are few women—or men either, for that matter—who are more personally loved, and by a wider circle, than Margaret Bondfield.

**Women in Council.**

The Annual Conference of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland will take place on October 16 to 22 at Edinburgh under the presidency of Lady Frances Balfour. This year the subject discussed will be the Call of the Children. The resolutions to be considered include: Criminal assaults on young girls, Guardianship, Maintenance and Custody of Infants' Bill, housing conditions, early treatment of tuberculosis in children, illegitimate children, affiliation orders, school medical service, women police, economy in education, emigration of children, pensions for fatherless children, venereal diseases in children, unemployment and part-time education, employment of children and young persons, Old Age Pensions, four points of the Temperance Council.

The first speaker will be the Duchess of Atholl, who will discuss the child and the stage in Scotland. Other women speakers will include the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, the Lady Emmott, Lady Dunedin, Lady Salvesen, Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, Mrs. Edwin Gray, Miss Cecile Matheson, Miss Chart, and Miss Frances H. Melville. Mrs. Wintringham, M.P., will preside at the public meeting on Saturday.

**The Need for Enquiry into Police Regulations.**

The *Daily Herald* last week contained charges against the Police Administration at Peterborough which were to the effect that three women, one of them on the verge of her confinement, were kept for a week in a police cell. There were neither seats nor beds in the cell, and the women had to sleep on planks. No woman officer was in attendance and the captives were not visited by a doctor or nurse. We are informed that these facts are incontrovertible, and the danger clearly exists that similar cases could be quoted from all over the country. With the closing of many prisons, especially women's prisons following on the drop in the criminal population, it has been inevitable that many women are being detained in police cells either before their case comes on or while on remand for further investigation—a certain proportion of whom are innocent and are afterwards discharged. The Home Office instructions indicate that a woman should be in charge where there are women prisoners. It is necessary that the public should be informed what is meant by a woman being in attendance. Is she called in on special occasions, or for special purposes, such as searching a prisoner, or do the regulations imply that she must always be on the premises when a woman is detained? To what extent are the regulations, as interpreted, carried out? What are the numbers of men and women and juvenile offenders detained in police cells? In short, how is the whole system working, and how specially does it affect women? The matter, no doubt, will be raised in the House and it is important that all Women's Organizations press for an inquiry.

**Lord Morley and Woman Suffrage.**

In our last week's issue we stated that Lord Morley's attitude on questions specially represented by this journal was not very clear. Since then Mrs. Fawcett has sent us the following comment: "He not infrequently *spoke* and *wrote* publicly and well as privately in favour of Woman Suffrage, it was when we wanted him to pass from words to actions that he failed us. In reference to Lord Lytton's speech on Woman Suffrage in the House of Lords in May, 1914, for example, Lord Morley wrote

'Lord Lytton's speech is really a great event. I have heard many thousands of speeches but scarcely ever one more splendidly effective. It was no ordinary feat to sweep away two such performers as Curzon and Hicks Beach.'

#### Factory Inspection and Women's Part in it.

During the last week in October, the International Labour Organization will hold its fifth Annual Conference in Geneva. The subject to be discussed will be "The General Principles for the Organization of Factory Inspection."

A questionnaire has been sent on this subject to the Governments of Member States, which contains, among other interesting items, important questions as to whether women factory inspectors should be employed on the same conditions as men; whether they should inspect all establishments employing women, or only particular classes of establishments.

Another question asks whether representatives of the workers may be called upon to take part in the supervision of the enforcement of laws regulating conditions of labour. Women interested in the welfare of their fellow-workers should watch the proceedings of the Conference, and study this problem which affects them so closely.

Miss Bondfield, as technical adviser to Mr. Poulton, the representative of organized labour, and Miss Constance Smith, as technical adviser to the British Government, will be admirable exponents of the functions of the woman factory inspector. Norway, alone out of all the countries, has appointed a woman as full delegate.

#### A Fight for a Vote.

Mrs. Pistor, of Stoke Newington, was successful on Friday last in securing a favourable judgment in the Edmonton County Court against the decision of her local registration officer. Mrs. Pistor, being over 30 years of age, resided with her husband in a house owned by her and occupied by him without any definite agreement as tenant. This, it was held, disqualified her from registration as a local government elector, from which it followed that Mrs. Pistor was disqualified from registration as a parliamentary elector. After considerable argument, turning mainly upon the question of whether Mrs. Pistor "occupied as owner or resided only," judgment was given in favour of the appellant. We congratulate Mrs. Pistor on her spirited action in fighting the question, and thereby securing a ruling which will

serve as a useful precedent in the case of other women voters similarly placed. But the whole affair serves to illustrate the extraordinary perversity of our franchise laws. Mrs. Pistor is a responsible adult citizen of this country. Why in the name of common sense should she be required to prove that she "occupies as an owner" and does not "reside only" before being admitted to the elementary right of citizenship?

