

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS

JUS SUFFRAGII

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PROTECTION AGAIN!

(In the June issue we gave some particulars of the new Draft Constitution of the Irish Free State. We are glad to have received from our valued correspondent, Dora Mellone, further information as to the fight women are waging against certain clauses.—ED.)

Most Governments suffer from a superiority complex; in other words, when not caring for higher matters they take an opportunity to provide for the better protection of the weaker sex. A unique opportunity offered itself to the Government of the Irish Free State, when the New Constitution was being drafted. Let us, they said, assure proper protection for the mothers of the nation. The following quotations make this clear: Article 41. 2 (2).

"The State recognises that by her life within the home woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved. The State shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home;" and Article 45. 4 (2):

"The State shall endeavour to ensure that the inadequate strength of women and the tender age of children shall not be abused, and that women or children shall not be forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their sex, age, or strength." (See last paragraph).

Article 16. 1 (1 and 2):

"Every citizen who has reached the age of 21 years, and who is not placed under disability or incapacity by this Constitution or by law, shall be eligible for membership of Dail Eireann. Every citizen who has reached the age of 21 years who is not disqualified by law, and complies with the provisions of the law relating to the election of members of Dail Eireann, shall have the right to vote at an election for members of Dail Eireann," when taken in conjunction with Article 40. 1, is possible of adverse interpretation concerning women.

In a letter to the press from Professor Mary Hayden, M.A., D.Litt. (National University), attention is

called to the "Memorandum recently presented to the League of Nations by the International Union of Catholic Women's League. This document upholds without reserve the principles for which the Irish women who oppose certain articles in the proposed new Constitution are contending. It claims for the married woman, as for the single, recognition of her right to provide for her subsistence by sufficient remunerative work. At the same time, it adds, legislation should "intervene as far as it is necessary and according to the possibilities for creating economic conditions, such that the work of the father should suffice to provide necessary resources for the family."

The women's societies which are demanding the deletion of Articles 40, 41 and 45 in the New Constitution ask no more than this. While desiring that, by increased economic prosperity for the nation at large, married women might be relieved from the necessity of working outside their homes, they hold that they should not be prevented from so working if (according to the judgment of themselves and their husbands, not of the State) such a necessity exists. Further, they demand that, by enforcing the principle of "equal pay for equal work," the present injustice done to women by their miserably low standard of wages in many occupations, and to men by the unfair competition of women should end. It is satisfactory to find that the enormous body of Catholic feminine opinion which this memorandum represents holds this view."

Amendments moved in the Dail during the Committee stage were defeated. It was pointed out that the danger lay not so much in the actual provisions as in the opening afforded for reactionary measures.

Professor O'Sullivan asked if it was intended to provide sufficient for every widow with a family of seven or eight children to make it unnecessary for her to work at all except to look after the home. Supposing, and it was often the case, that there was a woman of a family who had to work because her husband would not work? To say that they were leaving that matter to future legislation would not do. Taking the President's

whole attitude, there was a bias against women seeking work.

Mr. de Valera.—That is not true. It is absolutely false.

Professor O'Sullivan.—That is my view. I am taking the articles as they stand. We are not legislating for what is at the back of the President's mind. We are legislating on what is in this article.

The President has refused to alter articles 40 and 41. In the published draft as approved by Dail Eireann the obnoxious clause in Article 45 had been somewhat improved, but is still open to objection; it now reads: "The State shall endeavour to ensure that the strength and health of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children shall not be abused and that citizens shall not be forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their sex, age or strength."

DORA MELLONE.

OUR PRESIDENT.

Immediately on her return from the United States, Mrs. Corbett Ashby found herself faced with the necessity for an immediate campaign in the Parliamentary By-Election in her constituency (Hemel Hempstead) owing to the bestowal in the Coronation Honours of a peerage on the sitting member. Having accepted nomination, she found that she would be opposing a woman Conservative candidate, Lady Davidson, wife of the late member.

The fact that the Conservative candidate was elected by a considerable though reduced majority, unwelcome though the result is to us all, would have been rendered just a little bit less disappointing by the knowledge that at least we have another woman M.P. had not Lady Davidson gone out of her way to proclaim herself no feminist.

What we now ardently desire is that in the next election we shall see Mrs. Ashby standing in a constituency where she has at least a good "sporting chance" of election.

OUR NEXT NUMBER.

Will subscribers please note that the next issue of the paper will as usual be in the form of a single August-September number, and that it will reach them about the middle of August, as the Editor and Headquarters Secretary will be away in July and unable to produce the paper at the beginning of the month.

AN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS CONDEMNS STATE REGULATION OF PROSTITUTION.

The International Abolitionist Federation held an International Congress in Paris from May 20—22nd.

The Congress was opened in the presence of Madame Brunschvicg, Under-Secretary of State for Education, Dr. Cavaillon, representing M. Henri Sellier, Minister for Public Health, and M. Justin Godart, Senator and ex-Minister, who all expressed sympathy with its aims. A number of delegates, both French and foreign, took the opportunity to pay their tribute to the Minister for Public Health for the courage he had shown in introducing into Parliament the Bill which bears his name. If this Bill calls for certain reservations by Abolitionists on some of its clauses it is, none the less, the first Bill introduced by a French Government which absolutely forbids traffic in women in all its manifestations.

