

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Milk.

The question, raised in our last issue, of why the National Food Council took no hand in the recent milk price settlement is now answered. It appears that the Food Council has been holding aloof on the ground that it is only competent to take action in the matter of consumers' prices. As the terms of the final settlement involve an additional charge to the consumer in the form of an extension of winter prices for an extra two months in the year, the Food Council will doubtless now consider itself competent to act. The public has already learned enough through official publications, concerning the trustification of the milk trade and the price policy of United Dairies, Ltd., to need some assurance from disinterested sources that this recent transfer of a distributor's charge to the consumer is really justified by the facts of the trade and the financial position of the distributive agencies. But we are inclined to fear that the Food Council is constitutionally ill-equipped to do effective battle on behalf of publicity and equity.

Equal Divorce.

Interesting figures have recently been published as to the number of divorces granted last term. Needless to say the outstanding feature of the divorces passed since the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1923, has been the increase in the number of suits brought by women on account of their husband's infidelity. The fact that infidelity alone can now be made the grounds for divorce by wives as well as by husbands has meant that, of the 700 undefended suits last term, 486 were presented by wives, and only 217 by husbands. Thus, though we have now an equal moral standard, there is apparently no equality between the sexes with regard to departures therefrom.

Lord Astor's Wills and Intestacies Bill.

During the coming session Lord Astor will be re-introducing his Wills and Intestacies (Family Maintenance) Bill, the principle of which, it will be remembered, was promoted by Lord Astor at the request of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship by means of a resolution in the House of Lords on 16th May, the summary of which is printed in another column. It is important that the points of the Bill which Lord Astor has had drafted should be carefully scrutinized by women's organizations and others during the coming weeks. It is necessarily intricate, as the subject is a complicated one, and all kinds of contingencies must be provided for. It is interesting that the Bill borrows both from Scotland and from the Dominions. It borrows from Scotland in that it lays down certain definite

requirements as to the portion of property left to spouses and children, which, if observed, prevent the will from being questioned. It follows the precedent of the Dominions in the discretionary power which it gives to the Court.

Indian Women and Education.

The question of women's education was once again pressed into the limelight of the Indian Assembly at Simla on 18th September by the unofficial motion of Mr. Chatterjee, who demanded a grant for the furtherance of girls' education and the establishment of a women teachers' training college. The motion was debated at some length, and in the course of the discussion Mr. G. S. Bajpai, Secretary for the Department of Education, offered on behalf of the Government to set up a committee of inquiry into "existing facilities for primary education for boys and girls, and the possibility of expanding them either on a voluntary or compulsory basis, with special regard to the attitude and aptitude of the local population and the necessity for providing special facilities for the untouchable communities." This committee, it was announced, would include members of the Assembly, educational experts, and a woman member. The suggestion was duly accepted by the Assembly, and we may expect that the whole tangled problem of Indian education, male and female, will shortly be brought under review. But we must confess that we regard the phrase "and a woman" as a somewhat grudging concession. Why not "women?" And why should "a woman" be thus differentiated from "educational experts?"

A Separate Electorate for Indian Women.

A memorandum has been presented to the Simon Commission "on behalf of the women of India", demanding that women representatives on public bodies should be elected by women only. The memorandum, in arguing the merits of a separate electorate for women, points out that under existing conditions it is practically impossible for women to secure election, since women voters vote largely under the direction of their husbands or of those who manage their property, that being newly released from purdah, women are unpractised in political tactics, and that the most desirable women candidates are deterred from the house to house appeals for votes which are a feature of modern elections. Frankly we do not find it easy to comment on this proposal. With the principle of separate protective measures for women voters we are in general disagreement. We would, on the whole, prefer to see women take a normal and unsheltered place in public life, even though concrete achievement may appear to come more slowly as a result. But the question of separate electorates in India arises also in connection with the religious communities, and is one of the most acutely vexed problems of Indian constitutional politics. The idea of a separate electorate for women will thus appear less revolutionary and less differentiated than it appears in a homogeneous political community such as our own. We should like to hear more of the pros and cons of the matter and of the composition of the organizations which speak for "the women of India."

The Nationality of Married Women.

A report on the codification of international law submitted to the League of Nations Assembly on Monday last, expressed the view that women should be included among the delegations to the projected conference on the subject, owing to their vital interest in its bearing on the problem of the nationality of married women. We hope that the women's organizations in the various countries to be represented will impress this fact upon their respective governments in due time before the delegations are appointed.

