

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Bill.

We refer to the great triumph of the second reading of this Bill in our leading article. Its ultimate and early success seems to be universally assumed, and to listen to last week's debate, at which the only dissenting voices were those whom the *Daily News* dubs the "Ten Tough Tories" was a fine and moving experience for old suffragists. The amendments which have so far been sent in refer to: (1) The scale of election expenses, proposals being made that the maximum should be fixed at either 6d. or 4d. for rural and urban areas respectively, or 5d. or 3½d.; (2) the extension of plural voting in the Bill. This is being objected to by both Liberal and Labour parties, who are putting down amendments which will delete Section (c) of Clause I, which gives the vote to the husband or wife of a person entitled to be registered in respect of business premises. The Labour party has a further amendment, which will limit the holder of a dwelling-house qualification and any other qualification to one vote, instead of two as provided in the Bill. The Labour party will also move an amendment to the provision with respect to the register of electors. The Bill proposes that the register should be made next year and continue in force until October, 1930. The proposal is that it should remain in force until October, 1929, that is, for six months instead of eighteen.

The 135 Conservative Members of Parliament.

With regard to the division on the Second Reading of the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Bill, we read in *The Times* of 3rd April that "there has been a good deal of criticism in certain quarters of the fact that 135 Conservative Members were absent from the division on the second reading of the Franchise Bill. It is known, however, that thirty-three of them were abroad, that fifteen were ill, that thirteen were speaking in the country, and that eighteen others had asked for pairs in favour of the Bill, but could not be accommodated owing to the limited numbers of the Opposition. This leaves only fifty-six unaccounted for, and it is certain that a number of these left the House of Commons before the division took place, confident that the opponents would not show their numerical weakness by challenging a division."

Lord Cave.

Lord Cave, whose death last week followed closely upon the news of his retirement from the Lord Chancellorship, was a statesman whose work and political personality aroused little passionate enthusiasm and no enmity. We, for our part, have occasion to remember him not only as the Coalition Home Secretary who piloted the Representation of the People Act

through the House of Commons in 1918, at a time when Women's Suffrage was borne forward on a swollen tide of public opinion, but also as a man who professed allegiance to Women's Suffrage during those earlier years when it was not a popular cause. In these days of public approval it is with peculiar affection that we remember our earlier friends.

The Cause of Peace.

While our publicists contrive to threaten us with the horrors of the next war, the cause of peace, of world organization to prevent war, moves slowly onwards. Perhaps it moves too slowly, and many of those who read this note are doomed to be choked in gas-masks or stricken by some skilfully disseminated germ. But it does move. The negotiations between Mr. Kellogg and M. Briand continue. France states that she is prepared to join with the United States in offering to Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Japan an agreement "condemning recourse to war as an instrument of national policy, or in other words as a means of carrying out their own spontaneous independent policy." The details of this agreement, the procedure to be adopted, remain to be settled, but even if, with the army of the United States in Nicaragua, we cannot take a very hopeful view of such treaties, it is something that the negotiations have not broken down. In the meantime there is the good news that Spain is rejoining the League of Nations. She was invited back by the nations composing the League in a friendly and cordial message, to which she returned an answer in terms of the greatest frankness and goodwill. She will be welcomed not only for herself, but for the good work done in the past by her representative, Señor Guñones de Leon. This being so, it is probably not a bad thing that she went. It has shown that the League can stand unshaken even by the defection of a European Power, and that it has certainly lost neither in prestige nor importance since the Spanish Government temporarily resigned from it. Brazil has also been invited to return, but considerations of local politics make it doubtful whether she is yet prepared to do so.

American Women and World Peace.

The women of Europe, constantly reminded as they are by their Lord Birkenheads that their social status is still definitely below that of men, that they are in fact mere conduit-pipes in the social structure, are sometimes inclined to resent the startling social pre-eminence achieved by American women. For our part we welcome it for a variety of reasons, some noble, some inspired merely by the spirit of liking to get a little of one's own back. Among the more respectable of these reasons is the fact that the attitude of American women has undoubtedly influenced American politicians in cutting down their original naval programme. Another is that under the presidency of Mrs. Chapman Catt a meeting of 900 women delegates has just met in Washington to discuss "The Cause and Cure of War." The organizations who sent representatives are stated to have a membership of over ten million, and the conference was avowedly pacifist. The Secretary of War and Rear-Admiral Frank Schofield, appearing for the Secretary of the Navy, both spoke, "urging strong defensive measures as the best preventive of war." In spite of their eloquence a resolution was passed deploring the policy of increased armaments. A letter was also sent to President Coolidge urging him to reopen negotiations for the entrance of the United States into the World Court. This, if we may say so, sets us a good example. Great Britain is one of the only three countries in the world who are spending far more on armaments than they were spending twenty years ago. Would that ten million Englishwomen could make the heads of the War Office and the Admiralty feel that they had better appear before our representatives in order to tell us why!

Mrs. Sidney Webb.

On Wednesday of last week the Fabian Women's Group entertained Mrs. Webb to a dinner in honour of her seventieth birthday. In a reminiscent mood, she spoke afterwards on the early days of the Fabian Society, referring in passing to John Morley's description of herself as "able—but not charming." Well—Mrs. Webb's friends and acquaintances may cherish their own opinions on that score, but, at any rate, the feelings which centred round the above-mentioned ceremony were not wholly explicable in terms of objective homage to "a vortex of pure thought." Meanwhile—this year marks the passage of Mr. Sidney Webb's seventieth birthday also, and an influential all-party committee with Sir Josiah Stamp as its treasurer, has a plan on foot for the painting of a portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Webb, to be hung ultimately in the founders' room at the London School of Economics. There could, of course, be no more suitable place for it, since the School of Economics is an institution largely of their creation. One might go a step further and say that the subjects studied there have to a large extent reached their present phase because of the work of Mr. and Mrs. Webb. The world of newspaper readers may know them primarily as indefatigable and importunate administrative reformers. The world of economic and historical study knows them primarily as scholars of pre-eminent worth. They have constructed the history of English Local Government in all its multitudinous and intricate branches, they have indicated its currents and given it form and meaning. They have done the same for two other subjects (each a life's work in itself), trade unionism and co-operation. They have been more than any other contemporary thinkers responsible for bending the method of statistical investigation to the remaking of economic science, and in so doing they have carried the whole body of economic thought a step further than Adam Smith carried it when he gave it the unity of first principles and deductive reasoning. Students may well stand in awe before work so distinguished in quality and so gigantic in quantity. Feminists (however little Mrs. Webb may sympathize with their gratification) may well applaud the fact that one-half of the partnership which has produced such work is feminine.