Canon Magnin read a resolution which had been passed at the annual Assembly of Cardinals and Archbishops of France, formally condemning State regulation of prostitution as being in complete opposition to Christian morality. This was received by the Congress with the greatest satisfaction.

A very successful and well attended public meeting was held in the Salle des Sociétés Savantes. Those who spoke were Dr. Sicard; Mr. de Graaf (President of the International Abolitionist Federation); Dr. Marcel Pinard (President of the French Society of Dermatology and Syphilography); Madame Andrée Lehmann (Avocat); Dr. Hermans (Secretary of the Dutch Society for Combatting Venereal Disease); Miss Alison Neilans, General Secretary of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene (British Branch of the Federation); the Abbé Viollet; Dr. Droin (President of the International Committee of the Federation); and Professor Gemähling (President of the French Branch of the Federation).

The Congress, after hearing reports from Dr. Hermans, Professor Gemähling and Miss Neilans, adopted the following resolutions:—

- (1) Prostitution, as a personal and private act, cannot in itself constitute a punishable offence.
- (2) The Public Authorities responsible for ensuring decency in the streets cannot, however, be indifferent to public manifestations of prostitution. If they propose to put a stop to scandalous street solicitation which is of such a nature as to disturb public order and decency, the measures adopted to this end must be based on the equality of both sexes before the law, must be applied to men as well as to women, and their enforcement should be entrusted, not to a special police, but to the common law police and must not be arbitrary. The Congress urgently recommends that, following the example set by more than forty countries, a service of women police be everywhere established, with the special duty of assuring the protection of children and to give assistance to women who need their help.
- (3) The rôle of the law, in endeavouring to combat prostitution, should consist, above all, in forbidding procurement in all its forms without distinction, and in mercilessly hounding down all those—souteneurs, traffickers and brothel-keepers—who are the agents of the national and international traffic in women and children and who derive profit from the prostitution of others.
- (4) The modern struggle against venereal diseases must be based on liberty; treatment must be voluntary, free and confidential. It is unjust, contrary to the most elementary psychology, prejudicial to the general scheme of treatment, and medically unjustifiable to impose coercive measures on certain sections of the population.

We would add to this report, sent out by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, the following tribute to Miss Neilans' speech, taken from "La Française": We should like to be able to quote in full the report of Miss Alison Neilans, who represented the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene and the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. Such a speech is an honour to our sex, appealing both to the heart and the head.

ABOLITION IN FRANCE.

The Minister for Public Health, M. Henri Sellier, has introduced a Government Bill in the Senate for the prevention and treatment of venereal disease and the repression of public incitement to immorality and traffic in women. The Bill would abolish licensed houses. This Bill was introduced some months ago, but it is from the May number of the "The Shield," the organ of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, that we have learnt details of its provisions, but the article does not give particulars as to the fate of the Bill in Parliament to date.

While this action is naturally welcomed, both the Union Temporaire of France, and the International Abolitionist Federation criticise many of its provisions on the grounds that they are not nearly radical enough, and would fail in practice to suppress even the houses, much less the regulation system as a whole.

This same issue of "The Shield" contains reviews of several books or pamphlets dealing with the regulation system, and copies of letters from "pensionnaires" in the licensed houses addressed to Madame Paz, the author of one of these books, and to Madame Brunschvicg. These letters are not written on a note of pathos, they

are strictly practical and the more moving for that reason. The one addressed to Madame Paz shows a most lucid grasp of the difficulties of reform, the writer says: "You have to fight all these parasites. There are three kinds of profiteers from prostitution: the souteneurs, the patron and—do not forget—the State. It is the greatest! And you have to fight so much greed in high places that your end seems terribly difficult to attain."

Nothing better than that sentence could illustrate the national shame of the system of regulation. That the State should be making money from this vile traffic! It seems as if once that fact could be realised, there must inevitably be a revolt by the great mass of decent citizens against being associated with the trafficker in human flesh. But it is not realised, and the difficulty is to get any hint of it conveyed to the general public.

In the review of Madame Magdaleine Paz's book, "Femmes à Vendre," the reviewer says: "There is in France an almost unbroken conspiracy of silence, which makes the public believe that regulation is necessary, and worse, that its administration is flawless." The majority of people are either "totally uninterested" or horrified at the campaign for abolition. Mme. Paz, speaking of Josephine Butler, says that her work in puritan and Victorian England was nothing less than a miracle. The rising up of a great prophet is always a miracle, but in a way one can see that the famous English hypocrisy, preferring to pretend that prostitution did not exist, may have been easier to shake, than the matter-of-fact acceptance of the necessity for it. In any country of course people hate to be made to think of abuses, but the assumption of an idealistic attitude, hypocritical although it may in many cases be, does nevertheless carry with it a certain obligation when once facts are forced down people's throats. In France the broad fact of legalised prostitution is accepted, though its hideous implications are unknown. That is difficult. And then the whole system has been allowed to become so profitable to so many by the mere length of time in which it has been in force. Long, long ago, one of the ancient Kings of Ireland said in his last instructions to his son: "Beware of vested interests. They are shameless things."

