

WOMEN'S SERVICE  
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# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### Home Office Committee on Solicitation.

At long last the Home Secretary has appointed a Committee "to inquire into the law and practice regarding offences against the criminal law in connection with prostitution and solicitation for immoral purposes in streets and public places and other offences against decency and good order, and to report what changes, if any, are in their opinion desirable." It will review the law both in England and Scotland. The Chairman is the Right Hon. Hugh Macmillan, K.C., and Sir Chartres Biron, Chief Magistrate, Sir Leonard Dunning, Inspector of Constabulary at the Home Office, and the Bishop of Durham are among the members. Five women have been appointed: Miss Margery Fry, J.P., Principal of Somerville, Chairman of the Howard League for Penal Reform, and a member of the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons, whose appointment will be very specially welcomed by women's organizations; Miss E. H. Kelly, C.B.E., J.P., also a member of the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons; Bailie Mrs. Millar, the first woman bailie in Glasgow; Lady Joynson-Hicks, and the hon. Mrs. Wilson-Fox, who sat on the Tomlin Committee on Child Adoption, and is a prominent member of the Joint Parliamentary Advisory Committee. It will be remembered that the request for a committee of inquiry into the administration of the solicitation laws was first mooted by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene in 1924 and received the support of all women's organizations. It was on the introduction of the Public Places (Order) Bill, in March, 1926, that the Home Secretary first announced his intention in Parliament of setting up a departmental committee. It seemed, however, to need the stimulus of recent cases in which men of good positions were convicted on police evidence alone (as occurs so frequently in the case of women of another class) to effect the actual establishment of the committee. It will be for the committee to decide whether its meetings are to be held in public, but it appears probable that this will be the case.

#### Husbands and Wives.

Among the appointments to the Home Office Committee on Solicitation, the name which naturally attracts the greatest attention is that of Lady Joynson-Hicks. We do not know in what way this lady is qualified to be a member of this body, but we are prepared to believe that she would not have been

appointed unless the Home Secretary were certain that she is perfectly capable of undertaking the duties it entails. We feel, however, obliged to protest against the placing by her husband of any wife on a public committee whose report is to be made to that husband. In the first place, it is a hindrance to the efficiency of the committee that one of its members should have the ear of the deciding authority while the others have not. Such arrangements have been made in the past with the wrong end in view, and it is fortunate, indeed, if any particular one does not arouse suspicion. Equally, such a circumstance may, when the report of the committee has been made, and is under consideration by the husband, shake the confidence of the public in his decision. Finally, it is a setback to the status of women in public life that obvious qualifications should be set aside in favour of a man's domestic faith in his wife's capacity, docility, or what you will. Apart, altogether from this individual job, the principle is wrong, and the precedent is harmful. We hope that it may be found possible, before the committee starts on its work, to reconsider them.

#### Scottish Women Unionists and Equal Franchise.

The turnover in public opinion with regard to votes for women at 21 continues at an almost dizzy rate of progress. At a woman's Area Conference in connection with the Eastern Divisional Council of the Scottish Unionist Association a resolution in favour of the vote at the age of 25 was lost in favour of an amendment which recorded "agreement that Ministerial pledges to extend the franchise to women on the same terms as men, including the reducing of the age to 21, should now be fulfilled." The resolution proceeded to urge Unionists to enlist young women in the party organization, and do their utmost to interest them in the Unionist cause. Another resolution urged a vigorous campaign among young women with a view to awakening their political interest. Sir Patrick Ford, M.P. for North Edinburgh, believes the Unionist party had nothing to fear from the extension of the vote.

#### Another Woman in Parliament?

Lady Iveagh, better known as Lady Elveden, is to stand as a candidate for the vacancy created at Southend by her husband's succession to the peerage. The new Earl Iveagh has represented Southend since 1918, and his majority at the last General Election was 12,500, so that his wife's chances of success are very promising indeed. These are strengthened by her own personality and training in politics. We have reason to believe that Lady Iveagh will be an able advocate in Parliament of the reforms for which this paper stands, and on this assumption we wish her success. A fuller statement of her views will appear in a subsequent issue. But while we rejoice at the early prospect of another woman—and a woman of markedly suitable experience and personal qualifications—quite irrespective of party, it is impossible not to regret that such women as Mrs. Wintringham and Mrs. Corbett Ashby and other able Liberal women cannot find seats because of their party allegiance, and we hope that by some unexpected turn of fortune the Conservative and Labour women in the House will speedily be reinforced by at least one representative of the third party.

#### The I.L.O. in Berlin.

The thirty-seventh session of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office was opened last week in Berlin at the Imperial Ministry of Labour. At the outset of its proceedings, Herr Brauns, Minister of Labour, handed in the instrument of ratification by Germany of the Washington Convention concerning the employment of women before and after childbirth.

Thus Germany becomes the first great industrial country to ratify this particular convention. Meanwhile the Eight Hour Day Convention, with its equal application to men and women, remains an ideal to which universal "lip-service" is accorded, and from which universal support is withheld. It is not for us to twit Germany with the "Emergency Hours of Work Act" under which thousands of German workers are at present employed for intolerably long spells of continuous labour. Here in Great Britain the International Eight Hours Day Convention is still unratified, and this in the face of repeated governmental assurances of its general acceptability. Once again, we are struck with the shortsightedness of withholding co-operation from a form of international regulation from which Great Britain, above all other countries in the world, stands to gain economic security in a world of cut-throat competition.