#### Women in Medicine.

At the opening of the Winter Session of the School of Medicine for Women on 1st October an address was delivered by Sir Humphrey Rolleston, President of the Royal College of Physicians, who took as his theme "The Problem of Success for Medical Women." With all the diffidence of a layman criticising a man of science, it would appear from the report of his speech that Sir Humphrey Rolleston, though kindly disposed to women doctors, is guilty of just as many rash generalizations with regard to the nature of women and their suitability as doctors as were those medical men who, during the first rounds of the fight for the entry of women into the medical profession sought to crush the pioneers. Some of his statements are undoubtedly correct. He showed, for instance, that so far there had been no women's names of equal weight with those of Lister, Osler, and Horsley. He pointed out too the severe "marriage mortality", which Medicine, in common with all women's industrial and professional occupations, has to suffer, though it seems perhaps a little sweeping when, in reference to those who do marry, he said "the ablest fall by the way". Sir Humphrey subscribed to the theory of women's intuitive powers, stating that in his opinion it sometimes amounted to clairvoyance. This quality, he, however, considered as an important aid in diagnosis and prognosis! He pointed out wisely, that the best student combined recreation with work, but it was perhaps unnecessary to have added that, as a class, women students are more liable to mental breakdown. Sir Humphrey, however, readily admitted that the question of the need for and the sphere of usefulness of women doctors was no longer open to discussion. It is apparently necessary to remind Sir Humphrey that women in medicine are comparatively a new phenomenon, and that their numbers compared with those of men are comparatively few. Is it not far too soon to institute comparisons between the achievements of the two sexes?

### ONE UP FOR THE VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS!

On Friday of last week *The Times* published a brief account of the dispute which has recently been occupying the attention of the Birmingham Local Education Authority concerning the employment of married women teachers. Early last spring the Birmingham Education Committee adopted the pernicious, though unfortunately widely adopted, course of terminating the appointments of its married women teachers. Apparently their primary incentive was the existence of large numbers of unemployed teachers fresh from training colleges. They accompanied their action by a request to the voluntary school managers in their area to adopt the same policy. Very strange, however, was the reasoning with which they accompanied their request. The dismissal of the married women was urged "in the interests of education," and pains were taken to point out that another dearth of teachers was threatened by the existing state of things, as parents would not send their children into a profession which could not find room for them.

This, however, did not prove to be the end of the matter, and the aforementioned *Times* paragraph records an *impasse* between the Birmingham Education Committee and its voluntary schools. These last institutions have, it appears, insisted upon retaining the services of no less than 106 married women teachers, and the Elementary Education Sub-Committee is obliged to confess that it can exercise no compulsion upon their managers. It takes the opportunity, however, of recording its opinion that further persuasion should be exercised, as there is now a more favourable opportunity than for many years of securing efficient modern-trained teachers.

We are not, unfortunately, acquainted with the motives which induced the managers of these voluntary schools to take this obstinate course, but we sincerely hope that their obstinacy will endure, and that the *impasse* described in *The Times* will continue indefinitely to embarrass the Birmingham Elementary Education

Committee and confound its policy. For of all the bad arguments ever used to defend this particular bad cause the arguments put forward by the Birmingham Committee appear to us the worst. If they had rested their case solely on the pseudo-humanitarian contention that, given our present discontents in the Labour market, the unmarried teachers are more likely to suffer hardship by unemployment than those who may be supposed to have other sources of support, their action might perhaps have appeared a little less perverse. A very little less—for we have always maintained that the attempt of employing authorities to order the lives of their female employees with reference to the circumstances of their private lives involves an anti-feminist implication. And the danger of this implication far outweighs the very problematical increase of human welfare which may result from employing someone whose immediate financial necessity is greater, at the expense of someone whose immediate financial necessity is less. For, be it noted, no education or other public authority, so far as we are aware, has ever attempted to dispense with a male employee on the ground that he has inherited an unearned income or married a woman of property.

In this case, however, the arguments put forward by the offending authorities are economically unsound rather than dangerously anti-feminist. They urge their case on behalf of "the interests of education." And the interests of education require, apparently, not that the best person shall be selected for the job of teaching, but that the teaching profession shall be deliberately "casualized" for the purpose of maintaining a reserve of labour consisting of persons who are tempted into it by the probability of getting a job, unaccompanied by the certainty of keeping it.

Once again we express the hope that the *impasse* may continue indefinitely, and that other education authorities who pursue a similar policy may be similarly afflicted.

## THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

This week has proved to be the last of the anxious Assembly weeks, and it has been, in some ways, the most anxious. Council meetings were held one after another behind closed doors, and the Assembly delegates hoped and yet feared, longed and yet dreaded, that the necessity for speaking out would be upon them. In the end, as everyone knows, the Council achieved concessions from Italy, and produced an agreed resolution affirming the full competence of the League in all disputes, and this is a thing for which to be profoundly thankful. It saves the League from disruption and it keeps hope alive. But it is very difficult to think that it does more than that; and, indeed, reviewing the whole behaviour of the Great Powers, with the thankworthy exception of Great Britain, during this month of September, there is no disguising the fact that the League has come to earth with a very severe bump. In the long run, no doubt, this will be a good thing. Governments, as well as League enthusiasts, now realize what the implications of a real League policy may be: and the colossal difficulty of the task stands out at its full size. But meanwhile, during the long running, the task of explanation and advocacy becomes harder than it has ever been before.

It is idle to pretend that the decision and settlement of the Græco-Italian dispute has been arrived at by any considerations of justice. It is idle to ignore the fact that one of the big European Powers—and one, moreover, with a permanent seat on the Council of the League—is openly and flagrantly denying the letter and the spirit of the Covenant and swinging back, in almost unchecked triumph, to the worship of flamboyant force. It is true that a contrary resolution stands on record, for which its representatives have voted: it is also true that its signature stands at the foot of the Covenant. But no one can imagine that Italy is a pro-League country or a genuine believer in arbitration, peace, or open diplomacy.