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

We have just received a copy of the Report on the work of the Advisory Committee on Social Questions in 1937: C.235.M.169, 1937 V. We regret that, having given a survey of the work of the recent session of this Committee in our last issue, we are unable to devote space in the present number to a review of this interesting Report.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

We give the list of women attached to the delegations to the Conference this year, kindly supplied by Mlle. Gourd, who points out that the number is greater than last year, in spite of the fact that the agenda concerned no purely "women's questions." It is a welcome sign that the competence of women and their concern with the whole field of labour is being recognised.

The members of the Alliance Board in Geneva during the Conference, Mlle. Gourd, Miss Manus, Mlle. Ginsberg and Mlle. Atanatskovitch, gave a dinner to welcome many of these women delegates which was a great success. Miss Dannevig, the only woman member of the Mandates Committee, was also present.

List of Women Delegates.

British Empire. Miss Louisa Martindale, C.B.E., Director of Women's Establishments, Treasury: Government expert.

Denmark.	Mrs. Julie Arenholt, Factory Inspector: Government Expert.
France.	Mme. Paitre, Factory Inspector: Government expert.
Ireland.	Miss Brigid Stafford, Chief Labour Inspector, Chief of Service in the Department for Industry and Commerce: Government expert. Miss Helean Molony, President of the Irish Trade Union Congress: Workers' expert.
Netherlands.	Miss G. J. Stenberg, LL.D., Director at the Ministry for Social Questions: Government expert.
Norway.	Mrs. Sigrid Syvertsen, President of the Women's Section of the Labour Party: Government delegate. Miss Aaslaug Aasland, Factory Inspector: Government expert.
Poland.	Mme. E. Wasniewska, Member of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Intellectual Workers' Trade Unions: Workers' expert.
Spain.	Mme. de Palencia, Minister to Sweden: Government delegate. Mme. Maria de Lejarraga: Secretary to the Government Delegation.
Sweden.	Miss Kerstin Hesselgren, former Chief Factory Inspector, M.P.: Government delegate.
Switzerland.	Dr. Dora Schmidt, Assistant Director of the Federal Office for Industry, Arts and Trades and Labour: Government expert.
U.S.A.	Miss Grace Abbott, Professor Public Welfare; Editor of the "Review of Social Service" at the University of Chicago: Government delegate. Miss Beatrice McConnell, Economist in the Bureau for Child Welfare in the Labour Department: Government expert. Miss Lillian Herstein, Executive Committee of the Labour Federation in Chicago: Workers' expert. Miss Mary Hulbert, of the Social Service School in the University of Chicago: Secretary to the delegation.
U.S.S.R.	Mme. Eugénie Egorova, Secretary of the Central Council of Professional Trade Unions: Workers' delegate.
Yugoslavia.	Mlle. Milena Atanatskovitch, Councillor in the Ministry for Social Policy and Public Health: Government expert.

WOMEN WORKERS.

Industrial and Labour Information, issue of June 7th, gives several interesting items about women workers in different countries, some encouraging, some distressing. Peru has just adopted an Act for the Regulation of Home Work, which will in future come under the factory inspectors. Home workers are not to be paid less than the wage paid to workers in factories or workshops doing the same kind of work in the same locality. If the home worker is a woman, her pay may not be less than that received by a male worker. Bravo Peru! There is also a decree by which the State undertakes to buy back sewing machines pawned during the depression by

women home workers, and to return them to their owners. Now that seems a really practical piece of State aid to women workers.

The new regulations in *Yugoslavia* for workers in the Savings Bank lay down a quota for the number of women employed, 5% of the posts requiring a university degree, and 30% for others. This is not to apply to women already recruited, who are already in excess of the quota so that recruiting of women is suspended. There is also a proviso that employees concerned with the archives, with forwarding activities and as messengers must in future be men only. Further, teachers—presumably women teachers—in primary schools, domestic schools and kindergartens must give up their posts on marrying any person who is not a teacher.