#### Perturbation in the City.

A sense of wonder at "what the world is coming to" has been stimulated among the ancient City Companies of London by the application of a woman for admission to the Stationers' Company. It is said to be the first demand of the kind since the foundation of the Company 500 years ago. In the case of other companies there are records of isolated women "freemen", but it appears from assurances given to Press representatives that no woman has ever aspired, or could ever be permitted by the laws of immemorial custom, to become a "liveryman". We are tempted to wonder why it is that feeling on the subject is so strong, and apparently so strangely out of harmony with the spirit and practice of the age. It is true that the "liverymen" have a definite function to perform in the local government of the City. But it is also true that Miss Beavan, as Lord Mayor, will have a definite function to perform in the local government of Liverpool—and that Dame Sarah Lees had a definite function to perform as Mayor of Oldham. We are, in fact, even the most conservatively minded of us, well accustomed to seeing women play a determining part in local, if not in central government. It is equally true, that if the economic events of history had not robbed the City Companies of their original controlling powers over the conduct of trade and commerce women would to-day be playing an active part in their councils. One can only suppose that it is the serial functions of the Companies which are thus sacrosanct. The fact is that men will work with women more readily than they will feast with them. Oxford University conferred academic membership and privilege upon its women with a welcoming gesture of friendship and co-operation. But we have not the imaginative power to visualize its reaction to the proposal that a woman should be invited to dine in a common room!

#### Women and Aviation.

It is somewhat disappointing to turn from the personal achievements of Mrs. Elliott-Lynn to the spectacular but passive part played by women in the recent long-distance flights. Indeed, one is tempted to reconstruct the whole business of Atlantic flying, as it has developed during these last few weeks, in terms of Press publicity. A section of the Press wants news. An Atlantic flight, successful or unsuccessful (with a good rescue story thrown in) will provide it. "Backers" are found. The presence of a young woman on board will enhance the news value—supply the personal touch and add piquancy to the photographic side of the business. One must find a very courageous young woman for the job, of course, since it is not without grave risks. But the rewards are great—a quick leap to fame, a national reception, a world-wide notoriety achieved without any sustained effort of brain or muscle. It is thus that one is tempted to visualize the scenic background of Atlantic flying. Can it really be as bad as this?

#### Hoax.

Last week we announced that a lady, Dr. Logan, according to the account she now gives of the matter, decided to call attention to the unsatisfactory conditions under which Channel records are claimed. This was to be done by means of a carefully worked out hoax. According to the account she gave at the time, she swam the Channel at a moment when, owing to the low temperature and a fog, the feat involved a high degree of endurance, she received the praises of the public and journalists, and she finally signed a statutory declaration that she had in fact swum the Channel as part of the process of obtaining the award of £1,000 given by a weekly paper. In England her claim was accepted in good faith, but the French newspapers were unbeliev-

ing and published several articles in which they refused to admit it. Dr. Logan then made a fresh statement, explaining that the whole affair was only a means of exposing the unsatisfactory nature of the records. As to this side of the matter we say nothing. If the records are unsatisfactory it is a good thing that this should be made known. Though this perhaps had better have been done without the clumsy concoction of a hoax. But we do object very strongly to anyone, and in particular a doctor, making false statutory declarations for any such purpose. The person who will do such a thing is not only unscrupulous, but obviously unable to discriminate between a matter of real and permanent public importance, and the publicity which it has become customary to give to the performances of athletes and sportsmen. The error might be pardonable in the office boys for whom some of our papers are supposed to be written, but it is unforgivable in a member of an honourable profession.

#### Bernard Shaw's Views on Government.

Much discussion was occasioned last week by the publication of a correspondence between Mr. Bernard Shaw and Dr. Friedrich Adler on the subject of Mussolini and his dictatorship. In the course of it, Mr. Shaw emerged, doubtless to the delight of the Italian Press, as a stout champion of the Fascist régime. Numerous challengers immediately leapt to the attack, among them the exiled Florentine Professor Salvemini, and Mr. Shaw's unusually inconsequent case was riddled with angry criticism. But none of these challengers appear to have indicted what is, to us, the spring and starting point of Mr. Shaw's perverse defence of Fascism. "It is clear," he writes, "that our attitude to a new régime cannot be determined by the means employed to establish it." But is it clear? It is certainly not clear to us. The only thing that is clear is the fact that the means by which a new régime establishes itself are among the fruits by which it may legitimately be judged—the symptoms by which one gauges its moral and social standards and deduces its ultimate ideals. We are not in the least convinced that it is possible even for a government to touch pitch without being defiled.

#### What is the Matter with Councillor Harvey?

The nomination of Mrs. Drapper as Mayor of Deptford, supported by the entire Council with the exception of one member, has provoked the following declaration from one member: "I object to sitting under the chairmanship of a woman. It is bad enough for women to have votes and to be eligible for election to borough councils and Parliament. But when they are elected to the chair it is going too far. I have always been an opponent of woman's suffrage, and the mentality and attitude of most modern women in endeavouring to ape man gives me cause for alarm as to the future of this dear old country. My opinion may seem archaic, but if men had the courage of their convictions I am certain that women would not have votes now, neither would they be tolerated so much in business." Mrs. Drapper has been a member of her local Board of Guardians for 21 years, and of her Borough Council for eight. She is also a member of the National Food Council. Her opponent is Councillor F. C. Harvey, who declares that he will resign from the Council if Mrs. Drapper becomes Mayor. Now, what, we are tempted to ask, has some woman done to poor Councillor Harvey? Or perhaps—an alternative surmise—he wants to be Mayor himself?

#### Labour and Family Allowances.

In its issue of Friday last, the *Economist* publishes a note by "A Labour Correspondent," which throws new and very surprising light upon the attitude of the Labour party to Family Allowances. "Certain of the Labour leaders," he writes, "consider that the official statement at the Blackpool Conference that the national executive supported the principle, *inter alia*, of family allowances went beyond what should have been vouched at this stage." These leaders, he goes on to explain, are anxious in view of financial impediments to discard the idea of a State family allowance scheme financed out of the proceeds of direct taxation, and are disposed rather to press for advance along the lines suggested by Mr. J. L. Cohen, of national contributory insurance. This, though a very vague statement (we should greatly like to know, for instance, who these particular Labour leaders are), is a very interesting and significant one. It suggests that the emergence of family allowances in the arena of practical Labour politics has occasioned in some minds at least, a new and very welcome sense of political realism.