The Perils of De-naturalization.

On 21st September the Bombay High Court reserved judgment in the appeal of Mabel Ferris, the wife of a native of Baroda, against a magistrates' order directing her to appear in a Baroda court to answer a charge of theft brought by her husband. Our readers may remember the facts of this painful extradition case, as retailed in an earlier issue. They included the record of a threat by the husband that once in Baroda, Mabel Ferris would never leave the State alive. Meanwhile, the unfortunate woman pleads that the charge of theft has been brought from malice, and demands trial in a British Court. But the regrettable fact remains that she has become through marriage a subject of the Gaekwar of Baroda. We await with keen interest the judgment of the High Court of Bombay.

Miss Violet Markham Cuts the Cutlers.

A pretty situation confronts the Master Cutlers of Sheffield. It is their custom and their privilege to invite the Mayor of Chesterfield, *qua* Mayor, to their annual feast. But this year the Mayor of Chesterfield happens to be Miss Violet Markham. For 300 years no woman has been admitted to their feast. *Qua* woman therefore Miss Markham must be excluded. A compromise suggested itself to them, and the Mayor of Chesterfield was invited to dine simultaneously in another room, and afterwards to listen to their speeches from the gallery. She has, however, declined their invitation—very properly. *Qua* mayor and *qua* woman she has been scurvily treated.

Lichfield Moves with the Times.

The Mayor of Lichfield (Mrs. Stuart Shaw) has met with fairer treatment at the hands of the Johnson Society, whose traditions though less ancient than those of the Cutlers, are by way of being no less venerable. As it is their custom to invite the Mayor of Lichfield to their annual dinner, they pursued it, on Saturday night, undeterred by the irrelevant fact that the dignitary in question happened, for the first time in history, to be a woman. We greatly hope that Dr. Johnson was with them in the spirit.

Women and the Civil Service.

In view of the intense competition which exists for posts in the administrative class of the Civil Service it is gratifying to note the occurrence of a woman's name among the first eleven candidates who will be appointed this year to posts in the home departments. Miss Nancy Procter-Gregg has won her ninth place in a long list by hard examination work in a fair field with no favour. We hope against hope that she will encounter similar conditions in whatever government department may claim her services, and that she will live to see a day when equal pay and equal opportunities will be accorded to women civil servants. At the same time we look forward not too sceptically to the day when this country will have levelled up the conditions of entry to all its public services to a more progressive standard, and it will be possible for us to search for women's names among the diplomatic and consular examination lists as well as among those of the administrative class.

The Law of Desertion.

An interesting decision was given last Saturday in a North London police court on behalf of a wife who asked for judicial separation on the grounds of her husband's desertion. It appears that for the last two years the husband had refused to speak to his wife. Although using the same bedroom, he had denied her marital relations, and had simply used the house for rest and refreshment. The husband announced to the court that he proposed to continue this conduct as long as his wife had anything to do with her mother. Judgment was given in favour of the wife, who owned the house and furniture, as it was held that the parties were leading separate lives to such an extent that the plea of desertion was justified.

Misplaced Leniency.

We have often in these columns had occasion to draw attention to the action of Benches of Magistrates in giving adequate sentences when offences against a person, such as cruelty to children, are before them. Similar leniency is also known to exist when an employer under one of the Trades Boards or Minimum Wage Acts fails to pay his workers according to the terms of the Act, and is tried for non-compliance by a Bench consisting of his social equals and perhaps his personal friends. A glaring example of such a case reaches us from Lincolnshire, where a farmer was summoned by the Ministry of Agriculture on account of deficits of sums varying from 2s. 6d. to 10s. 6d.

per week in the wages paid to five workers. The defence was that which has always been given in such cases, viz. that the men accepted the terms offered. Of course they would if starvation is the only alternative. He further pointed out that he allowed the men bacon equivalent to 6s. a week. Even if this is true, it is a useful part of the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) Act that bacon is not allowed as an equivalent to wages. The defendant was ordered to pay the men £26, though in our report there is nothing to indicate whether this covered the total of the arrears. The point which arouses our indignation, however, is that the farmer was only ordered to pay ½d. fine on each of the ten summonses, and was charged no costs. Is this not almost an invitation to other farmers to do likewise? They run no risk apparently within the jurisdiction of that Bench of ever having to pay more than the legal amount, and it would almost appear that the court approved of their action in trying to escape from their liabilities.