In *Poland*, however, a recent general delegate meeting of local sections of the Polish Association of Civil Servants adopted a resolution declaring that the defence of the occupational interests of women, which was one of the basic principles of the trade union movement, required the fullest attention by the Association, since the position of women employed in the Administration had not improved and needed to be defended. The resolution then proceeded to advocate various measures for securing the fuller co-operation of women in the work and management of the Association. Mixed professional organisations and trade unions in other countries please note this good example.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

The Thirteenth Annual Conference was held at the end of May under the general title of "The Duties and Rights of Women under Democracy." In this Coronation Year, the Conference sent a loyal message to the King and Queen and heard a gracious reply. Lady Astor, M.P., was the first speaker on "Franchise" and resolutions were adopted on woman suffrage in Bermuda and other parts of the British Empire. Then Mrs. Littlejohn, from Australia, spoke on the need for making the citizens of democratic countries realise what it really means, appreciate what they have got and determine to achieve a truer democracy, since only an effective and well-organised democratic state can compete with a dictatorship. Education for Citizenship and Civil Liberties formed the subject of subsequent resolutions, Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, Mrs. Hubback and Mr. Kidd being among the speakers. The address on Women's Part in the new Constitution of India was to have been given by Mr. Butler, Under Secretary of State for India, but owing to an accident, his place was taken by Lady Hartog who gave an admirably succinct and clear account of the new Constitution as it affects women, and how it has been evolved. She was followed by two women from India whose names unfortunately we did not catch.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby arrived straight from the United States just in time to take the Chair and make her presidential address at the second session. She spoke on the need for claiming and maintaining a just position for women socially, economically and politically. Mrs. Tate, M.P., gave most admirable and practical advice as to how it is possible to work for more women in Parliament. It is easy after listening to her to understand how she won over local political executives, most reluctant to have a woman candidate foisted on them, to become the most loyal and enthusiastic supporters. Direct, unaffected and witty, every word of her speech was worth listening to, and we give her three main recommendations in full as they would seem to be generally applicable everywhere. First, women must

join their local political organisations, of whatever party they adhere to. They must be prepared to attend dull meetings, do routine work until the recognition that they really are prepared to work and can be counted on to carry out what they undertake to do, may win them places of influence on those bodies. If that day to day work is impossible for them, then they should be prepared at election time to offer their services—always provided that they have some experience and capacity for such work—to the women candidates of their party who, it must be remembered, never have a wife, and seldom anyone to play a corresponding part for them. Lastly, if it is not possible to give personal time and service, even small financial contributions given to the party funds with the proviso that they are to be used for running women candidates will have an effect.

The writer was not able to attend other sessions, and can only report that Resolutions were adopted on Equal Status, speakers: Miss Chave Collisson, Miss Pope, Mrs. Gordon Wilson; Nationality, speakers: Mrs. Donze, Mrs. Soljak, Mme. Casgrain, Miss Colwill, Miss Grace Saunders; Equal Pay, speakers: Mrs. White, Mrs. Wilks; Adult Status, speakers: Mrs. Le Seuer, Mrs. Knox Gilmer; Nutrition, Speaker: Miss Craig McGeachey, of the League of Nations Secretariat; Physical Training and National Health; and The Contribution of Democracy towards the Peace of the World, with a speech by Mr. Noel Baker, M.P.

OPEN DOOR INTERNATIONAL.

Owing to the serious illness of the President, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, and for other reasons, the Fifth Conference of the Open Door International, which was to have been held in Salzburg in July, has been postponed till 1938. The Board has accepted the invitation of the British Branch, the Open Door Council, to hold the Conference in England next July. The actual date and place will be announced later.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

As briefly announced in our May issue, the Peace and Disarmament Committee of Women's International Organisations is organising a Study Course in Geneva from August 25th to September 1st with lectures and Round Table discussions on:

The Actual International Situation.

Renewed Attempts to break the International Dead-lock.

The Work of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office.

The fee for the course is 10 Swiss frs. For further particulars write to the Office of the Committee, Palais Wilson, Geneva.

The Paris Exhibition is attracting a number of meetings. We have already referred to the Congress on Women's Activities being organised by the National Council of Women. On June 26-27, the Union Française pour le Suffrage de Femmes, and from the 25th to the 30th June the Ligue pour le Droit des Femmes are holding their Congresses, from June 30th to July 13th there will be a series of "Journées d'Amitié Internationale" in defence of Women's Rights and of Peace and Liberty organised by the World Committee of Women. The Programme seems to cover every aspect of women's activities and interests, and the meetings will be held in the Salle des Fêtes d'Issy les Moulinaux. For all particulars write to the Comité Mondial des Femmes, 1 Cité Paradis, Paris Xe.

On August 15th the Comité d'Entente de la Jeunesse Française (3, rue Le Goff, Paris Ve) is organising an International Youth Peace Day in the Stade Buffalo, in the middle of its International Camp at Bierville open from August 8th to 23rd. This is in connection with the World Youth Congress movement initiated last year

ECUADOR.

In the May issue we referred to a disquieting rumour that in the new Constitution there might be a clause withdrawing woman suffrage. We have now received information from the Inter-American Commission of Women, set up by the American Governments in connection with the Pan-American Union, that early in July there will be elections to a Constituent Assembly, which will consider the new Constitution in August. It appears that by decree, copy of which was not available at the time of writing, the acting President and Supreme Chief of the Republic, Senor Paez, has laid down special conditions for voting for this Assembly which already exclude women. Further, it is believed that the parties of the Left are urging that the franchise for women, implicitly granted in the 1897 Constitution and explicitly confirmed in that of 1929, shall be withdrawn. The Alliance and many other bodies have addressed urgent letters to the President asking that this retrograde step should not be taken. Ecuador was the first of the South American Republics to grant woman suffrage, and it is impossible to believe that this measure has in any way led to consequences on which a change of policy could be based. We sincerely hope that councils of justice will prevail.