#### INDEPENDENTS.

Whether because we are all sheep or they are all cranky, the word "independent" in politics has become almost a term of reproach. This, of course, suits the party leaders very well. They would like their own followers to have only one body, in order that there might be no possible doubt about its all being present in the same lobby at the same moment; and they do like their opponents to have all the same label, in order that they may know exactly what to blacken, and that with the deepest dye. But it is odd when you come to think of it that the rest of us should so tamely acquiesce in this valuation. The old knights of the shires were not sent up to Westminster to obey a party whip. They were sent there precisely to be independent, sturdy and obstinate upholders of local rights—unless, of course, as may have happened in some cases, they were sent because the shires themselves were demonstrably quieter without them. Their successors of to-day, as a rule, come up not to represent a neighbourhood but as the liegeman of one central office in London who has beaten the liegeman of another central office, either having had his expenses paid for him from a central fund or having been permitted, as an enormous favour, to pay his own expenses. Before the war a bright young member, especially if his family were good, so that his blood could be expected, in the long run, to bring him into line, was permitted and almost expected to make a certain show of independence. He voted against his party on a well-chosen issue, collected a few supporters who voted with him, and was thereby understood to be not opposing but carrying on the great tradition, and sending in his name for future office. Nowadays when political issues affect our pockets so closely that they have lost much of their glamour, even this amount of personal display is no longer viewed with favour, at any rate, in either of the parties which may be said to have enunciated a definite policy. The Labour party has recently rid itself of Dr. Haden Guest because he voted and spoke against them, and of Mr. Spencer because, though orthodox in the House, he ran counter to their industrial policy outside it. The Conservative party saw to it that one of their most respected members, Sir Robert Newman, was pulled up short by his own local party because he

went further than they desired in his utterances on social reform, and it is rumoured that for the same reason a rival Conservative is to stand against Lady Astor. The machine, whether it pays or not, is for the moment omnipotent, and for the moment it is hard to see how its hold is to be weakened. So many measures come before Parliament every week that not the most vigorous member can expect for more than half his time to understand clearly what he is voting about. If the Cabinet succeed in grasping fully the implications of the programme they are placing before the House this can only be due to a special virtue inherent in Cabinets. This pressure, coupled with the vagaries of the Press, make it a wearing task to keep together one's own nominal party. Independent members who are elected as such are merely nuisances, and in these days of large majorities, negligible nuisances. They will not be able to influence votes in an assembly where votes are normally determined beforehand. They will lack the apparatus of publicity which alone can create for them a personal following in the country. Because their speeches are good it does not follow that even brief reports of them will appear in the Press. They will be largely wasted spirits, fulfilling nothing but some instinctive need of their own. This is a pity, both on its own account and because it shows that the growth of our social life and the development of our political institutions need readjusting—in fact, that the territorial basis of representation is no longer effective. It has often been suggested that a system of representation by interests might take its place—that members with a solid homogeneous backing behind them and a definite point of view to urge could not be so flouted as are our present members by the party machines, for they could no longer be replaced at a moment's notice, nor their constituents estranged from them. In this connection it will be interesting to see the report of the Commission which is about to inquire into the constitution of Ceylon. There the communal system is in force, and we shall all be glad to study a dispassionate survey of its working. But the real trouble goes deeper: it is our own intellectual laziness which makes us prefer to be dragged in the wake of a machine rather than to form and maintain our own opinions for ourselves.

#### GENERAL INSURANCE.

By JESSIE M. ALLPORT.

In my last article<sup>1</sup> I dealt with the subject of life assurance as being a matter of importance to everyone in all walks of life. It was not possible in a short article to deal with the many forms of general insurance that are very necessary for a good many people, as, for example, the householder—the owner of business premises—the employer of labour—the professional or business woman. Let us take these in order and see what insurance they each need, although probably there will be a certain amount of overlapping in the divisions.

First, the householder who has, it may be, a house or flat on lease, or even one or two rooms. The danger of fire is the first risk, that occurs to one in this case, and although the insurance of the actual building will generally be arranged by the landlord, the furniture and contents of the house, when they are the property of the tenant, must be protected by the tenant. Where a house or flat is self-contained a comprehensive insurance to cover fire, burglary, and employers' liability to servants is the best, and this can also include the building if it is the property of the insured. Where a tenant has only one or two rooms, or a flat which is not self-contained a very good policy may be obtained to cover the three risks mentioned above with rather different conditions.

Compensation for larceny, which is petty theft, can be included in most household policies, but not in all cases, and it is a most valuable addition if circumstances will allow of it. The regret which some people feel when they cannot obtain cover for larceny brings to my mind a story of an insurance manager who dictated to his typist "the policy will cover fire and burglary, excluding larceny," which was interpreted into "the policy will cover fire and burglary, excluding blasphemy," a qualification which the manager sorrowfully reflected was only too applicable. Householders would do well to consider also the insurance of plate glass windows, as the breaking of these is a serious risk in some places, and repairs are costly. Insurances on private houses usually allow houses to be shut

up for a certain number of weeks in the year—generally 90 days in any one year is the limit, but most people will agree that that is a very generous allowance.

The owners or tenants of business premises and schools require fire, burglary, and plate glass insurance in the same way as the private householder, and it is very rarely that one finds a business woman who is not alive to this. They may also have to consider the insurance of boilers and lifts, as these are not included in a fire policy.

Those who own leasehold property, whether houses or business premises, have also to think of the time when their lease will terminate and they must not only hand the property back to the landlord in good condition, but provide themselves with new quarters. The usual policy to provide for this is known as a leasehold redemption. An annual premium paid over a fixed number of years secures a capital sum at the termination of the lease, and thus leaves the leaseholder in a position to pay for any depreciation in the property, or to recoup herself for the capital sunk in the purchase of the lease. This sinking fund policy will also be found very useful where a loan on mortgage has to be settled, or where it is necessary to pay out a partner at the end of a term of years.

The employer of labour runs a great risk unless she is adequately insured against any legal liability she may incur under the Workmen's Compensation Act. The last Act came into force on the 1st May, 1926, and places a responsibility upon all employers of providing compensation for injuries to employees, as well as creating a liability for certain diseases. Ordinary domestics in a private house are included in a comprehensive householders' policy, but employees in all businesses, schools, nursing homes, etc., whether employed in manual or clerical labour require to be insured under an Employers' Liability Policy. The rate of premium for such a policy is based on the occupation of the employee and the amount of remuneration per annum, and should include temporary as well as permanent staff. It is not

<sup>1</sup> See THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 20th May, 1927.