Disappointing as it is, however, it is not despairing. The

League still stands acknowledged (if only by lip service), and vital if as yet fettered. Its days of trial are upon it, and this is no moment for its advocates to lose heart. In the next year or two it is to do or die, and it is already evident upon which battleground the doing or dying will take place, for the Mutual Guarantee and Limitation of Armaments Treaty has gone through and now awaits individual ratification. It will afford a severe test of national sincerity: it will mean the life or death of that new hope for peace which was born of the great war.

With these great issues filling every thought, it has been difficult to attend to the routine business of the week. Nevertheless, things have gone on, reports have been made and accepted, and many deeply interesting things have been discussed. The magnificent speech of Professor Gilbert Murray on the subject of Reparations was received in an ominous silence by the Powers concerned. The plain speaking of the last sessions, too, upon the decision of the Ambassadors' Council was unanswered; but it was heard for all that. It is easy to jeer at the "talking shop" and the "academic oratory" of Geneva; but it is always an uneasy jeering, for the things said there by the smaller Powers of this world travel far and are not soon forgotten.

Among the events of the week, the admission of Abyssinia to membership was the most picturesque. The League now contains 54 Member States, some great some small, and it is a wonderful sight to see them all gathered together. As yet their delegates include not more than six or seven women, and those only from the whiter-skinned races. But, dark or fair, male or female, there is an obvious common spirit among them all, the spirit of sincerity and peace. Their Governments may hold them back; their peoples may be slow to rouse; they may feel discouraged and even dismayed. But all the same, no one who was in Geneva during the meeting of the Fourth Assembly of the League can easily turn back. The everlasting battle for peace goes on, and the banner of hope is still flying

## THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, ETC., BILL.

By CHARLES G. AMMON, M.P.

I have been invited to contribute to the *WOMAN'S LEADER* an article on the "Children, Young Persons, etc., Bill," which I introduced in the House of Commons on the 26th March last, but for which it has not yet been possible to secure a second reading. I gladly do so in the fervent hope that readers of this journal will be roused to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to grant facilities for a second reading.

I propose briefly to outline the points of the Bill with a word or two of comment which will serve as a guide to what is therein proposed. The Bill is a bulky one of 178 clauses and 4 schedules, and is published at 6s. Its size is mainly accounted for in that it seeks to consolidate with amendments and fresh provisions the Children Acts, 1908 to 1921 (the Children Act, 1908; the Children Act (1908) Amendment Act, 1910; the Children (Employment Abroad) Act, 1913), and a number of other Acts that have been passed into law up to and including 1922; also it seeks to amend certain provisions of the offences against the Person Act, 1861.

The Bill also proposes:—

(a) To extend the Law of Homicide to the protection of children not completely born.

(b) To amend the Law of Marriage in England and Wales so as to prohibit any person under the age of sixteen from marrying.

There will be little dispute as to the advantage of bringing together into a comprehensive whole the many Acts dealing with children and young persons which have passed into law during the past fifteen years. It is also difficult to see on what grounds decent people could object to a strengthening of the law to deal with offences against girls under sixteen and the abolition of "reasonable ground to believe," with respect to a girl under that age as a defence in any proceedings.<sup>1</sup> In this class of offence it is sought to classify felony and misdemeanour to

correspond with the dividing line between a child and a young person. Increased penalties are outlined for "procurator" or the attempted "procurator" with immoral intent. Proposals are included for the protection of boys under sixteen from women or girls of or over that age. Amendments to former legislation and fresh proposals are made for the punishment of offences of cruelty against children and young persons.

There are also proposals to restrict the reporting in newspapers of certain cases in which children or young persons are involved, in a manner calculated to lead to identification. This gave rise to certain representations on behalf of the newspaper proprietors, and I am happy to say that a form of amendment to the present drafting has been agreed upon.

From this brief sketch it will be grasped that the Bill is wide and comprehensive in its scope without, I think, being in any way grandmotherly or interfering with rightful individual liberty. As one who has spent many years in active work among children and young people, and as a member of the London County Council Education Committee, I know from first-hand experience the need for further legislation such as is proposed in this Bill. Of course, I know equally well that the enforced social habits of great masses of population, particularly as to housing, contribute in a very large measure to the committal of such offences. It is no exaggeration to say that to a very large degree the housing conditions of the people are a direct incentive to immorality and that thousands of young children are being reared under conditions that make for a moral standard little better than the poultry yard. That they have not got to such a pitch is due to the strong Puritan instincts innate in the British character, but these have, I fear, been sadly undermined during more recent years.

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that this defence has already been abolished for offences against girls under sixteen, except when the offender is a man of twenty-three or under and it is his first offence.

WHAT I REMEMBER.<sup>1</sup> IV.

By MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT, J.P., LL.D.

When my husband became Postmaster-General in 1884 no one was more interested in his new official position than Mrs. Barham; it appeared that she had a great-nephew in the Post Office whose abilities she thought were worthy of a better kind of work than that entrusted to him. She did not fail to raise the subject when I was next in her company. She had had her great-niece with her not long before, a sister of the young man in the G.P.O. "Yes, m'm, Jennie was here, and I thought I would talk to her about her brother. I didn't like to say to her straight out 'what is your brother Willie's character?' but I worked up to it kind of gradual; soo, when we was settin' at our teas I say to her: 'Jennie, dear girl, do your brother Willie drink?'" This gradual approach to the subject had very satisfactory immediate results, for Jennie was able to give her brother a clean bill of character, but unfortunately for her there were so many young fellows in the G.P.O. with similar qualifications that it did not lead to his immediate promotion.