GREAT BRITAIN.

For twenty-five years in succession, without a break, Mrs. Despard has come to London to spend her birthday, June 15th, with her suffrage friends. This year, when she is 93, she is not well enough to make the journey from Ireland, although she confidently hopes to come to London next month. The Women's Freedom League therefore commemorated her birthday on June 15th with a wonderful meeting, where a Roll of Honour was signed by a great number of her co-workers in the many causes to which she has devoted her life. Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Sadd Brown, tributes to her work were paid by the Rt. Hon. Margaret Bondfield, our first and only woman privy councillor, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., the Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, M.P., the Rt. Hon. F. W. Pethick Lawrence, M.P., Mrs. Billington Greig, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Elise Sprott, of the B.B.C., Dr. Aiken-Sneath, Mrs. Le Seuer, Mrs. Barton, J.P., Miss Adeline Bourne, of the Actresses Franchise League, Mrs. Rama Rau, Miss Froud, of the National Union of Women Teachers, and others. We are planning another meeting on July 15th, when we hope to present the Roll of Honour to Mrs. Despard at the Caxton Hall, and to collect many of her friends to welcome her.

Our members have been working for Mrs. Corbett Ashby in Hemel Hempstead where she is the Liberal Candidate in the Parliamentary By-Election. In the Autumn, October 29th, we are arranging a one-day Conference of representatives of women's organisations on "Women and Political Action: More Women in Parliament—or a Woman's Party?" We are working strenuously in opposition to the unequal income limit for men and women under the Government's Contributory Pensions Bill.

FLORENCE A. UNDERWOOD.

EGYPT.

It is a matter of congratulation that Egypt is now a member of the League of Nations. This, together with the disappearance of the régime of capitulations as a result of the Montreux Conference, should open the field for many reforms which women have at heart. If they can obtain their rights as citizens, both in national legislation and in the international sphere, they will be able to work for peace, so dear to their hearts, and for such causes as equal nationality and an intensification

in Geneva. Two special boats will be run from England, and a special train from Brussels to transport the young visitors from those countries. No doubt other similar plans are in train, and the French Committee is forming welcome committees in the principal ports and frontier towns of France.

ZURICH CONFERENCE REPORT.

As stated in our last issue, this Report should by now have reached the hands of all Alliance members and of those who took part in the Conference. A few copies will be available to those who apply for them—preferably accompanying their request with a small donation!—to Alliance Headquarters. The Report gives in compact form a complete summary of the Conference proceedings, including the public meetings and the speeches at the big luncheons. The summaries are in the language which the speaker used, French, English or German, the Resolutions adopted being printed in all three languages, so that the Report will be of value to the great majority. It is a handy and attractively printed little booklet and contains a convenient list of the names and addresses of the Alliance Board and Auxiliaries.

GENEVA OFFICE.

We regret that it has not yet been possible to make definite arrangements in regard to the Temporary Office of the Alliance to be opened as usual in Geneva during the Assembly. Full information will appear in the next number and in the meantime we hope many readers and members are planning to visit Geneva this year.

NATIONAL BABY WEEK.

Each year our paper has given space to some article dealing with the National Baby Week in Great Britain. This year the special subject chosen is that of Housing and Home in Relation to Maternity and Child Welfare, and in place of a special article, we have received a copy of a Housing Manifesto. Our space does not allow the reproduction of this in full, and moreover it is printed in a form to catch the eye not suitable for that purpose.

The desiderata it sets out would seem of such universal application, that we are glad to quote them briefly. Mores should be spacious, that is, roomier than the mere legal cubic space; quiet; airy and sunny; beautiful, which, we take it, means of good proportions and materials; safe and obtainable at rents which will not mean that workers will have to cut down other living, and especially food expenses beyond a decent minimum.

The detailed demands are: cross ventilation without draughts; a garden or balcony easily overlooked by the mother, and failing the first, easy access to an allotment; Proper planning, especially of the kitchen with a view to labour-saving; bathroom and constant hot water; cool larder—and some day surely a refrigerator; simplicity and the disappearance of mouldings and picture rails; built-in equipment such as cupboards (but some comment calls attention to a possible danger in this in harbouring vermin); proper lighting everywhere, both natural and artificial; windows proof against accidents to small children; electric switches, gas and water taps out of reach of young children.

There is a special foot-note on flats demanding the provision of lifts which, where automatic, must be so constructed as to be inoperable by small children; of two handrails on stairs, one for adults, one for small children; playgrounds specially set apart for small children; space for prams, each of which should be under lock to avoid unauthorised use.

Lastly, the following community services should be provided in connection with every housing estate: a Day Nursery, where children may be cared for during the day; a Nursery School and Infant Welfare Centre; Communal Laundries, especially for flat-dwellers.

of the fight against traffic in women where, up to now, they have felt hampered by the capitulation system.