(Continued on page 297.)

### THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN AT BOURNEMOUTH.

Over seven hundred women attended the Council held on the 11th, 12th and 13th of October, and proceedings opened with a service and sermon by the Bishop of Winchester at St. Michael's Church, followed by an official welcome by the Mayor of Bournemouth. Mrs. Franklin, in her presidential address, reminded her hearers of the hard battles fought by the pioneers to win them many of their present liberties. Miss Green again presented an admirable report of the year's work, and read it in her usual delightful and audible way.

A resolution in regard to the fund for the new offices was withdrawn, as the matter, it was agreed, could be dealt with next year. It was agreed that in future elections for committees and officers should be by postal vote, the present system of proportional representation being retained.

The first resolution, after the conclusion of these matters of business, was one, moved from the Chair, to affirm the Council's demand for votes for women on the same terms as men, and from the age of 21. This was carried with three dissentients.

An admirable debate followed on the treatment of young offenders, and Dr. Doris Odlum pleaded for the establishment by the Home Secretary of observation centres for the mental examination of offenders, as recommended by the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Young Offenders. In dealing with an amendment, she added that only three centres were contemplated at present, and that there were sufficient fully qualified psychologists to staff these.

A resolution calling for legislation embodying the principal recommendations contained in the reports of the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons was carried after the usual discussion about the position of Scotland (dealt with by a supplementary resolution), but Lady Selborne's characteristic observations in regard to "crank" State officials led to the previous question being found acceptable rather than the resolution calling for Government inspection of all children's institutions.

Up to this point the Council had shown itself the responsible and sober-minded body it is, but when Lady Frances Balfour rose to move "that the N.C.W. of Great Britain agrees to concentrate upon one great question of national reform each year, etc.," it was found that she was, as a wit, in her very best form, and the hall, as the saying is, rocked with laughter. Space and other things forbid the reproduction of her speech, suffice it that she told how she was away in the Hebrides in the summer recking nought of having promised to move the resolution, how the Press called her up on the telephone and said "What is this great thing the N.C.W. is going to do?" and how at last she got them to ring off, only to be summoned by the bell to give her views at length regarding the future of the Council, and how a third time the Pressmen called upon her to tell them the meaning of this word "concentration." It was all the best of fun, and everyone called blessings on her head for the relief. She lost her resolution as was right, and her comment was "I wish I was back in the Hebrides." Mrs. George Morgan, Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, and several others, pulverized the idea. Protection of Young Stage Performers going abroad, the deplorably low age of marriage in this country, and migration were other matters dealt with, and in regard to the last subject, regret was expressed that there was still such an almost exclusive demand for domestic service.

That the N.C.W. urges the Home Secretary and the Secretary for Scotland to follow up the circulars sent by the Home Office and by the Scottish Office on 31st December, 1926 and 15th January, 1927, respectively, by the issue of a further circular, detailing the duties on which women police would be employed by police authorities, was proposed by Mrs. Johnston, on behalf of the Standing Committee of the Scottish Branches, and was the occasion of an interesting discussion before it was carried, the fact being again elicited that the N.C.W. stands absolutely for women constables fully sworn in and qualified as are men constables, though specializing somewhat in duties which they can perform better than the men constables. Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon's proposal to concentrate this year a good deal on this matter was found acceptable, especially by all who had wished to support Lady Frances.

Time was found to deal with resolutions beyond the eight chosen by the vote.

The first of these was asking the British representatives on the League of Nations to recommend an inquiry into the Traffic in Women in the East, on the same lines as the admirable League Report dealing with other parts of the world. This was carried.

(Continued at foot of next column.)

### THE FAMILY ENDOWMENT CONFERENCE. FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

The public conference arranged by the Family Endowment Society last Friday and Saturday at the School of Economics was a successful affair which at least demonstrated the life and vigour of the movement. A large and heterogeneous selection of societies was represented—Liberal and Labour bodies, professional organizations (those of teachers being amply and vociferously represented), Women Citizen Associations and Equal Citizenship Societies, Co-operative Guilds, the Charity Organization Society, and numerous bodies interested in economics and social research such as the Eugenic Society.

The discussions which followed the papers at each of the five sessions were extremely lively, but unfortunately only too restricted as to time. They tended as is the way in such Conferences to dwell perhaps excessively on particular difficulties or sectional interests rather than on the main aims and principles underlying the movement. The contribution of the representatives of the teachers' organizations tempted one in especial to speculate as to whether the teaching profession existed for the sole object of providing a comfortable livelihood for teachers, so little did the welfare of the children bulk in the discussion. Indeed, we do not remember if it was even alluded to by any of their professional representatives.

Each session was closed by a resolution demanding a Government Commission to investigate and this was carried in every case with one to six dissentients.

As for the main speakers, perhaps the most striking contributions from the point of view of those already familiar with the main case for family allowances, were the following: First, Sir William Beveridge's declarations in the course of his opening address that "the theory of the living wage based on the normal family was the greatest statistical fallacy of this or any other age"; "that family allowances were the only way of preventing the passing of a large part of the population through primary poverty, the kind of poverty which stunts growth"; and that "I have in my mind a perfectly definite scheme by which it can be done." Secondly, the figures submitted by Mr. Fisher (hon. secretary of the Eugenic Society and Chief Statistician of the Rothamsted Experimental Laboratory) analysing the effects on the birth-rate of one of the most important French Equalization Funds, that of the Upper Rhein. This showed the very substantial character of the allowances and also their almost negligible effect in increasing the birth-rate. Thirdly, Professor Mottram's newly worked out estimate of a minimum standard of life for an adult male and by inference for the "standard family." This will be valuable to those who have been hitherto compelled to use the somewhat out-of-date data of Mr. Rowntree's famous investigations.