Women's Sphere.

The controversy about women doctors has raised the old question of woman's education and her sphere. Correspondents have written to *The Times* complaining that the women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge insist on their students passing practically the same entrance examinations as men's colleges—to wit, examinations in subjects which consist of "book-learning"—whereas, in their opinion, women university students should concern themselves with the problems of housing and food. The President of the Association of Head Mistresses has replied at length, explaining that Head Mistresses are trying to teach their pupils "housecraft." Personally we should have liked to see an answer on altogether more pugnacious lines. To begin with, universities are places for specialists in "book-learning." People who do not care for it have most of the planet left to flourish on. Secondly, as soon as "housecraft" becomes more than unpaid housekeeping, it is no more a woman's concern than a man's. As soon as a decent wage or salary is paid for any part of it, from engineering to cooking, a man may be found drawing that salary, and we shall not in fact get the houses and towns we want until we have rubbed the importance of these questions not into women students who happen to have a turn for Latin verse, but into male Town Clerks and building contractors and their male staffs. Women own practically none of the wealth of the country, and when plans on a large scale have to be drawn up or carried out, it is the control of large aggregates of wealth that counts and not the handling of tiny weekly sums. Thirdly, before woman's opinion about housing is going to carry weight in this world, women's opinion must carry weight as such. And this state can only be achieved—has only been achieved so far—by women showing that they can equal man in the things he does respect or pretends to respect, things such as book-learning and aviation. Fourthly housecraft is neither a science nor an art, but a useful hotch-potch. Anybody who wishes to can in fact in a few months learn to be an efficient housekeeper. To waste on this the years of a university education is treason to learning.

An Easter Offering.

We referred last week to the useful debate on the mining areas which took place in the House of Commons. *The Times* has since published three articles on the coalfield in South Wales,

which throw light on many points raised in the debate. In the last of these articles which are from a source which no one can question, after discussion of remedies the following significant sentences occur: "There remains the immediate need, for to-day men and women are starving; not starving outright, but gradually wasting away through lack of nourishment." We cannot allow this state of affairs at this happy Eastertide to continue without at least some effort to help our fellow citizens both in Wales and in the Northern Counties. Some of our readers have no doubt already done what they can; others will contribute through agencies known to them. For those who are at a loss as to where to send their help we have decided ourselves to receive any gifts of money which may be sent to us. These we will duly acknowledge and distribute through existing non-party organizations to the best of our ability. If those who can spare clothes and especially boots which are urgently needed for men, women, and children will write to us, we will undertake to provide them with suitable addresses to which parcels may be sent. We fully realize that relief is only a palliative, and we believe that the time has come for drastic measures. But we cannot meantime harden our hearts to actual suffering that is undisputed, and we believe that our readers will respond with their usual liberality to our appeal.

The Lord Mayor's Appeal.

After the above note was printed, we read with satisfaction that a joint appeal for a public fund has been issued. We have no liking for Lord Mayor's Funds, and had hoped they were now almost obsolete, but the present crisis is no ordinary one, and it is right that London should join with Cardiff and Newcastle-on-Tyne in this way; the generous lead given by the King and Queen will be followed, we believe, by a practical expression of sympathy from every class in the community. Our readers will in all probability send their offerings direct to this public fund, but any gifts received direct by us will be forwarded at once.

More Room for the Women M.P.s.

Critics of the more homely aspects of political life have recently called attention to one aspect of the increasing direct representation of women in the House of Commons. It appears that each new woman M.P., as she arrives in the House, is required to take up her quarters in the Lady Members' Room, originally allotted to the use of Lady Astor and Mrs. Wintringham, and adapted for the special needs of two persons. The London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* describes it as having a single peg for coat-hanging and an inadequate number of chairs. In one sense the rapid overcrowding of this significant little room is a matter of great satisfaction to us. We should be glad to learn that it had become impossible for Lady Members to sit down in it, owing to the surrounding pressure of their multitudinous colleagues. Nevertheless, there is much to be said for anticipating such pressure by the more equitable allocation of available space.

The Local Elections.

The local elections will be over by the time this paper is published. As our Local Government Correspondent pointed out in her article last week, there is still a great lack of interest in the elections for urban district councils. Our records show that 125 women were nominated for these Councils, and in Alderley Edge, Colville, Esher and Dittons, and Penrith women stood for the first time. In Bexington the Women Citizens' Association supported a woman candidate, and at Chingford and Dorking the candidates included Miss Mathieson and Miss Florence Douglas, J.P., who both stood for re-election. Miss Douglas, who was the first woman to be elected to the Dorking Council in 1922, has been Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, in addition to serving on the Housing, Finance, Regional and Town Planning, and Technical Education. For the first time in its history a woman was nominated to the Glendale Rural District Council.

Greater Coventry.

Like Brighton, Coventry has extended its boundaries and the elections for the larger council have resulted in the return of four women—an increase of two on the old council. The women candidates were all nominees of the Labour Party, and in two wards they headed the polls.

AYES 387 ; NOES 10.

Thursday, 29th March, 1928, was a red letter day in the Women's Movement. Just over ten years ago the third great measure of franchise reform which for the first time included women, was successfully piloted through the House of Commons by the then Home Secretary, Lord Cave, who died only a few hours before the memorable debate which inaugurated the final extension of his great franchise reform measure.