The women of Egypt have taken as full a share as they found open to them in the struggle for the independence of their country, and we sincerely hope that the Egyptian Government will recognise the value of that share in the only practical way, namely, by giving them political equality with men. There is something very educative about the use of political rights, and in the sphere of education properly speaking, it is certain that under woman suffrage the provision of the necessary educational facilities for girls will go forward far more rapidly than under a purely male electorate and Parliament, though we know that very much has been done in recent years.

SWEDEN.

At a joint session of both Chambers of the Riksdag, the principle of equal pay for men and women was accepted in a vote on the salaries of board school teachers. The woman teacher will not reap an immediate benefit, but the principle is to be applied before 1942 to all rates of salaries except the highest, in conformity with the rule in force for the public service. Up to now the teachers have been paid partly by the Government and partly by the municipality or parish, but they are to be progressively considered as public servants. It is hoped that the general regulations for the salaries in the public service may be re-considered and that then there will be repealed the rule under which women in the highest posts do not receive equal pay with men.

RELIGION AND FEMINISM.

The article on the fight which women in Ireland are carrying on to prevent the new Constitution of the Irish Free State opening the door to subsequent legislation dangerous to the economic and social position of women gives one to think. The Irish Free State is a Catholic State, it has not to fear the anti-religious bias shown in many countries at the present day. It is concerned to uphold the Catholic doctrine of the sacredness of the family. But should it not just because it is a Catholic State, be concerned also to prove that such a State is one where the personal dignity of women, the free exercise of their judgment just because the mother must in sober reality play the central rôle in the family, is fully safeguarded? The family cannot be conserved as a basic social unit by any compulsion. Its function is too intimate, too personal for that. It must prove itself as the expression of the fullest possible life for all its members, the sphere of disciplined freedom, if it is to contribute to that happiness and harmony of each individual as a social unit on which alone can rest the solidity and continuity of any form of government.

It would seem to be time that all Churches should take stock of their attitude towards women if they wish to exercise a real influence on the social order. They must realise surely that while they have kept the governance in the hands of men, nevertheless it is women who are the mass of their supporters, women who alone in the last resort can ensure that coming generations shall be brought under the influence of religion in their early years. We would not claim it as true that women will be disillusioned in their religious adherence by any failure on the part of their Church to take into account their just demands for equality in that as in all other spheres. No, what we want to say is that the Churches should in their own interests, in the interests of that influence and authority they must all desire to exercise on the life of all nations, force equality on women, inside their own administration, and in the government and whole life of the country. While the family was really an economic unit, it did not apparently matter very much that the man was its titular head: the woman

was a very important factor in production, she was not a mere nurse or cook. But the family is no longer for the most part an economic producing unit, it is mainly a consuming unit and its unity must be a matter of a centralising moral influence, exercised by whom? Few would deny by the mother. But leaving aside the question whether the world can afford to carry such a mass of non-producers as would be represented by the whole class of married women doing nothing but managing and running the home all their lives, how is the mother to fulfil her spiritual and moral function if she is kept aside from the main stream of life; if she is to have little or no say in the conditions under which her family lives; if her voice is not to be heard in the councils of the state and in the management of all the manifold activities of the modern world?

Is it too much to hope that the Churches should consider adopting a policy of "enlightened self-interest" and give generous and active support to the woman's movement. There is nothing in the teachings of Christ, we believe that there is nothing essential in the doctrines of other great religions, opposed to the equality of the sexes. If as men the leaders of religions are influenced by secular tradition, as spiritual guides it is surely their duty to free themselves from those human prejudices, and see clearly what in this day and age should be the policy of their organisations towards women both as members of those bodies and as souls entrusted to their care in a realm where sex is not.

SECTION FRANCAISE.

A l'issue de ses séances de travail, le Congrès de la Fédération Abolitionniste Internationale, qui a eu lieu à Paris du 20 au 22 mai 1937, a voté les RESOLUTIONS suivantes:

"Au moment où un projet de loi relatif au régime des moeurs est soumis au Parlement français, la Fédération Abolitionniste Internationale croit devoir affirmer à nouveau ses principes sur les points suivants:

"1. La prostitution, en tant qu'acte personnel et privé, ne saurait par elle-même constituer un délit.

"2. Les pouvoirs publics, s'ils jugent nécessaire de prendre des mesures contre la provocation à la débauche, ne peuvent réprimer que celles de ses manifestations qui présenteraient un caractère scandaleux et de nature à troubler le bon order et la décence publiques. Les mesures de répression instituées à cet effet devront, sans aucune exception, s'appliquer aux hommes aussi bien qu'aux femmes, et leur exécution devra être confiée, non à une police spéciale, mais à une police de droit commun, sans ramener sous une autre forme des mesures administratives arbitraires.

"Le Congrès recommande instamment que, suivant l'exemple donné déjà par près de 40 pays, il soit créé partout une police féminine spécialement chargée de protéger les enfants et de venir en aide aux femmes qui ont besoin de leur appui.