From the point of view of the general public, perhaps the most informative and attractive papers were those of Mr. Brailsford and Mr. Cohen, defending respectively the State and the Contributory Insurance method of providing allowances. Undoubtedly the most controversial and fiercely provocative speech was that of Principal Murray, who devoted at least half of an hour's discourse to an attack on his colleagues of the Family Endowment Council, who by their Feminist, Socialist, Trade Unionist, and Pro-insurance bias have in his view "contaminated" the whole movement. Paradoxically he ended by an invocation to these peccant colleagues to purge their propaganda of those "antagonizing elements" and content themselves with preaching the French methods of allowances through voluntary equalization funds as the sole road to salvation.

The closing word was left to Miss Eleanor Rathbone, who in her vote of thanks which she described as "Kissing the rod", managed nevertheless to deliver a few counter strokes, including the reminder that Principal Murray's devotion to a "belated and discredited" *laissez-faire* was at least as likely to antagonize as the tendencies he deplored.

(Continued from previous column.)

as well as one commending the appeal of the National Playing Fields Association. The N.U.S.E.C.'s reasoned rider to the National Health Insurance resolution, was unfortunately defeated, in spite of a brilliant and lucid exposition of the facts by Mrs. Hubback, who was seconded by Mrs. Ryland, and supported by Miss Helen Ward and others, on the grounds that although sent in time it had not been printed.

The Council, though somewhat less exciting than some, did, on the whole, excellent work. The chief relaxation provided were a big reception by the Mayor and Mayoress, with plenty of amusing entertainments, and the various expeditions by charrs-a-bancs.

The new president is Lady Emmott, who received a warm welcome by acclamation.

A. H. W.

### EQUAL FRANCHISE.

#### "THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY."

The following Unionist Members of Parliament have this week signified their support of the Prime Minister's proposals with regard to Equal Franchise:—

Balmiel, Lord . . . . .	Lonsdale.
Berry, Sir G. . . . .	Scottish Universities.
Bird, E. R. . . . .	Skipton.
Blades, Sir R. . . . .	Epsom.
Boyd-Carpenter, Major Sir A. . . . .	Coventry.
Cockrill, Brig.-Gen. Sir C. . . . .	Reigate.
Dalrymple-White, Sir G. . . . .	Southport.
Elliot, Major W. E. (Government) . . . . .	Kelvingrove.
Erskine, J. M. M. . . . .	St. George's, Westminster.
Evans, Capt. A. . . . .	Cardiff.
Hall, Vice-Admiral Sir R. . . . .	Eastbourne.
Harvey, Major S. E. . . . .	Totnes.
Henn, Sir S. . . . .	Blackburn.
Hudson, R. S. . . . .	Whitehaven.
Kenyon-Slaney, Major P. . . . .	Tavistock.
Lucas-Tooth, Sir H. . . . .	Isle of Ely.
Luce, Sir R. . . . .	Derby.
Morrison-Bell, Major Sir C. . . . .	Honiton.
Oakley, T. . . . .	The Wrekin.
Ruggles-Brise, Major E. . . . .	Maldon.
Waddington, R. . . . .	Rosendale.
Wilson, Major Sir C. . . . .	Leeds Central.
Winby, Lieut.-Col. L. . . . .	Harborough.
Wood, B. C. . . . .	Bridgwater.
Wood, Sir K. (Government) . . . . .	Woolwich W.

### STUPID ADVICE.

"My advice to you," said Mr. Boyle, Conservative Candidate for the Central Division of Newcastle, addressing his prospective women constituents, "is to remain British and be British, and leave internationalism to work out its own salvation."

### GENERAL INSURANCE.—(Continued from page 295.)

possible always to forecast the number of employees who may be engaged or dismissed in any one year, so the policy allows for variations in the staff employed, and an adjustment is made each year for any increase or decrease in the total remuneration for that year.

There are still other dangers, however, to be considered by professional and business women. First in importance I would put a policy to compensation for loss of profits through fire. Ordinary fire insurance covers the actual damage by fire and may include loss of rent, but that is not all the loss in many cases. Anyone in business who experiences a disastrous fire is faced with many difficulties which affect her actual business turnover. If she has goods to sell she will be without stock for a time, or she may have to take temporary premises which are a drawback to her trade. For instance, if she has an attractive shop in Bond Street and has a fire during a busy season she may succeed in finding temporary premises, but it may be only possible to get these in some side street, where, in spite of the fact that she publishes her temporary address, the ordinary passer-by will not be attracted to her, and even the fairly regular client may not turn out of her way to find her. The business or professional woman whose work necessitates fixed machinery or appliances is in a still worse state—and it is easy to picture the plight of the proprietor of a boarding-house or hotel. The premiums for these policies are based on the average yearly profits as shown by the books kept.

Lastly there is the risk to a professional woman of a claim being brought against her for alleged wrong treatment or neglect of a client. In these circumstances the cost of legal proceedings is an important matter to consider, even where no claim can be established. Indemnity policies for this purpose cover costs as well as the payment of a claim if necessary. It is one of the contingencies that may never arise, but if it should arise would be a serious matter. People do not trouble over these matters for compensation amounting to a few pounds. If they feel they have been injured they will usually assess their injuries at a figure which would be crippling to many a woman unless she were in a position to fight her case.

These are some of the most obvious risks which can be covered by insurance, and ones which should not be neglected. If any readers of this paper have special risks which they wish to discuss it would be well to get in touch with the writer at 42 Kingsway, W.C. 2, who will be very pleased to give any help she can.

### FICTION—NEW AND OLD.

Not long ago Mr. Sinclair Lewis brought us into intimate relation with the world of *Elmer Gantry*. Admitted behind the almost transparent veil of his portentous religiosity, we saw him for what he was: knave, sensualist, vulgarian, hypocrite, and megalomaniac. He was the simple product of human wickedness reacting to the multifarious temptations of a religious environment in which personality, unrestrained by the fetters of prescribed ritual or the weight of tradition, is free to cut its wildest capers and exercise its maximum potency. As Elizabeth Fry says, in one of the wisest of her testimonies, nothing is so dangerous to the human soul as "to be made much of in a religious society."