Those whose memories extend to past debates on the same subject must have been struck last Thursday by the changes which the years have brought. Some of the leaders of the pre-war movement were there. Dame Millicent, in spirit if not in the body, and her marconigram "Hallilujah" seemed to reach us from Jerusalem in an incredibly short time. Mrs. Pankhurst was present in the Ladies Gallery—no longer an outlaw but a prospective candidate for the next General Election in the Conservative interest. Mr. Pethick Lawrence was now to be seen in his place on the Opposition benches. Seven women cast their votes in favour of the second reading and four took part in the debate (the eighth woman, the Duchess of Atholl, once, as the Prime Minister confessed of himself an "anti," would have voted with them but was out of the country). The galleries were crowded with relays of women, many of them potential voters, who wondered what the "grille" could have been like. The wives of the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary and of other Cabinet Ministers mixed with representatives of Suffrage organizations in the Speaker's Gallery. How respectable, if not fashionable, the once despised Cause has become!

But the great difference between this and second readings of past Suffrage history lay not in those outward and visible symbols of the march of time, but in the general atmosphere above all in the tone of the debate. The Home Secretary himself struck the right keynote in his admirable speech when he claimed that this Bill was the logical conclusion of a series of Reform Bills beginning with that of 1832. The speeches in favour of the Bill which followed were wholly in tune with this attitude of conscious and confident rectitude. There was a complete absence of the half apologetic approval or the passionate appeal of past rhetorical efforts. For the most part, with the exception of Lady Astor, the participants in the debate on the Government side were hitherto unknown to us. Our tried and trusted friends were content to let others do the talking, reflecting no doubt as they listened on the whirligig of time.

The speakers from the Labour benches were those we would ourselves have selected: Mr. Philip Snowden, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Parliamentary friends of long standing to whom the Movement owes more than ever can be told; Mr. Pethick Lawrence who was part and parcel of the campaign before he was in a position to champion the cause on the floor of the House; Miss Ellen Wilkinson, at one time a worker for the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies, who spoke with real feeling; Mr. Adamson, always a loyal supporter, and Miss Margaret Bondfield. The Liberals were disappointing. Mr. Lloyd George was in his place for a short time and remained to cast his vote, but he did not raise his voice. We regretted this, for we cannot forget that he was Prime Minister when the Coalition Government gave the first instalment of the vote. Mrs. Runciman, the second woman to be returned to Parliament in the Liberal party, was in her place, and we hoped that she would take advantage of this singularly appropriate occasion for her maiden speech. But no, she sat silent. Major Owen and the only other Liberal speaker gave carping rather than enthusiastic support, and we would willingly have imported Sir John Simon or Mrs. Wintringham to give utterance the whole-hearted support of less Laodicean members of the party.

But perhaps the most significant change of all must be found

JERUSALEM, 1928.

By DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT, G.B.E.

I was thinking of you all very much yesterday and wishing well to your great Queen's Hall meeting; one of my hopes was that it might be the last our great group of Societies will ever have to hold. It was a unique occasion in many respects, especially that you had as your principal speaker the Prime Minister during his reign as First Lord of the Treasury. We get telegraphic news day by day of great events taking place at home, so I hope I may hear something of your meeting before we get your letters and the home newspapers.

The great event here of the week which is just closing is the Exhibition of Palestine Arts and Crafts. It was held in the

in the attitude of those who opposed the measure. To begin with—was there ever before in Parliamentary history a second reading of a Government Bill in which the sole opposition came from the Government benches? Time-honoured arguments against women in politics were conspicuously absent. Each one of the small remnant of past hosts of antagonists endeavoured to make it plain that they were certainly not opposed to the enfranchisement of women. The mover of the amendment declared he was a feminist—a better feminist than the Home Secretary, because he had defended the cause of women police (we gave him due credit for this white spot in his record in our note "Seven Black Sheep" last week). The arguments on which they based their opposition were various: the absence of a mandate; the inequality in the relative numbers of the sexes which would result from the proposed extensions; the failure of the Government to summon a conference of the three parties; the difficulties of an increased franchise without a redistribution scheme; the effect of the increase of women voters on the Mohammedan population of the world, and the grave danger of breaking up the Conservative Party on what was only a personal, not a Party pledge, and so on. Sir Charles Osman referred to the publications of the "Equal Citizenship Society," which had reprinted "pledges" and pleaded that though printed in the *Morning Post*, such printed matter did not constitute a pledge.

But it is pleasanter to pass from the futile and half-hearted protests from a few Jem Jays to the crowning events of an eventful day. As usual Lady Astor flashed gleams of light into the gloom of overlong speeches and her own speech was a gem of the first water. Lady Iveagh made a neat retort to Major Cockerill's argument that the higher the organism the more difficult to rear when she reminded him of the scientific fact of the survival of the fittest. Miss Wilkinson told a story of a boy who reproved by his father for being beaten by a mere girl said "girls were not so mere as they used to be." Two of the youngest members of the House, one Sir Hugh Lucas Tooth, not yet 25, chivalrously supported the claims of the young woman. It was rumoured that the Prime Minister was to close the debate about 10.30 p.m. (it began before 4 p.m.), and as the hour approached the House filled up and a subtle change in the atmosphere took place. Mr. Baldwin's speech raised the whole debate to a higher plane; it will rank as one of the great speeches on the subject, which will go down to history. He began by a quiet statement of the reasons which led him to abandon the idea of a conference. The Speaker had, he said, intimated to him that in view of the fact that party controversies had been renewed since 1918, he would prefer not to preside at a second conference. The Government therefore decided to fulfil their pledge as to equal franchise, literally, unencumbered by other considerations such as redistribution. On the single point of the vote for women on the same terms as for men "there was nothing to confer about." After granting generous absolution to the members of his party who felt it their duty to oppose the Bill, Mr. Baldwin, speaking with real sincerity and feeling, summed up the overwhelming case for women's claim to Equal Citizenship. He concluded with a telling reference to the comparison in the *Æneid* between the work of Vulcan in forging the shield of *Æneas* "with all its promise of the greatness of Rome" and the work of the women in the home who like the Fire-god rose early and worked late. "To-night," he said, "marks the final stage in the union of men and women working together for the regeneration of their country and the regeneration of the world." The dramatic effect when the Prime Minister sat down, amid loud cheers, in which the occupants of the galleries found it difficult not to join, was slightly marred by a last futile effort on the part of the opposition, listened to with obvious impatience. But it only lasted a moment. "The House divided: Ayes 387; Noes 10."