"3. Le rôle de la loi en vue de lutter contre la prostitution doit consister avant tout à interdire la proxénétisme sous toutes ses formes, sans aucune distinction, et à traquer impitoyablement tous ceux qui, souteneurs, trafiquants, tenanciers, sont les agents de la Traite nationale et internationale des femmes et des enfants et tirent bénéfice de la prostitution d'autrui.

"4. La lutte moderne contre les maladies vénériennes devra essentiellement reposer sur la méthode de liberté; le traitement doit être libre, gratuit et discret. Il est injuste, contraire à la psychologie la plus élémentaire, médicalement non justifié, et préjudiciable à l'efficacité de la lutte qu'il

convient d'entreprendre contre le péril vénérien dans toutes les classes de la population, d'imposer des mesures coercitives ne s'appliquant qu'à une fraction de la population."

NOTRE PRESIDENTE.

A peine arrivée de son voyage aux Etats-Unis, Mrs. Corbett-Ashby a été priée de poser sa candidature pour près Londres la circonscription de Hemel Hempstead. Ayant accepté, elle découvrit que son opposant serait aussi une femme: Lady Davidson, femme du dernier député.

Si nous regrettons que notre Présidente ait été battue par une majorité de voix conservatrices, nous avons du moins la satisfaction de savoir qu'une autre femme va siéger aux Communes. Nous nous permettons de souhaiter qu'aux prochaines élections, Mrs. Corbett-Ashby se voie confier la candidature d'un siège où elle aura chance d'être élue.

MRS. DESPARD.

Le 15 Juin verra le 93ème anniversaire de Mrs. Despard. Les amies suffragistes qui la fêtent depuis 20 ans, n'ont pu cette année l'avoir parmi elles; mais Mrs. Despard espère que sa santé lui permettra de faire le voyage d'Irlande le mois prochain, souhaitons le. En attendant son anniversaire a été célébré par la Women's Freedom League avec enthousiasme.

PROGRAMME DE REUNIONS.

A Genève du 25 août au 1er Septembre:

Centre d'études. (1) sur la Situation internationale (2) les efforts pour remédier à une situation apparemment sans issue; (3) l'office International du Travail.

Prix de la Session: 10 francs suisses-Ecrire au Siège de la Commission des organisations féminines internationales: Palais Wilson, Genève.

A Paris du 25 au 30 juin, Congrès de la Ligue pour le Droit des Femmes et de l'Union pour le Suffrage des Femmes.

Du 30 juin au 13 juillet. Série de Journées d'Amitié internationale—réunions dans la salle des Fêtes d'Issy les Moulinaux. Pour détails écrire au Comité mondial des Femmes, 1 Côté Paradis, Paris X2.

Le 15 août. Le Comité d'entente de la Jeunesse Française (3 rue Le Goff, Paris V) organise une Journée Pacifiste pour la Jeunesse Internationale au Stade Buffalo. Le Camping International de Bierville est ouvert du 8 au 23 août.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

Cette Association qui groupe tous les pays de l'Empire britannique pour la Défense des Droits de la Femme a tenu sa treizième Conférence à la fin de Mai sous le titre général des "Droits et des Devoirs de la Femme dans une Démocratie." Mrs. Corbett-Ashby arriva de son voyage des Etats-Unis, juste à temps pour prendre la Présidence. Parmi les oratrices on entendit Lady Astor qui parla sur "le suffrage," Mrs. Littlejohn, d'Australie, qui montra la nécessité d'organiser l'état démocratique de façon à ce qu'il puisse s'opposer avec succès aux dictatures; vinrent ensuite Miss Stewart Parnell, Mrs. Hubback and Mr. Kidd. Lady Hartog expliqua la nouvelle Constitution de l'Inde et son discours fut suivi par ceux de deux déléguées indiennes.

L'accueil le plus intéressé fut toutefois réservé au discours de Mrs. Tate, membre du Parlement, qui, en des conseils pleins de sagesse, donna le fruit de son expérience politique. Toute femme qui veut un jour se présenter à la députation, dit-elle, doit s'y préparer par des années de travail modeste et dévoué, soit dans les commissions et réunions locales, soit dans les organisations destinées à aider les candidates. Mrs. Tate

recommande que la dite postulante offre de préférence son concours et ses services aux femmes candidates qui sont les moins aidées.

Les résolutions qui furent adoptées ser apportent: (1) à l'égalité civile; (2) à l'égalité des salaires (3) à la nutrition, éducation physique et santé nationale; (4) à la Contribution de la Démocratie envers la Paix du Monde. Cette dernière résolution fut commentée par un discours de Mr. Noel Baker, M.P.

OUVRIERES ET EMPLOYEEES.