Of a somewhat important funeral in Aldeburgh, Mrs. Barham was pleased to express her approval of the arrangements made. "The family all following, husbands and wives walking together. Now some people make the eldest son walk first, along with the eldest daughter, and the second son along with the second daughter, right down to the ind—and then the pore 'laws' all alone by themselves." It was the first time any of us had heard sons- and daughters-in-law called "the pore laws," and the expression took root. One of my nephews-in-law to this day always signs himself when writing to me "Your affectionate pore law." One more story of Mrs. Barham shall be my last. It has a pathetic note. Her dear daughter, Mrs. Marker, had died not long after the death of her husband, and the two children, a boy and a girl, the former about four years junior to the latter, were left without either father or mother. The girl in this position developed a motherly and protective feeling towards the boy. When they both had holidays at their respective schools she would seek him out and take him for some little excursion. On one of these excursions she took him to Beccles, where there is an attractive river and a nice woman who let out boats to hire by the hour; the two children presented themselves at her house and said they wanted a boat. And now Mrs. Barham must finish the story: "the woman, she looked 'em up and down, and then she say, 'What could your father and mother be thinking of to let you two dear children come here all alone by y'rselfes to go out in a boat?'" And then the two pore children bursted out crying, and said their father and mother was both dead: and the woman, oh! she was so sorry you can't think: she couldn't do enough for 'em. She let 'em hev a boat without charging them nothin' for it, and when they came back she say to them 'now you two dear children you goo down into my garden and gather anything you like that grows there.' But what was the good o' that? they didn't want nothin' out of the woman's garden."

## OTHER ALDEBURGH FRIENDS.

There was a remarkable old lady who had lived in Aldeburgh all her life, and remembered in minute detail the chief events of the Napoleonic wars. Her name was Mary Reeder; she was often given brevet rank and called Mrs. Reeder. In middle life she had been a nurse in the Rowley family, and had specially devoted herself to a delicate child. She lived to be nearly 100, and directed in her will that the church bells should ring a merry peal at her funeral in lieu of the usual solemn tolling. She lived in her own cottage, bequeathed to her by her father. It had a pleasant little garden in front and at the back. Mary objected to chance acquaintance and indiscriminate greetings, and would say: "If I goes out in my front, one and another passing says, 'Good day, Mrs. Reeder,' or 'Hope you are well, Mrs. Reeder.' I don't want none of that, so when I wants the air, I goes out in my back." Her father had been in the Navy, and he and four other Aldeburgh men had been taken prisoners by the French about 1798. "When none of the five came back and nothing was heard of them by their wives, four on 'em thought their husbands was dead and put on black and widders' caps: but my mother, she say, 'Noo, I will niver put on black for Joo Reeder not till I know he's dead, not if I can afford it iver soo.' Soo she put me out to nurse and went into service again herself. Well, when five years after that they

<sup>1</sup> This article is the fourth of a series which will extend over several months.

all came back,<sup>2</sup> alive and well, you should ha' seen how silly them other women looked as had made certain their husbands was dead. But my father, he bought this house, and my mother came back to live with him in it. Oh! it was a wretched place then, the roof all to pieces, earth floor in the kitchen and no comfort anywhere: and my mother she say, 'Joo Reeder, Joo Reeder, this is a place to bring a woman to!' but my father he was as merry as could be. Sailor-like, as soon as he had lighted a fire and put a kittle on to boil, he thought he'd got a home: and he worked away at it and got it all to rights in noo time." She used also to tell how on another occasion her father, having just been released on furlough from his ship and put ashore at Portsmouth, was proceeding to walk to Aldeburgh, a distance, I suppose, of some 150 miles, when he was taken by the Press Gang and sent back into active service again. When I contrast this with the treatment of our men in the late war, I cannot help feeling that whatever may be its faults a democratic government is more humane and more intelligent than the old autocratic way of doing things.

When Mary Reeder was about 70, and very hard pressed to make ends meet, for she had very little besides her cottage, my father arranged to give her a pension of so many shillings a week as long as she lived on condition that the cottage was to be his when she died. Well, she lived and lived: and we were very glad she did: it was she who was disturbed by it. She used quite to worry us by harping on the subject every time we saw her. She constantly wanted to give my mother a pretty little set of silver spoons which she possessed, my mother as constantly declining them, saying she enjoyed very much more seeing them on Mary's table than she would if they were locked up in the plate chest at Alde House, but Mary had got the subject on her brain, and could not leave it alone. "I ha' lived out of the course of nature," she argued, "and I want to die an honest woman." My mother was equally determined, but Mary left her the spoons in her will. An honest woman she certainly was: some question arose as to her exact age: was she really 100 or only 98 or so? "It is very easy to settle that," said my mother, "ask the Vicar to give you a copy of the entry of your birth in the parish register." Mary agreed, and my mother added, "The charge for that you know, Mary, is 3s. 6d.": the reply came as quick as lightning, "and I have got it riddy for him too." When in 1870 the municipal franchise was given to women ratepayers, Mary became a voter: and my father being keen on the return of a certain candidate asked the daughters who were at home to canvass the women electors. When they came to Mary Reeder's house they found with her an old man named Taylor—Billy Taylor he was always called. My sisters did not canvass him, for he saved them the trouble by volunteering the following information: "When my pore dear sister lay a-dyin', 'Willam,' she say to me, 'when there's any vootin' goin' forrard, du you always voot same as Mr. Newson Garrett, be that blew, yaller, or rad': and so I du." The point of this lay in my father lately having changed over from the Conservative to the Liberal side in politics. My father didn't like this story about Billy Taylor at all.

## OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Next week's number will contain an article by Mrs. H. M. Swanwick, called "Bringing America into the League", the 5th instalment of Mrs. Fawcett's "What I Remember", and the 2nd article by Ann Pope on Household Economics. We regret this could not be published this week, owing to the proofs not having been received.

## SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITAL.

The Scottish Women's Hospitals Association was started in 1921 to commemorate the war work of the Scottish Women's Hospitals by supporting the new Obstetric and Gynaecological Unit of the Royal Free Hospital.

Four beds are to be endowed with £1,000 each, and since starting nearly £2,000 has been collected.

A series of lectures has been arranged in support of the funds and should prove exceptionally interesting. They are advertised on page 287.

<sup>2</sup> I think this must have been during the Peace of Amiens when prisoners on each side were released.

## EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP.

## THE STORY OF A BIRMINGHAM CAMPAIGN.

It was in the Spring of 1920 that the Birmingham branch of the Society for Equal Citizenship organized the first Citizenship Competition for the women of the district.

"Competition" is a vague word. It implies the knitting of jumpers, or photographs of "beauties" in the illustrated papers. One might even think of a forecast of some kind, possibly as to the result of the Municipal elections! But our competition is, in reality, a written examination, dealing on broad and very elementary lines with the government of the nation and the city as it affects the everyday lives of the people. It was launched as part of the Society's educational work to encourage intelligent use of the vote that had been newly won; and when the S.E.C. and the National Council of Women in Birmingham subsequently amalgamated the Competition was carried on by the Citizenship Sub-Section of the Council.

A few months before the examination a syllabus is sent to the various women's organizations of the City. Co-operative Guilds, Mothers' Meetings, political organizations, Girls' Clubs, Guides, and the Women's Institutes of the adjoining villages are all invited to enter. Each competing body must send in at least four papers, and the awards are made not on individual entries but on the work of the group as a whole.

The examination paper is divided into eight sections, containing respectively questions on Parliament, Local Government, Education, Public Health, Taxation, the League of Nations, Temperance, and general topics. This year nineteen questions were set, and all competitors were asked to answer not more than eight, of which one should deal with either Parliament or Local Government. The answers are written by each group at one of its own meetings, under the supervision of its officers, and are then forwarded to our headquarters for adjudication by a small sub-committee.

Specimens of the questions set will be of interest. Under the head of Local Government, competitors were introduced to one Miss Harris, who is standing for the City Council in a very poor Ward: "She asks the housewives in it to tell her what improvements are needed in the houses, courts, and streets; what would you suggest to her?" This is typical of questions that are asked every year in some form or another to give opportunity for the expression of thought and opinion as distinct from mere knowledge, and many well-thought-out answers show how intense is the desire of the working mother for more space, more cupboards, and, above all, better facilities for light and cleanliness.

Very full and accurate replies are generally given to the questions dealing with the City's work for children—for imaginary Jimmies and Sallies who develop ricketts or phthisis, or who more cheerfully, aspire to a secondary education or to facilities for spare-time recreation.

The qualifications for Parliamentary and Municipal voters, and the outline of the composition and work of Parliament form the basis of questions every year.—was it a convinced democrat or merely a cynic who said that "the House of Commons works for the people's rights, and the House of Lords talks"?—and the beginnings of international politics are touched upon in some very simple questions on the League of Nations. The answers to these are apt, as yet, to be rather sketchy and confused, except where special lectures on the subject have been given beforehand.

Nor are the more definite topics of current interest forgotten. One of our speakers during the past year or two has carried on most enthusiastic propaganda work at women's meetings on behalf of the Equal Guardianship of Infants Bill, and questions on this subject are always well and clearly answered.

A most valuable part of the Competition work, and one which we hope to develop still further as time goes on, is the course of preparatory lectures given, if they so desire, to intending competitors. One girls' club this year had a series of regular coachings on the Competition subjects. We also try to arrange for one of the examiners to visit the various competing groups after the papers have been corrected, in order to discuss the questions and to indicate the strong and weak points of the various answers that have been given.

A first, second, and third prize, with a certificate, is awarded in the form of a money gift to the successful group, and sometimes an extra prize is given for the best individual paper. During the past four years the first prize has been awarded successively to a girls' club in one of the poorest wards of the City; a women's political organization; a Village Council; and a Co-operative Guild.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

## WOMEN AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

It was fitting that, in the town which sent the first woman member to Westminster, there should have been a marked increase in the number of women speakers to the Church Congress this week. At official and non-official meetings women could be heard. Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith was the "star" at the English Church Union meeting, and she stressed the need of religious education for the children of to-day, pleading that they should be brought early to the Sacramental life of the Church.