Citadel, which next to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Dome of the Rock is the most celebrated and the most picturesque of the antiquities of the city: within its wonderful walls are contained the Towers of David and Hippicus; just outside it and leading up to it are the stone steps from which Lord Allenby proclaimed the British victory in December, 1917, and from which he promised liberty for and goodwill towards all the inhabitants, not only of the city but of Palestine at large. He and his successors have well kept this promise. It is well known that one of Lord Allenby's first public actions was to bring into the city a good supply of fresh spring water.

Up to this time Jerusalem had been dependent for its water on what fell as rain and could be stored in tanks and pools. His second public action was to start a British High School for Girls, comparable in its scope and thoroughness to our High Schools at home. I believe this action to be unique of its kind; anyway, I never heard of any other victorious general who celebrated his triumph in a similar fashion. This High School has been an immense success. It is well attended by all the numerous races and creeds which form the population of Jerusalem; when I first visited it in 1921 the pupils were representative of eleven different races. It has promoted the well-being of the whole population, for I am told that not the least of its good results has been its appreciation by Moslem young men, who when they reach the marriageable age not infrequently ask their fathers to select a wife for them from among the girls of the famous school; for they are beginning to hope for a wife who will be their companion and friend.

But to go back to the Exhibition: It is comparable in its excellence and variety to most of the Women's Institutes at home. Every district in Palestine, seventeen in all, is represented in it, many by their Mayor and in every case by its leading man or woman. Lady Plumer, the wife of the High Commissioner, is Chairman of the Central Committee, and the Exhibition itself was opened by Lord Plumer in an excellent and very practical speech. The work exhibited is extremely various in character, for nearly every district has its own specialty in production and the quality of the articles exhibited can only be described by the word "first rate." The variety shown is very remarkable, almost every district has its special industry. Hebron, for instance, specializes in fine leather, glass, and pottery; Haifa in basket work of exquisite quality and beauty; Ramallah in fine and dainty needlework; Gaza, Beersheba, and Jerusalem in carpets and rugs. The prices were all marked in plain figures and five per cent of the purchase fund will be added to the Earthquake Fund as well as all profits made in the result of the gate money taken for entrance to the Exhibition. The number, variety, and first-rate workmanship of the exhibits have called forth great admiration. One feature of the arrangements made illustrate one of the difficulties inherent in the government of a Moslem country. On the outside of the catalogue is printed in conspicuous type "On Tuesday, March 6th, from 9.30 a.m. till 12.30 p.m., Ladies only will be Admitted." This was, of course, necessary to encourage the attendance of Moslem ladies and doubtless it had this desired effect, for Tuesday morning was one of the most crowded days on which the exhibition was open.

Our members will, I think, want to hear something about the earthquake and its result. The suffering from the one which took place last summer is by no means over; and there was another, of a much milder type, very shortly before our arrival. We heard details of this from our kind hostess, Miss Nixon. She was sitting at home towards evening in her pleasant Arab-built house, with walls from 4 to 6 feet thick, when her front door bell rang violently. She went to the door herself and found no one: the bell had been rung by the earthquake. She then proceeded to shut her door, and bending forward for the purpose her head was precipitated through the glass of which the door was in part formed. It was not for a few seconds that she realized that this assault and battery was also due to the earthquake. Not a very pleasant experience; but a bearable one when one remembers how much worse it might have been.

(Continued from next column.)

essayists appear to draw it—that the safest and soundest channel for the dissemination of birth control information to those who desire it and are not already in touch with medical opinion, is the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.

In the second of our publications, a small comprehensive general statement of the case for birth control teaching written by a medical man drawing upon his own practical experiences,¹ we have the simple, unsentimental exposition for which we have long waited. It sets forth with commendable lucidity principles for the practical guidance of those who desire to limit their families. At the same time it may be commended to intelligent critics of birth control as an authoritative and measured statement of the case which they are criticizing. Many disastrous malpractices might be avoided and many confusing misapprehensions removed by its wide circulation.

M. D. S.

¹ *Parenthood: Design or Accident*, by Michael Fielding. (Labour Publishing Co. Cloth, 2s. 6d.; paper, 1s.)

BETTER GUIDANCE FROM DOCTORS.

"The public has a right to better guidance from doctors than it gets at present in this matter." In commenting thus upon the present position of the birth control controversy the *Church Times* reflected with perfect precision the feelings of a very large section of the British public. The medical profession has been lamentably slow to take up the challenge—partly no doubt from a conservative reluctance to fit the developments on a new and experimental technique into the crowded curricula of the medical schools, partly from a subconscious resentment at the impetuosity of non-medical advocates in taking the initiative with public propaganda. But there are on all hands signs that this initiative is now passing into the hands of those best qualified to inspire public confidence on a medical matter. Some of these signs: the publication of a remarkably judicial report by an *ad hoc* medical committee, and the formation of a permanent body for the prosecution of scientific research, we have already remarked in an earlier review. But further signs are multiplying, and two recent publications add to their number.