L'Information du Travail et de l'Industrie en date du 7 juin donne des détails intéressants concernant les travailleuses de différents pays, dont certains sont encourageants et d'autres regrettables. Le Pérou vient d'adopter un Décret pour la réglementation du travail à domicile qui sera désormais sous le contrôle d'Inspecteurs du Travail. Le travail à domicile ne doit pas être payé moins que le travail d'atelier on d'usine effectué dans le même localité. Pour le même travail, le salaire de la femme ne doit pas être inférieur à celui de l'homme. Bravo Pérou! N'oublions pas de mentionner aussi le Décret par lequel l'Etat s'engage à racheter les machines à coudre qui ont été mises au Mont de Piété par les ouvrières lors, de la dépression.

En Yougo Slavie. De nouveaux règlements pour l'admission des fonctionnaires aux Caisses d'Epargne prescrivent que 5% seulement des postes exigeant des titres universitaires peuvent être remplis par des femmes et 30% pour les autres. Cette proportion étant déjà en fait dépassée, l'administration semble pour longtemps close aux femmes. Un autre règlement prescrit que les institutrices de l'Enseignement primaire doivent de missionner, si elles se marient, à moins qu'elles n'épousent un collègue.

En Pologne. L'Association des fonctionnaires résolve de redoubler sa vigilance à l'égard des attaques possibles envers le statut de travail des employées femmes—et souhaite voir ses membres du sexe féminin prendre une part active à la direction de l'Association.

PROTECTION ENCORE ET TOUJOURS.

Ceci se rapporte à l'Irlande où notre correspondante Dora Mellone et sa vaillante association livrent bataille au Gouvernement du Dail au sujet de certains clauses de la nouvelle Constitution ayant rapport aux femmes.

Brièvement la Constitution dans les articles 41 et 45 limite la liberté du citoyen si celui-ci est une femme, en déclarant que "l'Etat s'engage à veiller à ce que la mère de famille ne soit pas obligée de travailler hors de chez elle, négligeant ainsi les intérêts du foyer"; et à ce que "les femmes et enfants, par raison de nécessité économique, ne soient pas occupés à des travaux qui ne conviennent pas à leur âge ou à la nature de leur sexe."

Etant donnée la teneur de ces deux articles, l'Article 16 de la Constitution peut en conséquence placer les femmes dans une position d'infériorité. L'Article 16 dit: Tout citoyen âgé de 21 ans qui n'est pas frappé d'incapacité par un article de la Constitution est éligible au Dail Eireann.

Madame Mary Hayden, Professeur à l'Université de Dublin, dans une lettre à la Presse, rappelle que le Mémoire récemment présenté à la Société des Nations par l'Union Internationale des Femmes catholiques "maintient le droit intégral de la mère de famille à travailler pour sa subsistance et celle de ses enfants" mais ajoute que la législation doit intervenir pour créer des conditions économiques telles que le gain du père soit suffisant à l'entretien du foyer.

Les sociétés féministes demandent la suppression des Articles 40—41 et 45 dans le Projet de la nouvelle Constitution. Professor O'Sullivan parlant au Dail en

leur faveur, dit que ces articles ouvrent la porte à des mesures réactionnaires. Mr. de Valera refuse de modifier les articles.

Même aujourd'hui, après une propagande acharnée il semble difficile de faire comprendre au public que la négation du principe: à Travail égal, salaire égal, est la cause du malaise industriel et des bas salaires. Le fait que des ouvrières sont engagées à un salaire inférieur force les hommes au chômage, et en conséquence déprécie les salaires masculins.

La protection de l'ouvrière d'autre part la relègue à des occupations mal payées. Tout s'enchaîne.

RELIGION ET FEMINISME.

Le fait, que les femmes irlandaises, citoyennes d'un Etat catholique sont obligées de lutter si ardemment pour la sauvegarde de leurs droits civiques et sociaux nous invite à réfléchir sur les rapports de la religion et des droits de la femme. L'Etat libre d'Irlande pretend vouloir maintenir la doctrine catholique de l'intégrité de la famille. Dans ce but, il semble oublier que la dignité féminine, demande que la mère de famille ait le droit d'exercer son libre jugement, quand le bonheur

des siens est en jeu. Elle peut et doit concilier cette dignité avec ses convictions religieuses.

Mais il n'appartient pas à l'Etat d'exercer une pression quelconque sur un organisme aussi délicat et aussi intime que le noyau familial pour servir des fins réactionnaires, sous les apparences de la religion.

Il semble, en vérité que les Eglises soient arrivées à un tournant où elles feraient bien de réviser leur attitude dans la question du droit des femmes. Si le gouvernement des Eglises est entièrement entre les mains des hommes, ce sont les femmes qui forment la masse importante du troupeau; ce sont les femmes qui influencent la vie de la famille et l'éducation des enfants; et de même que la famille a cessé d'être une unité économique et ressent les réactions de la vie générale, de même la mère ne peut être confinée au foyer et doit participer aux manifestations de l'existence moderne.

Les Eglises, dans leur propre intérêt devraient accorder plus d'attention au mouvement féministe d'égalité. Il n'y a absolument rien, dans la doctrine du Christ qui soit opposé à l'égalité des sexes. C'est le devoir des directeurs religieux de s'affranchir des préjugés traditionnels et d'agir uniquement en guides spirituels.

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