Alderman Clara Winterbotham, J.P., ex-Mayor of Cheltenham, pleaded with women to take more interest in the responsibilities that were their consequent on their new share in Church and State Control. Miss Joyce Baines gave an inspiring talk to women calling them to be "modern" in the sense in which Jesus Christ was modern. We were not "modern" enough to keep up with Him and could only humbly follow. Mrs. Moore, the wife of a priest at Wragby, Lincs., and Mrs. Griffiths, a Messenger of the Diocese of Southwell, spoke from experience gained first-hand, of the difficulties and conditions of the country parish. The latter stressed the need for a change in the appalling housing conditions. Miss Knight-Bruce and Miss Dorothy Maud dealt with the larger issues of Christianity and Nations, and the Christian Ideal and the World. Both speakers were listened to with marked attention. Mrs. Hudson Lyall, C.B.E., J.P., gave her hearers a good drubbing down for their apathy towards the local civic life of their districts, and urged them to come forward for service as councillors, guardians, etc.

At a discussion on the Marriage Service, following a Reception at the Royal Hotel, which was well-attended by men and women, a fair number of clergy being present, Mrs. Marston Acres, Chairman of the League of the Church Militant, presided. The following day the L.C.M. arranged another meeting, at which Mrs. Acres spoke at greater length on "The Ministry of Women." There were good discussions at both meetings. It was evidently unbroken ground to most present, and some interesting educative work was done.

## WOMEN UNDER THE POOR LAW

(J. THEODORE DODD, J.P.).

"The Ministry of Health is about to make a New Order for Casual Wards and Casual Paupers to supersede the Orders of 1882 and 1914, and now, therefore, is a golden opportunity of obtaining some alleviation of the sufferings of women, who either alone or in company with their husbands are 'on the road.'" I suggest that the Women's Associations should make three very simple demands, and send them *at once* to the Ministry of Health (Whitehall, S.W.): viz. that the New Order shall (1) give to the destitute wayfaring woman at least as good food as is given in prison to a woman sentenced to hard labour for crime; (2) that the task of picking oakum, which no longer exists in the ordinary prisons, shall be abolished; and that the present task of 'Nine hours' work in washing, scrubbing, and cleaning, or needlework, be reduced to eight. For a woman who has, perhaps, walked 20 miles on the day before, and may have to walk 20 miles more on the day after, eight hours standing at the wash-tub is more than enough. Our third demand is that the Order shall prescribe in detail that every precaution shall be taken to prevent and exterminate lice in the wards, and that the Poor Law Inspectors shall be made responsible for these precautions being taken. In some wards the lice are dreadful.

"I have no doubt that much good would be effected and cleanliness promoted if Women Magistrates would exercise their powers under 30 Geo. III, c. 49, s. 1, and 4 & 5 Will. IV, c. 76, s. 45 (see Stone Tit, *Poor*, 54th edition, p. 1,045, note), of visiting Workhouses and Casual Wards, and not leave these Institutions entirely in the hands of the Male Inspectors. I am quite aware that these powers have been long disused, but would be very glad if some courageous Justices, of either sex, would revive them."

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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

### RECEPTION TO DAME EDITH LYTTTELTON.

The Reception to Dame Edith Lyttelton and to other women who have taken a prominent part in the Assembly of the League of Nations will be held at Church House, Dean's Yard, on Friday, 12th October, at 4.30 p.m. It will greatly facilitate arrangements for this Reception, which promises to be of an immensely interesting nature, if an early application is made for tickets (price 2s. 6d., including tea).

### THE SUMMER SCHOOL AT KESWICK.

The Summer School came to an end on the 28th inst. We think that we may justly claim that it has been a great success. The attendance at all the Lectures was well maintained, and many of the Students announced their intention of coming another year. An account of the School from one of the Students will be found in another column. The Second Conference of Societies was held, at which the subjects discussed were: Finance, both Headquarters and Branches; Local Government Elections, Literature, and the Library.

### MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

Our readers probably do not stand in need of reminding that the Municipal Elections will be taking place everywhere in England and Wales on 1st November. We shall be glad to hear from those of our Societies who are supporting Women Candidates, as the need for a large increase in the number of women City and Town Councillors is being keenly felt. Copies of a Questionnaire for Candidates for Municipal Councils can be obtained gratis from Headquarters. Members of our Societies are urged to see that all Candidates both men and women are asked to pledge themselves on the points dealt with.

**MEETING ON RECIPROCAL VOWS IN THE MARRIAGE SERVICE, Central Hall, Westminster, Monday, 12 November, at 8 p.m.**

The arrangements for the above meeting are proceeding apace. The speakers include Miss Maude Royden, the Countess of Selborne, Lady Barrett, C.B.E., and others. Admission free; reserved seats 5s., 2s. 6d., 1s.; blocks of not fewer than six seats will be reserved for Societies at 2s. 6d., 1s., and 6d., each, according to numbers required. Applications for seats for Societies must be made before 8th November. Seats will be allotted in order of application. Leaflets can be had for distribution from Headquarters, and it is hoped that our Societies and others will do all they can to ensure a good attendance.

### WOMEN'S YEAR BOOK.

The Women's Year Book will be ready for sale in a month's time. Our members will remember that it has been compiled by the N.U.S.E.C., and contains information absolutely necessary for the woman interested in any kind of public work. The Year Book will be on sale at Headquarters, and our members are urged to order their copies from us, price 5s.

### PERSONAL.

We know our Societies and Members will wish to express their warmest sympathy with the Honorary Secretary, Miss Macadam, on the death of her sister, Mrs. Ross. The Union will also suffer greatly at the death of such an able and devoted friend.