The first is a collection of essays¹ by various authors, all (with one exception) medical men and women, and all in varying degrees enthusiastic advocates of birth control. Their value lies in the fact that the bulk of their writers have had practical experience in the teaching and supervision of birth control methods, and thus write with a certain authority which is not attributable to many of those who oppose such teaching. The quality of the essays is exceedingly unequal, ranging from the direct and convincing technical expositions of the Senior Obstetric Surgeon of Guy's Hospital, and Dr. Maude Kerslake, down to the signally infelicitous and inaccurate sociological diatribe of Sir James Barr, replete with such indefensible assertions as that the country is "living largely on accumulated capital". It is doubtless conducive to the abundance and variety of human development that cobblers should be on the whole disinclined to "stick to their lasts". But those who crave an expert medical judgment upon the pros and cons and possibilities of birth control are inclined to be grateful to the medical opponent who forswears an incursion into theology, and to the medical advocate who leaves economic considerations to economists and statisticians.

One or two of the essays provoke definite queries. Professor Maxwell Telling of the University of Leeds asserts that the Roman Catholic Church "puts a ban upon all methods of birth control except total abstinence". This needs qualification, for it is well known that many members of the Priesthood have so far compromised the Catholic case against family limitation as to advise in many individual cases the restriction of marital intercourse to periods of the monthly cycle which are likely to prove infertile. This, as will be readily seen, represents a very important compromise of ethical principle, since it concedes the case that sex relations may be undertaken without the intention of, or desire for procreation. The Catholic opposition is thus narrowed down to a somewhat arbitrary opposition to certain particular methods of family limitation which it chooses to label as "artificial" or "unnatural". Another query is provoked by the same essayist's confident assertion that knowledge of contraceptive methods is unlikely to have any influence upon the readiness of unmarried persons to indulge in illicit relationships. To question this assertion is not to support the contention that fear is a desirable or worthy instrument for the discouragement of immorality, or that their existence is a greater evil than those which result in other spheres of life from the inadequate dissemination of knowledge. It is merely to suggest that the experience of Professor Telling does not coincide with that of other observers, and that his case in this particular respect is non-proven.

Taken together, these essays constitute a useful contribution to the literature of the subject, and if it is possible to draw a collective conclusion from them it is that a number of responsible and experienced medical practitioners are prepared to support the conclusion set forth in an earlier and more closely co-ordinated work: *Medical Aspects of Contraception*, that certain methods of contraception, carefully practised under medical guidance, are physiologically harmless and fairly efficacious. With this conclusion goes the further implication that many methods practised at the present time, ignorantly, secretly and desperately, are harmful to body and mind alike. From these two conclusions a third may be drawn—and our assembled

(Continued at foot of previous column.)

¹ *Medical Help on Birth Control*. (G. P. Putnam and Sons, Ltd. 6s.)

A MARRIAGE IN 1830.

THE SEMI-ATTACHED COUPLE. By The Hon. Emily Eden, with an Introduction by John Gore. The Rescue Series. Elkin Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d. net.

It is a good idea on the part of an enterprising publisher to re-issue some of the lost novels of long ago. There may be buried literary treasures amongst them. At the very least they will give us fresh knowledge about the social habits of other days. Readers of the *WOMAN'S LEADER* will find a special interest in them, for novels are the best source of information about women's lives in past times, and this is a matter about which we are always eager to know more. The *Semi-Attached Couple* is specially valuable because it deals with a period later than Jane Austen's and earlier than that of the Brontës and George Eliot. Its author, the Hon. Emily Eden, was born in 1797—twenty-two years later than Jane. She began to write this book about 1830, and when she published it, which was not till 1860, she said in her introduction that it was a picture of the England of her youth.

No one will like the *Semi-Attached Couple* or Emily Eden any the less when they realize that *Pride and Prejudice* has to some extent served as a model. Emily is quite frank about it. She makes her little Eliza Douglas write to ask her mother if she may read it, saying that it "looks very tempting," and describes her surroundings when she is staying away as "quite as amusing as one of Jane Austen's novels." The Douglas family, with the quiet sardonic father and the second-rate silly mother, are perhaps modelled upon the Bennets, but Mrs. Douglas is more definitely ill-natured than Mrs. Bennet, and Eliza is more like Catherine Morland than Elizabeth Bennet.

She goes to stay with an aristocratic family whose youngest daughter Helen is the real heroine of the book. Thereafter the reader is kept in rather more aristocratic circles than those in Jane Austen's novels. In fact the book is about a set of people once comprehensively described by a censorious acquaintance of my parents as "Lords and Colonels and other bad men." One is rather sorry that one hears comparatively little about Eliza. The letters home from her that are given are charming. One has a postscript as follows:—

"Please mention what papa's politics are. They talk a great deal about Government and Opposition, and I do not know what I am for."

The development of the book is in some ways rather disappointing, especially if one has been for a moment misled into comparing it with any of Jane's. Emily has no such gift for story-telling, and many of her characters peter out. But Helen herself, the semi-attached bride, remains very real and very charming, and one is led to go on to the end by affection for her. She is not unlike Anne Elliot. Only instead of having been over-persuaded into marrying a man she did love, she had been over-persuaded into marrying a man she did not quite love. The description of the poor girl's vain efforts to make her family understand her sudden dread of her over-passionate, jealous, umbrageous lover, and let her draw back from the marriage even at the eleventh hour, are very well done. They see only that he is a magnificent *parti*, a man of high character, and desperately in love. The marriage takes place, and the ill-suited couple are soon as unhappy as their diverse temperaments can make them. Lord Teviot's jealousy of Helen's intense love for her own family is again very naturally described. She cannot understand it, and all her endeavours to be the good, helpful wife, she feels she ought to be, only exasperate him because they are not the passion he craves for. The same capacity for deep faithful affection that made her so devoted to her family, make her cling to him, now that he is her husband. Gradually her love teaches her to understand his passion, and when illness and misfortune fall upon him she has the opportunity of showing him what she feels. So they are drawn together, and the book ends happily, though, as Helen is still only eighteen or nineteen and Lord Teviot is still the same man, the happiness does not seem very secure.

In spite of its obvious defects this is a very delightful book, and one cannot but be grateful to those who have rescued it.