Mrs. Strachey's presentation of the perversions of an earlier generation of American religious sectarianism<sup>1</sup> is less simple and more sinister than Mr. Sinclair Lewis'. She paints for us, not a straightforward cynical picture of individual wickedness spreading its expanding ripples of falsity and materialism over the sensitive surface of human conduct. She shows us how the just and the unjust in their various degrees, and under the stimulus of this same dangerous spiritual environment, may be the victims of a religious pathology which is not the less destructive because it is less consciously cynical. It is a very absurd story that she has to tell of the erotic perversions and unbridled superstitions of these remote American religious communities of the 1830's and 1840's. Some readers may find it not only absurd, but almost intolerably nasty. But its absurdity is dignified by the fact that Mrs. Strachey has drawn upon historical records which we believe to be authentic, and its nastiness is tempered by the grave simplicity and clean objectivity of her style. Her readers will doubtless draw from these queer happenings very diverse morals—to each according to his or her pre-existing bias. For one, it may fortify belief in the human necessity for a universal, impersonal, and institutionalized church. For another it may knock the last clinching nail into the coffin of religious scepticism. But one thing is certain: Seldom has a train of human events more forcibly demonstrated the wisdom of the Delphic—or as we should say nowadays, the Freudian—maxim: *know thyself*.

There is much to be said for Miss Holtby's *Land of Green Ginger*.<sup>2</sup> To begin it, is to read it eagerly to the bitter end. There are many other things to be said for it. It is a skillfully told tale, and of its three leading characters, two come vigorously to life. But though we read it eagerly to the end—one *must* do that—we are not sorry when the end comes. Miss Holtby has dealt unjustly with her courageous and exuberant heroine; too many agonies are piled upon her. One too many at any rate—that last prospective baby, for instance, begotten on the very eve of his demise by a consumptive husband. To say that such things don't happen is, of course, beside the mark. They do happen. But in so far as the artist seeks to transmit the emotions engendered by such happenings to the consumer of his art, he must have regard to the receptive capacity of consumer as well as to the generative capacity of the happenings. Our author may argue with perfect logic that Shakespeare deals no less roughly with the consumer of Macbeth, and that his accumulated agony is received without complaint. True enough. But it takes a Shakespeare or at least a Hardy to carry through such feats of emotional transmission. Meanwhile, lest we appear ungrateful and ungracious, it must be conceded that Miss Holtby's novel is among those which one advises one's friends to place upon their library lists.

Most excellent and commendable is the enterprise of publishers who offer in a convenient form and at a moderate price the collected masterpieces of living authors. As Heinemann gave us three immortal Galsworthy novels compressed into a single volume, so now Ernest Benn<sup>3</sup> gives us the short stories of H. G. Wells, between sixty and seventy of them, beginning with the *Time Machine* in a single fat, though not ungainly volume, elegantly bound, elegantly printed, and all for 7s. 6d. We contemplate it as an excellent item of bedside furniture, as the portable companion of a holiday—and as the ideal Christmas present for an overseas friend interested in modern English literature.

N. D. S.

<sup>1</sup> *Shaken by the Wind*, by Ray Strachey. (Faber & Gwyer, 7s. 6d.)

<sup>2</sup> *The Land of Green Ginger*, by Winifred Holtby. (Jonathan Cape, 7s. 6d.)

<sup>3</sup> *The Short Stories of H. G. Wells*. (Ernest Benn, 7s. 6d.)

### WORK FOR AN EQUAL MORAL STANDARD.

The Annual Report of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene for the year 1926-7, gives a very interesting account of the Association's work, starting with the preparations, which are being made for the centenary of Josephine Butler, the founder of the Association. The centenary celebrations will be held in London, on 25th April, 1928, and in Liverpool on 26th and 27th April. Services and meetings are also being arranged in other towns. The Report goes on to give an account of the work done in connection with the Public Places (Order) Bill, "which repeals the existing, obsolete and unjust Solicitation Laws, and substitutes in their stead as a single clause making it an offence for any person wilfully to molest any other person in the streets or in public places." The Scottish Federation of Societies for Equal Citizenship has drafted a Bill for Scotland on similar lines, in order that the position in Scotland may be included in the inquiry into the existing laws dealing with solicitation. During the year the Association held a useful Conference on Public Order, and has also been in correspondence with the Chief Constables with regard to the position concerning prostitutes in different towns. The result of this inquiry has been to strengthen the view that special laws against prostitutes are not effective in maintaining the public order, and that a general law equally applicable to all persons is what is required. As a result of the successful appeal of two women against conviction as "common prostitutes" the Association has brought to the notice of the Home Secretary the practical impossibility for a poor woman to appeal against police conviction, if she has to pay all the legal expenses even if successful in her appeal. The Association has issued a special leaflet in connection with the Edinburgh Corporation Provisional Orders, which *inter alia* provides for the "extension of powers in relation to venereal disease and powers of removal and detention of persons suffering therefrom," and against which the Scottish Federation of the N.U.S.E.C. has been working. Members of the Association have addressed a large number of meetings during the year, and the Library has been considerably extended.

### CHILD WELFARE AND ANTI-FEMINISM IN NEW ZEALAND.

A correspondent writes: New Zealand is still to the fore-front as regards the Plunket system, pensions for widows, etc., but its latest piece of legislation, the Child Welfare Act, has resulted in anti-feminism. Among some good measures, such as the protection of children's courts, it has made every illegitimate child automatically a ward of the State, and the young mother has no redress if she thinks herself wrongly deprived of her child, which has happened by now very often. (The Act came into force in 1926, and we are a quick young country.) Again, one official, the Superintendent of Child Welfare, a mere civil servant, can now remove a child from an ordinary orphanage into a Borstal or reformatory without any appearance even in the children's court. Access by the parent can be legally denied, and there is no machinery by which he or she can prove his entire respectability. During the war many soldiers had to give their motherless children to State orphanages, and they have been so efficiently lost that search seems to be in vain. Another clause, which should be avoided by Homelander, is that which makes the State ward solely the chattel of one departmental official. Miss Jean Begg, one of our publicists, has mentioned that in our little country of a million and a half persons, there are seventy institutions for children. In some cases the child, made a State ward for some childish misdemeanour, is licensed out to his parents. At 21 even, however, the State may take him away, if he considers him anti-social. If he dies before that time, any money he has earned or inherited goes to the State. These facts are not generally known to the people, mostly a scattered farmer population, but they are all in the Bill. A member of the Upper House, the Hon. Mr. Cohen, spoke lately of a bill making a girl for any misdemeanour (type of misdemeanour not specified) liable to a Borstal. Many persons are now protesting against the Child Welfare Act, such as Professor Andersen, of the University, Justice Edwardes, Constance Clyde, who pointed out the bill's defects in *Truth*, our leading weekly, and many others.

### NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: MISS ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P. Hon. Treasurer: MISS MACADAM.  
Acting Parliamentary and General Secretary: MRS. HUBBARD.  
Office: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.  
Telephone: Victoria 6188.

#### CONFERENCE ON "MOTHER INDIA."

A conference to discuss points dealing with women and children referred to in Miss Mayo's book *Mother India* is being called by the N.U.S.E.C. for Monday, 21st November at 4 o'clock at the Caxton Hall. Speakers will include Dr. Kate Platt, late Chief Physician, Lady Harding's Hospital for Indian Women, Dr. A. M. Benson, in charge of the Women's Hospital at Bombay, and Dr. Ethel Blakie. Further names will be announced later. Tickets for those other than members of the N.U.S.E.C., 1s.

#### TOWN COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

We wish again to remind our members of the literature stocked at headquarters in connection with Town Councils. We hope that the forthcoming elections will do something to remove the reproach from those boroughs which have few or no women members, and from women as a body if they do not come forth in sufficient numbers.

Town Councils: Their Power and Duties, 3d. or 3s. a 100.  
Useful Hints for County and Town Council Elections, 1d.  
Reasons why Women are Wanted on Town Councils, 2s. a 100.  
Local Government Questionnaire, free.

#### AS OTHERS SEE US.

An experienced secretary to a Member of Parliament, calling at the office the other day, informed us that of all organizations which approach Members of Parliament, the N.U.S.E.C. and the Farmers' Union were the most active.

#### NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

##### DURHAM S.E.C.

On 8th October Miss Helen Ward, in the place of Miss Macadam who was unwell, spoke at a well-attended meeting of the Durham S.E.C. The meeting was held at St. Hild's College, and was presided over by the Principal, Miss Eleanor C. Christopher. Miss Ward dealt with the work of the N.U.S.E.C., and in particular spoke on equal franchise and an equal moral standard, women and the Factories Bill, and the need for the Juror's Bill, which the Union hopes to get introduced into Parliament.

##### GLASGOW S.E.C. AND W.C.A.

At the opening meeting held in the McLellan Galleries on Thursday, 13th October, Viscountess Astor gave a rousing address on Citizenship. There was a good representation of the young women present as the "under thirties" of most of the women's societies in the city had been specially invited to the meeting. Many of them signed the Young Suffragists Petition to the Prime Minister for Equal Franchise. The following resolution moved by Mrs. W. L. McKerron and seconded by Miss Griselda Tomory as a representative of the unfranchised women under thirty, was put to the meeting by the Chairman, Miss Melville, and was passed unanimously:—

"That this large public meeting of the citizens of Glasgow calls upon the Government to introduce and pass without delay a measure conferring the franchise on all women at the age of 21 on the same terms as men in accordance with the public opinion of this country and in accordance with the definite pledge made in the House of Commons by the Home Secretary and the equally definite promise of the Prime Minister that there should be equal franchise before the next election."

##### PRESTON W.C.A.

Miss Rathbone gave an address, in Miss Macadam's place, on Legislation affecting Women and Children at a well-attended meeting of the Preston W.C.A. on 3rd October. Miss Rathbone outlined briefly the work of the National Union during the last two years, and mentioned some of the work on which it is concentrating at the present time. She emphasized the need for more women on Governing Bodies, so that the women's point of view might be fairly represented. Mrs. Todd, J.P., presided over the meeting.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL.

MADAM.—A few months ago you published a short letter from a correspondent who said she "had been told" that the policy of the Royal Free Hospital was unfavourable to women medical students and advised subscribers to cease supporting the Hospital.

I know your readers will be relieved and pleased to know that since then your correspondent has become fully conversant at first hand with the policy of the Hospital and is so convinced that it is in the best interests of women medical students that she has confirmed her opinion in the most practical way by becoming an annual subscriber.

Should any of your readers have any doubts left in their minds I hope they will visit the Hospital and learn for themselves all the Hospital has

consistently and persistently done for the last fifty years, in face of much opposition, to give the best medical education and experience to its past and present students. I shall be glad to welcome any of your readers if they will let me know when they can come, for though I am at the Hospital every day I am not there all day.

(Signed) MAY THORNE.

#### "INFORMATION AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE."

MADAM.—The paragraph in your issue of last Friday, under the heading of "The Legitimacy Act," touches a very real need. Every year new legislation is enacted for the benefit of citizens, and it becomes more and more difficult for even the intelligent individual to keep abreast of its manifold provisions. If your fancy of the filing cabinet in every home were taken literally, we should all be too busy keeping our records up to date to have leisure for anything else. The immediate practical solution is, as you say, the provision of channels of communication through which knowledge of what is being done can reach the man in the street, and also, I would suggest, some easily accessible standing source of information to which he can refer at any time for information on any point of social legislation.

Will you allow me in this connection to draw attention to the fact that the National Council of Social Service (a composite body comprising representatives of the principal voluntary social service organizations in the Kingdom, together with representatives of local authorities and Government Departments) provides among other things a centre not only for the mutual interchange of information among social organizations and social workers generally, but also for supplying authentic information to all inquiries on subjects connected with social well-being. This is reinforced by the issue of a handbook on "Public Social Services", giving details of all statutory social provisions, and a monthly *Social Service Bulletin*, which contains among other things details of all legislative and administrative changes touching the same subjects. In close relation with the National Council in a large number of towns are local Councils of Social Service or similar bodies which are similarly constituted and do similar work in their particular localities, and some of these have special "Citizens Friend" departments, where individual inquirers are given every kind of advice and help (other than financial) which may be of service to them in their particular problem.