### OBITUARY.

#### MARGARET MACADAM ROSS.

Margaret Ross, who died on Thursday, the 27th inst., after a long illness, will ever remain in the memory of those who knew her, as an indomitable and gracious personality, who, in spite of years of ill-health, rendered signal service to her fellow women. Born in Scotland (her father was the Rev. Thomas Macadam), at an early age she went with her family to America and took her B.A. degree at McGill University. In 1897 she married the Rev. J. M. E. Ross, the Assistant of her uncle, Dr. Alexander Whyte, of Edinburgh. After they had moved to Reigate her great interest in the part women can play in Local Government was given practical expression to by her being returned as Poor Law Guardian—head of the poll—in a Conservative constituency,

though herself always a staunch Liberal! This interest in Local Government was maintained all her life. In 1920 she became Hon. Secretary of the Women's Local Government Society, and spoke on this and on kindred subjects all over the country. In Hendon, where the last active years of her life were spent, her work as Minister's wife, as public worker, and as student represented a wonderful triumph of will and of spirit over weakness of body. She was Chairman and President of the Hendon Women Citizens' Council, and President of the Golders Green Society for Equal Citizenship. During part of this time she managed to work for, and—at the age of 48—successfully to achieve her M.A. (London) in Philosophy, her thesis being considered remarkably able. Her speaking was delightful—finished and scholarly, humorous and human. Students at the Oxford N.U.S.E.C. Summer School will not forget her lectures on the Administration of Justice, while her classes on Canvassing in Edinburgh and Glasgow remain a happy memory to those who attended them. To a wide circle of friends, acquaintances, and fellow workers it is not only her ability and her courage that will remain so green in our memory, and the loss of which will create so real a gap, but also the wonderful range of her personality, her ready wit, her quick sympathy—all the more appreciated as she knew when and how to be critical—her graciousness, and the beauty of her poise, her eyes and her hands.

E. M. H.

Miss Growse (Member of Hendon U.D.C.) writes as follows:—

"Keenly interested in the Women's Movement and in everything pertaining to the work and social status of women, Mrs. Ross initiated the formation of the Hendon Women Citizens' Council very shortly after the passing of the Representation of the People Act of 1918. She was elected its Chairman, and held that post until 1921. During those three years Mrs. Ross worked zealously, in spite of frequent breakdowns in health, to make the Council a real power. She spoke always with a masterly knowledge of her subject, with a power of lucid expression, and with a deep earnestness which carried conviction to the minds of her hearers. Her thought was constantly for the women and children and her interest was proved by her practical care for the Day Nurseries at Child's Hill and West Hendon. Delightful as Mrs. Ross was as a speaker, it was perhaps as a Chairman that her special gifts of charm, tact, and courtesy were best displayed. She won the entire confidence of her committee, and every member must treasure happy memories of those busy mornings' work. And now she has gone from our midst to her well-earned rest. Not only for the work done and the word spoken, but for the shining example set are we thankful for the past, and we look forward to the future, sure that the seed sown shall in the end bear fruit a hundredfold."

### N.U.S.E.C. SUMMER SCHOOL AT KESWICK.

21st to 28th September.

BY ONE OF THE MEMBERS.

We gathered from far and near—from Scotland—from busy lives in towns or from Committees of Women's Institutes. We represented different attitudes of mind, but we shared a common hope as we assembled and Mrs. Hubback laid our Bill of (Lecture) Fare before us. We were moved with a common gratitude as we departed. What was the gist of it?

Mr. Stock's lectures on Democracy, the Franchise, and Political Parties were most attractive. We shall henceforward give more reverence to the power of the "Voice of the People." We wait to hear that "voice" ringing more effectively through our land. Mrs. Stocks' lectures on the Economic Status of the Family, a Living Wage, and the Stabilisation of the Currency were extremely lucid and interesting, and, considering the short time at her disposal, constituted a most effective presentation of these difficult subjects. We shall not forget Miss Morton's fine appeal for the principles of Proportional Representation. We honour her work and her faith in anything that will give us more educated voters, and we wonder (in all humility) if the objections to P.R. expounded so logically, might prove no more dangerous than the proverbial Bogey. Mrs. Layton's eloquent and moving appeal that the League of Nations should have the strength of all thinking women's work and interest will not easily pass from our minds. We realized that we could all do so much more in this great cause if we cared enough to know more about it.

Miss Ashley inspired us. She obviously cares intensely because of the sad lot of those who are "victims of an Economic factor." We felt as we heard her that women do well when brains do not harden their hearts—these lectures were on Women and Economics and not Economics and Women.

We were much interested in Mrs. Hubback's able account of the Parliamentary work of the N.U.S.E.C., and as she surveyed the past and the coming session we felt full of hope.

Keswick Summer School has passed, and seems to have added to the dignity of our work on public bodies and it has transfigured and ennobled our office as Voters.

### PUBLIC MEETING AT KESWICK.

The Public Meeting held in the Battersby Lecture Hall, Keswick, on Thursday, 28th September, was a very successful ending to the Summer School held in Portinscale. Owing to the unavoidable and regrettable absence of Miss Eleanor Rathbone, the chair was taken by Mr. J. Stocks, supported by many local residents, including the Hon. Secretary of the local Branch of The League of Nations Union. Speeches were delivered by Mrs. Hubback, Parliamentary Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., Mrs. Walter Layton and Mrs. Stocks, Mrs. Hubback dealing with the programme of the National Union, Mrs. Layton taking as her subject The League of Nations, and Mrs. Stocks speaking on Women in Industry. Votes of thanks having been passed to the speakers, Miss Beaumont in her concluding remarks thanked Mr. Stocks for presiding, and on behalf of the School expressed thanks to Lady Rochdale, Mrs. Marshall, and Mr. Slack for so kindly opening their grounds to students during the week of the School.