I. B. O'MALLEY.

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LEGAL AID FOR THE POOR IN CIVIL CASES.

We return to this subject this week to discuss the proposal made by the minority of the Committee which presented its final Report last January. The proposal is that Local Authorities (either singly or in co-operation) should be empowered to appoint a qualified person to give legal advice to poor people. The signatories of the Minority Report (Mr. Rhys Davies and Miss D. Jewson) compare this suggested official with a Medical Officer of Health, and propose that the National Exchequer should contribute a grant-in-aid of his salary and also that the State should lay down the terms and conditions governing his appointment and duties. These latter would only be to advise and not to undertake the conduct of cases in Court.

The majority of the Committee throw much cold water on these proposals. They say they "would be distinctive of the peculiar relationship between solicitor and client which has in this country existed for so long and to the maintenance of which we attach importance." The relationship is certainly peculiar, not to say non-existent, when, as at present, innumerable would-be clients are unable to consult any solicitor at all because of their inability to pay him. Nor can anxiety as to the expense which is being incurred at each interview and with every letter coupled with inability to meet it contribute to very pleasant relationships at any rate on the side of the client. The majority of the Committee appear to think that for poor persons the choice is between an official legal adviser and a private solicitor; they do not seem to grasp the fact that for vast numbers of people the choice is between an official or philanthropic legal adviser or none at all.

The majority point out what appears to them to be a difficulty; "how awkward would be the situation if there were a dispute between two persons each of whom was entitled to the advice and assistance of the local municipal or State solicitor." There need not be awkwardness if the adviser were simply to inform the inquirer of the law on the point at issue and of the courses which were open to him to pursue. For example, if two rival claimants for the same house were each to ask his advice he could inform each of them of their rights under the Rent Restriction Acts and what would be the procedure if the case were taken into Court. Or if in a matrimonial dispute a husband and wife were each to ask his advice he could inform each of them on what grounds a separation can be sought and what is involved by the legal terms which are used. Of course, it is not pretended that this information is the same thing as the assistance which a solicitor gives his client, but at the same time it would be an enormous boon to the poor if they could obtain it. It is obvious that the situation is quite different as the Minority Report expressly says that it would be no part of a legal adviser's work to conduct in Court any case on which he had given advice. If he were to do this of course he could no longer remain impartial; it would become his duty to bring out the strong points in his own case and to expose the weak ones of the other side. The point is that every one ought to be able to find out what are his rights before the law, apart from the question of whether the case is to be taken into Court or not. A person may be influenced in this latter decision by his want of means to pay the Court fees and also those of a solicitor to conduct the case; to meet this the Minority Report suggests that the Registrar of the County Court should be empowered to remit the fees and to provide free legal assistance, "if he were satisfied that the case was one in which the applicant should properly receive such assistance, and was unable to pay for it." It also asks that the Poor Persons Rules should similarly be extended to Petty Sessions and that Magistrates should have power to refer poor persons to that Committee in Civil Cases which come before them.

The alternatives to this proposal for an official legal adviser are either to continue as we are with many poor persons needing legal assistance and unable to obtain it, or to trust to such an extension of Poor Men's Lawyers as to bring legal assistance within reach of the whole community. Judging from the slow growth of Poor Men's Lawyers in the past it seems quite hopeless to rely on the latter alternative, and no right-minded person can be satisfied with the former. It is quite right that any new proposal involving the expenditure of public money should be keenly criticized and the objections to it carefully examined. One would at least like to see some progressive local authority making an experiment on these lines and if it were successful then the scheme could be rapidly developed.

CLARA D. RACKHAM.

WOMEN IN MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

This letter was published in *The Times* of Friday, 30th March, 1928:—

28th March, 1928.

SIR,—We should like to support Dr. Isabel Hutton's admirable answer to Sir James Purves Stewart with regard to the closing of certain London hospitals to women students. In particular we wish to endorse her demand for the appointment of more women to the honorary staffs of hospitals; and for the employment of married women by public authorities. We also strongly support her contention that the inculcation of a scientific attitude to medical matters among men and women students, whether taught together or separately, depends on the teacher rather than on the taught.

We are writing now many of us as representatives and all of us as members of non-medical organizations of women which stand for equality of opportunity between men and women, in order to join issue with Sir James Purves Stewart on certain other points. Sir James states: "There is now ample accommodation obtainable for women students in their own special teaching hospitals." What does he mean by this? The Royal Free Hospital, the one special teaching hospital for women students only, takes approximately 300 students, and is always full. Where does Sir James suggest that the other 300—now divided among those hospitals which intend to exclude women—should in future be trained?

We are not concerned so much with arguing whether or no co-education in medicine is desirable, though for the reasons put forward by Dr. Hutton we warmly appreciate its advantages. Our concern is with the need for an adequate number of training places. It is obviously uneconomic to suggest the building of a new hospital when Sir James does not appear to suggest that there is no room for women in the existing fine medical schools of London.

We further wish to point out that on the part of the women of the country there is already a large and a growing desire to have women as doctors, while the need for more British women doctors in India brooks no delay. These demands cannot be satisfied unless a sufficient number of women are trained. We speak, further, as representatives of the women taxpayers and subscribers who contribute towards the hospitals, and demand in return for our contributions women should be concerned with the management of hospitals, women patients should have the opportunity of being treated by women doctors, and finally that women students should have facilities as adequate as have men students for the purposes of training.

We are, Sir, yours faithfully,
MARGERY CORBETT ASHBY.
NANCY ASTOR.
DOROTHY BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH.
ELEANOR BARTON,
Women's Co-operative Guild.
ELIZABETH MACADAM,
*National Union of Societies
for Equal Citizenship.*
RHONDDA.

NORTHERN IRELAND COMES INTO LINE.