By these various methods the National Council and its associated bodies is trying to solve the actual problem with which your paragraph deals. We should be glad of your help and that of your readers in our efforts to meet the need of which you speak.

LIONEL F. ELLIS,

Secretary, National Council of Social Service, 33 Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1

### SLAVERY IN SIERRA LEONE.<sup>1</sup>

Those who are watching events in Africa specially affecting the status of the natives, have noted with much interest an incident which happened recently in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone. When the British assumed control over this district in 1895, slavery was practised by the natives. The institution was from the first recognized and regulated by the British Government in a series of ordinances tending to the improvement of the status of slaves. In 1926 an ordinance was passed which stated that after that date:

1. All persons born or brought into the Protectorate are hereby declared to be free.

2. All persons treated as slaves or held in any manner of servitude shall be and become free on the death of their master and owner.

3. No claim for or in respect of any slave shall be entertained by any of the courts of the Protectorate.

The question to which attention has recently been drawn was raised by a case in the Courts where the owners of two runaway slaves were convicted of conspiracy and assault in recapturing them. The owners appealed to the Supreme Court, and by it were acquitted of this charge, though not unanimously. Two judges held that the recapture was lawful because not more than "reasonable" force had been used to effect it. (We are not told whether the slave had a right to use "reasonable" force to avoid capture.) The dissentient judge based his opinion on a sentence in another ordinance referring to laws and customs regarding acts that are "repugnant to natural justice, equity, and good conscience," and he held that the recapture of a slave was such an act, and therefore unlawful, even though not expressly

<sup>1</sup> Contributed by the Woman's International League, 55 Gower Street, W.C.

forbidden by law. In this we may cordially agree with him, while recognizing that from an exclusively legal point of view there was something to be said for the owners. It is very satisfactory that the governing body of the Protectorate decided to do away with such doubtful cases by the total abolition of slavery in the area under their control. They passed an ordinance to this effect on 15th September, which is to come into force on 1st January next year.

#### WOMEN AND CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

Miss M. Verity, who attended a recent Chamber of Commerce gathering in Liverpool, appears to be the only woman secretary of a Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain. For some years she has been secretary to the Walsall Chamber. In addition, she is secretary of a number of local trade organizations.

#### A QUARRY WOMAN.

Mrs. Greaves, first woman member of the Institute of Quarry Managers, has recently been made the Secretary of its Yorkshire branch. She is, it appears, not only an active quarry woman, but an inventor of some distinction, having evolved an inexpensive reconstructed stone for building purposes known as Betna.

### CROSBY HALL.

A CLUB AND HALL OF RESIDENCE now open for  
WOMEN GRADUATES OF ALL NATIONALITIES.  
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## COMING EVENTS.

## GLOUCESTER FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES.

OCTOBER 26. 2.30 p.m. The Shire Hall. Miss Macadam, "Poor Law Reform."

## LANGBOURN CLUB, LIMITED.

OCTOBER 24. 6 p.m. Mansion House (by kind permission of the Lady Mayoress). Meeting to make the objects of the Club known to City Workers. Speakers: Lady Blades, The Rev. J. Ellisson, Miss D. Evans. Chair: Mrs. Hoster, F.I.P.S.

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

OCTOBER 24. 8 p.m. Queen's Hall. Public Meeting on "Disarmament." Speakers: The Right Hon. D. Lloyd George, M.P., Mrs. Philip Snowden, Mr. A. Duff Cooper, M.P. Chair: Prof. Gilbert Murray. Tickets from 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W. 1.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Gloucester S.E.C. OCTOBER 26. 5.30. The Wellington Hall. Miss Macadam, "Equal Franchise."

Horsham W.C.A. OCTOBER 21. 3.15 p.m. St. Mary's Hall. Mrs. Abbott, "Equal Franchise."

Kensington and Paddington S.E.C. OCTOBER 26. 4 p.m. 9 Lansdowne Road, W. 11. Debate between Miss Rathbone and Mrs. Abbott on "Restrictive Legislation Affecting Women in Industry." Chair: The Hon. Mrs. Pollock.

St. Pancras S.E.C. NOVEMBER 2. 8 p.m. 27 Grove Terrace, Highgate Road, N. "Preventative Work from a Magistrate's Point of View." The Hon. Lily Montagu, J.P. Chair: Miss Elizabeth Edwards.

## SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Dundee W.C.A. OCTOBER 24. 8 p.m. Kidd's Rooms, South Lindsay Street. Mrs. Blanco-White, "Education and Citizenship." Chair: Mrs. David Johnston, President.

Dunfermline S.E.C. OCTOBER 25. 7.30 p.m. Y.M.C.A. Institute. Mrs. Blanco-White, "Problems of Social Insurance." Chair: Mrs. Currie, M.A., President.

Edinburgh S.E.C. OCTOBER 26. Drawing-room Meeting. Mrs. Blanco-White, "Social Insurance." Edinburgh Women's Luncheon Club, Mackie's Restaurant, Princes Street. 1 p.m. Mrs. Blanco-White.

Falkirk W.C.A. OCTOBER 27. 7.30 p.m. Temperance Café. Mrs. Blanco-White, "Equal Franchise."

## SIX POINT GROUP.

OCTOBER 25. 5 p.m. 92 Victoria Street, S.W. 1. Miss Chave Collisson, "The Woman Citizen—Realism in Politics." Chair: Mrs. Bruce Dick.

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SECOND-HAND CLOTHING wanted to buy for cash; costumes, skirts, boots, underclothes, curtains, lounge suits, trousers, and children's clothing of every description; parcels sent will be valued and cash sent by return.—Mrs. Russell, 200 Raby Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. (Stamped addressed envelope for reply.)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Members' Library. Books on Suffrage, Sociology and Economics, Hansard, latest Government Publications, Periodicals, Newsclippings. 10-8 (except Saturdays).

EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1 (new address), repairs and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Registration: Employers, 2s. 6d.; workers, 1s. Suiting fee: Employers, 7s. 6d.; workers, 2s. (Victoria 5940.)

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 21st October. 3.30, Prof. Delisle Burns, M.A. "Marriage." 6.30, Maude Royden: "Our Mistakes."

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