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The Session begins on MONDAY, 1st OCTOBER, 1923.

For further particulars apply to the  
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On behalf of the funds of the Scottish Women's Hospitals Association of the Royal Free Hospital.

## THREE LECTURES

Wednesday, 24th October, at 5.30 p.m. Mrs. Beauchamp Tufnel, on "A Glimpse of Czecho-Slovakia" (with unique lantern slides). Chairman: Professor Sir Bernard Pares, K.B.E. At Argyll House, 211 King's Road, Chelsea, S.W. (by kind permission of Lady Colefax).

Wednesday, 31st October, at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Walter De La Mare, on "Atmosphere in Fiction." Chairman: Miss Rose Macaulay. At 39 Wimpole Street, W.1 (by kind permission of Mrs. Ernest Waggett).

Tuesday, 6th November, at 5.30 p.m. Mr. John Slater, F.R.I.B.A., on "The Strand and the Adelphi" (with lantern slides). Chairman: Sir Frederick G. Kenyon, K.C.B., D.Litt. At the Royal Society of Arts, 18 John Street, Adelphi, W.C.2 (by kind permission of the Council).

Tickets for three Lectures, £1; single tickets, 7/6; payable on application to Miss Willis, Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

## WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE.

Our American friends have given us to think with their campaign to outlaw war. They argue, "There are two recognized institutions for settling international disputes—law and war. All disputes can be reduced to a justiciable form, therefore all can be settled by law. The great need is a code of international law covering all international relations and a Supreme Court to administer it. Nations must agree that submission of disputes to this Court shall be universal and binding and submission to the arbitration of war an international crime."

This differs from our European division of international disputes into the justiciable and non-justiciable. Our American friends answer, "All disputes are justiciable. Gentlemen of the eighteenth century said certain disputes involving honour could not be settled by law, but duelling was 'outlawed' and has disappeared." This is certainly worth our serious thought, though perhaps it is not quite so simple as it sounds.

The Covenant of the League of Nations does not contemplate the delegation of war to the category of crimes; in fact, it contemplates the use of force. Lord Robert Cecil's Treaties of Guarantees give war a definite place in international relations. Yet recent European experiences show us that the Covenant sanctions involving force cannot be applied. The truth emerges: force is no remedy, it settles no disputes. Only in an atmosphere of goodwill, justice, and fair play can disputes be settled, and then it will not be very important whether they can be reduced to a legal form. It is the great task of this generation to create that atmosphere. We of the Women's International League believe it can be done, but it needs faith and courage, and we call on all to join us in the work.

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## COMING EVENTS.

## N.U.S.E.C.

**EDINBURGH S.E.C.** OCT. 5-8. Week-end School at Dunblane.  
**SCOTTISH FEDERATION.** OCT. 8. At 11.30. Conference of Scottish Federation of S.E.C. on Scottish Bills. Details from 40, Shandwick Place, Edinburgh.  
**EDINBURGH W.C.A.** OCT. 10. At 8 p.m. Royal Society of Arts Hall, 117 George Street. "The Women Police Movement." Speaker: Commandant Mary S. Allen.  
**GLASGOW S.E.C.** OCT. 22. At 8 p.m., in the Glasgow Athenæum, St. George's Place. "Women in Public Life." Speaker: Mrs. Winttingham, M.P.  
**NEWPORT (Mon.) W.C.A.** OCT. 9. At 7.30 p.m. Annual Meeting. Town Hall Assembly Room. Short speeches by members.

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

OCT. 8. Sheringham, Tottenham, Broadneath, Worcester, Blandford, Upper Norwood, London.  
 OCT. 9. Brixton, Dorking, Hemel Hempstead, Worthing, Chiswick.  
 OCT. 10. Otley, Upper Clapton, Croydon, Colne, Bromley, Mere, Brentford, Buntingford, Kensington, Chiswick, Clapham.

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OCT. 11. Southend-on-Sea, Clifton, Wolverton, Chelsea, Bradford, Harpenden, Salisbury Buxton.  
 OCT. 12. Wolverhampton, Croydon, Wimborne.  
 OCT. 13. Guildford, Carshalton.

## GUILDHOUSE W.C.A.

OCT. 8. At 3 p.m. The Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. "What has the Woman's Movement to do with Westminster Women." Speaker: Miss Helen Ward.

## WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

OCT. 18. At 3.30 p.m. The Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, "At Home." 4 p.m. "Tea and Sugar Boycott Scheme." Speaker: Mrs. Juson Kerr.

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OCT. 11. Miss Francesca Wilson: "Russia."

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

**LONDON SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE.**—Secretary, Miss Philippa Strachey. Change of Address: Wellington House, Buckingham Gate. Enquiries: Room 6, 3rd floor.

**THE PIONEER CLUB** has reopened at 12 Cavendish Place, Town Members £5 5s., Country and Professional Members £4 4s. Entrance fee in abeyance (*pro tem.*).

**THE FELLOWSHIP SERVICES**, Eccleston Guild House, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1: Sunday, 7th October, 6.30. A. Maude Royden. "Christ Triumphant—I: An Unarmed State."

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