The following letter has been received by Miss Eleanor Rathbone from the Hon. Secretary of the Belfast Women Citizens' Union:—

DEAR MISS RATHBONE,—On behalf of the above Union I would like to convey to you, and the National Union of Societies of Citizenship the warmest congratulations on the introduction of the Equal Franchise Bill in the Imperial Parliament. It gives us very much pleasure that the final stage in the long agitation for the enfranchisement for women on equal terms as men, should be reached during your term as president. It is most gratifying that the leaders who have done so much for the cause in earlier and more difficult times should see the result of their work.

The Women's Organizations in Northern Ireland owe a special debt of gratitude to the N.U.S.E.C. for its unceasing efforts to secure Equal Franchise, since they were entirely dependent on the success of the British measure for the introduction of similar legislation into the Parliament of Northern Ireland.

Please accept our good wishes for the success of all the valuable work for which the National Union is responsible.

E. S. MONTGOMERY,
Hon. Secretary, Belfast Women Citizens' Union.
2 College Square, Belfast.

CHILD WELFARE THROUGH THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

We reported a fortnight ago on the meeting of the Traffic in Women Committee of the League of Nations Advisory Commission for the Protection of Children and Young Persons. Since then the Child Welfare Committee of the same body has been in session, the two committees having the same Government representatives, but a different set of assessors. The Child Welfare section both gains and loses by the greater width and vagueness of its scope. An embarrassing wealth of subjects offer themselves as bearing directly on the welfare of children, and as the claims of each are urged by different members, it becomes difficult for the Committee to give adequate attention to any in the course of a week's sittings. This year an inordinate amount of time was spent in discussing the employment of a sum of money offered three years ago by the American Association for Social Hygiene to defray the cost of a special inquiry into some subjects within the sphere of social hygiene. As defined by the Association's representative, this term covers all questions bearing on the right or wrong use of sex and the subject specially designated by the Association as suitable for inquiry was that of "biological education," i.e. teaching about sex. Unfortunately the use of these euphemistically vague expressions, adopted probably out of deference to the delicacy of the Latin countries, served only to mislead them as to the purpose of the gift and not at all to reconcile them to it when made plain. The usual cleavage manifested itself between the standards of Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and German countries, on the one hand, and of Latin countries on the other. The former group gave way, as was inevitable. An innocuous use was devised for the American gift and the ears of French, Italian, and Spanish children are to remain uncontaminated, so far as the labours of this Committee are concerned, by knowledge regarding the function of their own bodies. But do these children, one speculates, never cast an eye upon the literature of sex, so abundantly and cheaply provided by the bookstalls of their respective countries? The chief task of the above Child Welfare Committee was to discuss numerous reports submitted to it during the year either by the Secretariat or by its own members, or by the Health Section of the International Labour Office. The subjects covered included the protection and repatriation of abandoned children and the execution in foreign countries of maintenance orders on their behalf—subjects on which two draft conventions are being prepared; the age of marriage and of consent (the age of marriage being another *question delicate* to the Latin countries; the use and abuse of the cinema; recreation for the young; the legal position of the illegitimate child; the effect of family allowances on children; the blind child; the effect of alcohol on children—the facts given as to the consumption of alcohol by children in some countries were startling. It was decided that although the Committee should continue the study of all these subjects during the ensuing year, the discussion at next session should be confined to a few subjects selected as specially ripe for further action.

OBITUARY.

MISS FLORENCE BALGARNIE.

The death took place in Italy on 25th March, from heart failure, of Miss Florence Balgarnie, who for nearly half a century was a well-known speaker on suffrage, temperance, and social reforms. Miss Balgarnie was born in 1856. Being unable to go to Cambridge, she studied at home and passed the local Cambridge examination. Her first public work was to organize University Extension Lectures in Scarborough, and so successful was the venture that the same method was adopted by the University elsewhere. She served for a considerable period on the Scarborough School Board, and only retired when she became the secretary of the National Women's Suffrage Society, and took up her residence in London. She held the position for six years, and then went to America as a delegate to the Women's Convention at Washington, and the First Congress of the World Women's Christian Temperance Union, from the Suffrage and British Women's Temperance Associations. She spent twelve months in the States and Canada, studying social problems of every kind, and on her return in 1892 in conjunction with Lady Aberdeen and others brought successfully the matter of women inspectors of factories and police station matrons before the Home Office. Her book *A Plea for the Appointment of Police Matrons* did a good work amongst magistrates and social reformers. She was an active member of the committee of the Women's Liberal Federation. She signed the total abstinence

(Continued on page 75.)

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P. Hon. Treasurer: Miss MACADAM.
Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HORTON.
General Secretary: Miss HANCOCK.
Offices: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.
Telephone: Victoria 6188.

EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The office will be closed from midday on Thursday, 5th April, until Wednesday, 11th April, at 9.30 a.m.

DEPUTATION TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain is receiving a deputation from the National Union on 17th April. The deputation will be led by Miss Rathbone, and will include Mrs. Blanco White, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mrs. Corbett, Miss Fulford, Mrs. Hubback, Miss Picton-Turbervill, Mrs. Ryland, and Mrs. Van Gruisen. It will put before the Minister the Union's point of view with regard to the need, under National Health Insurance for: Provision for Dependents; Medical Benefit for Dependents; Improved Maternity Benefit; Equality between Men and Women in Insurance; Married Women as Voluntary Contributors. In order to meet the financial difficulty involved in making statutory the above benefits, the deputation will suggest that the scheme for the partial pooling of surpluses recommended in the Majority Report on National Health Insurance, should be adopted.

MRS. CORBETT'S OFFER.

We are glad to be able to state that we have now received the last £25 which has enabled us to claim the final instalment of Mrs. Corbett's generous offer of £100. Mrs. Corbett stipulated that £400 should be received by us in amounts of not less than £25, and we have now secured this amount. The final £25 was collected by Mrs. Van Gruisen from some members of the Executive Committee. Further particulars will be given when we publish our next list of new subscribers and donors.

THE EQUAL FRANCHISE DEBATE.

An account of the debate on the second reading of the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Bill is given in another column. Copies of the Hansard containing the verbatim report can be obtained from Headquarters, price 7½d. post free.

Thanks to the generosity of Miss Whitley, four representatives of the National Union found places in the Speaker's Gallery for the debate, and we have to thank kind friends for tickets to other parts of the House. Unfortunately neither Dame Millicent Fawcett who was in Palestine nor Miss Rathbone, who was still abroad, were able to be present.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

BOLTON W.C.A.

The Bolton W.C.A. held a meeting of members to review the activities of the Association and to discuss its future work. Mrs. Agnew, who presided over the meeting, urged the need for the participation of women in local government and of getting women to support women, not for their own well-being only, but for the well-being of the community. Mrs. Blincoe, Secretary of the Association, suggested that an effort should be made to make women realize their duties as well as their rights as citizens. Miss Nicholson suggested an energetic campaign to get women on to public bodies.

CROYDON W.C.A., EAST DISTRICT.

Mrs. Abbott gave a very interesting address to an obviously appreciative audience on the "Responsibilities of the Vote." Mrs. Terry presided over the meeting, which was followed by a good discussion.

DURHAM S.E.C.

A large gathering of the Durham S.E.C. was held at the beginning of last month, at which Mrs. Hodson spoke on "Hereditry." The meeting was followed by several questions, and a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the speaker on the motion of Miss Hindmarch, in the absence of Miss Christopher.

EXETER S.E.C.

This Society held an interesting and well-attended meeting at the beginning of the month, at which the subject of the address was "Our Marriage Laws and their effect on the Race."

SHEFFIELD S.E.C.

At a meeting held at the end of last week to hear the report of the Annual Council meeting of the N.U.S.E.C., there was a discussion as to the future work of the branch. It was suggested that an afternoon tea-club would be a useful way of keeping members in touch with each other, and of providing suitable and frequent opportunities for discussing matters of interest to the Society.

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

A very interesting dinner to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the passing of the Representation of the People Act, 1918, was held last month under the auspices of the Glasgow S.E.C. and W.C.A. Miss Francis H. Melvill presided, and proposed the toast of "The Tenth Anniversary." The guest of honour was Mrs. Stocks, B.Sc., who proposed the "Future of the Woman's Movement."

CORRESPONDENCE.
CITIZENSHIP AND PARISH COUNCILS.

MADAM,—In referring to the Annual Parish Meetings for the election of Parish Councillors in last week's issue, Miss Bertha Mason stated: "Our returns show that meetings have been sparsely attended, little interest in the elections evoked, in many cases seats left unfilled for lack of candidates. Few women candidates. There were of course notable exceptions, and growing indications of dissatisfaction with the method of voting by show of hands, but, on the whole, little interest was taken."

In comparison with the interest taken in former elections for Parish Councillors, it can certainly be affirmed that a much greater interest has been shown in many counties. Many polls were demanded in Devonshire, and, generally speaking, "great interest was taken in the meetings held in every parish"; in the north-east of England the interest shown was indicated by the large attendance and the demands for polls in several places. In Surrey, again, several of the meetings were largely attended, and the *Dorking Advertiser* commented that "the meetings generally provoked more interest than was expected." The nominations exceeded the number of the seats in most Essex parishes, and sixteen women were elected to fifteen councils. Women were elected for the first time in the parishes of West Auckland, Belmont, and Newfield (Durham). The *Herts Advertiser*, reporting on the Parish Council Elections said: "In most of the villages the ratepayers showed a little more interest in the proceedings than at previous elections, and in many, they even went to the length of demanding a poll—and never mind the expense—rather than be content with an election on a show of hands."

A different story comes from Bedfordshire, where in most villages sparse attendances witnessed to the small interest in these triennial events. The County Council, too, is now without a woman member.

MARIAN BERRY,
N.U.S.E.C., Local Government Section.

WOMEN AS BARMAIDS.

MADAM,—In the current number of the *New Campaigner*, which is the official organ of the Temperance Council of the Christian Churches of England and Wales, there is an article headed "The Employment of Women," by the Rev. C. F. Tonks which is of considerable interest and importance.

The article refers to the unsuitability of employing young women as barmaids whether in hotels or in public houses, pointing out that alcoholic liquor and self-control are incompatible, and declaring that "the Council is pledged to the promotion of legislation for the abolition of the barmaid."

This came as a challenge to one who has heard and read a good deal lately about Equal Opportunity as between the sexes, the slogan of the N.U.S.E.C. is "A fair field and no favour," we read that what is bad for women is bad for men, and vice versa. On thinking the matter over, I remembered that there are many women who go to licensed premises and it seemed to me that some of the reasons given for exclusion of the barmaid would apply when women are being served by men, and that the proposed legislation did not go far enough. In view of the strong tendency to sensuality where intoxicating liquor is concerned, I should like to suggest that women should be served by women and men by men. If the sexes wish to have refreshment together then it should be non-alcoholic. This would point a very obvious moral. "NEW READER."

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

WOMEN POLICE.

Mr. Briant asked the Home Secretary if a report on women police has been presented to him by the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolitan area; and whether it will shortly be issued.

Sir W. Joynson-Hicks: Information regarding the work of the women police will be included as usual in the Commissioner's next Annual Report, which I hope may be ready for issue in the course of the next few weeks.

Mr. Briant: May I take it, then, that the reports in the Press as to the adverse nature of the recommendations are incorrect?

Sir W. Joynson-Hicks: The hon. Member has perhaps learned enough not to take everything that appears in the Press as Gospel.

OBITUARY.—(Continued from page 74).

pledge in 1877, and after her visit to America became a convinced Prohibitionist. She took a prominent part in the Great Veto Campaign of the North of England Temperance League in 1894, and for years was an active worker for the British Women's Temperance Association. She travelled extensively throughout Europe, America, Canada, India, Ceylon, Australia, and New Zealand.
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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, 100 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. Information Bureau, Interviews, 10 to 1, except Saturdays. Members' Centre open daily. Restaurant open to 7.30. (Not Saturdays.)

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

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