Town Council Elections.

In Glasgow three of the present women councillors—Mrs. Barbour, Mrs. Beaton, and Miss Snodgrass—have to seek re-election, and it is probable that there will be other candidates. Councillor Annie Lee, the senior woman member of the Manchester Council, has again been adopted as the Labour candidate for the Gorton South Ward, which she has represented since 1919. In Bradford, Miss Margaret Law is standing for re-election, and is expecting a hard fight to retain her seat in spite of a majority of over 300 three years ago. Miss Law is a keen educationalist, and is Chairman of the Elementary Education Sub-Committee.

By-election at Burton-on-Trent.

Up to now the Burton-on-Trent Council has only included one woman amongst its members, but there is a likelihood of a second being elected, owing to the death of one of the aldermen. Mrs. H. T. Collett, who is a leading woman Unionist, has agreed to stand.

Another Dutch Woman M.P.

A correspondent in Holland writes: We are pleased to announce that Mrs. W. van Itallie-van Embden, member of the Board of the National Society of Women Voters, is now added to the row of women Members of Parliament. She has succeeded Dr. S. J. van Aalten, himself a strong advocate of women's claims, who died last July. Mrs. Van Itallie-van Embden, who has been to a great many of our international congresses, is a wonderful speaker and a well-known writer. She has been for years a member of the Town Council in Leiden, where her husband is a well-known Professor. Miss A. D. Knappert succeeded Dr. van Aalten in Rotterdam as a member of the Town Council. She was also an ardent suffrage worker for years, was President of the Rotterdam branch of our Society, and is a teacher and a good speaker.

The Police Commission.

At a preliminary sitting of the Royal Commission on Police Powers held last week, it was decided that in the absence of special reasons for privacy, all proceedings will be open to the public. The first session will be held on 10th October at the Headquarters of the Commission, Caxton House, Tothill Street.

An Alternative Route for Lady Bailey.

The Sudan authorities having proved adamant in their refusal to allow Lady Bailey to fly unescorted over Sudanese territory, she has now decided to reach England by a West Coast route. On September 20 she left Bulawayo en route for the Belgian Congo. We wish her a successful flight and a safe return to England.

Lady Aberdeen in Edinburgh

Among the three eminent persons upon whom the freedom of Edinburgh was conferred on 21st September, is the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair—the third woman Freeman of this City.

Erratum.

We greatly regret that a double error occurred in our note of last week on the Kensington and Paddington Society for Equal Citizenship's campaign for six independent candidates. The preliminary meeting on 8th October will be held at 184a Ladbroke Grove at 5.30, and all who are interested in the candidature will be heartily welcome. The public meeting on 11th October at St. Mary's College, referred to in "Coming Events" is not part of this campaign.

ANOTHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY CLIMBS DOWN.

A fortnight ago we had occasion to record the occurrence of a dispute at Leigh (Lancs) over the vexed question of the employment of married women teachers. About fourteen months ago the Leigh Education Committee fell into line with a number of other local education authorities by passing a resolution requiring the resignation of all women teachers on marriage. This resolution was circulated to the teachers, and as a result of it several of them resigned in due course. But a week or so ago the matter was sharply brought into question by the action of the managers of a non-provided Church of England school, who refused to acquiesce in the dismissal of a particular married teacher, and challenged the application of the resolution to non-provided schools, whose teachers can only be legally dismissed by the local education authority on "educational grounds." As the Rev. L. S. Murdoch, chairman of the managers in question, explained: "In this case the teacher married, and this in itself is not an educational ground for dismissal. Mrs. Bent is a capable teacher and qualified though uncertificated, and she has been carrying out her duties with credit to herself and with satisfaction to the managers of the school for the last five years." A deadlock thereupon ensued, the managers obstinately refusing to dismiss Mrs. Bent, the Education Committee obstinately refusing to pay her salary. Meanwhile the N.U.T. mobilized opinion on behalf of the view that an education committee has no power to dismiss non-provided school teachers on the ground of marriage, declaring itself ready to fight a test case on the matter; while the Leigh Education Committee decided to send a deputation to the Board of Education for direction and advice.

The members of that deputation returned, according to a *Manchester Guardian* informant, "very subdued men." As

THE FIFTH COMMISSION AND OTHER MATTERS.

BY KATHLEEN E. INNES, B.A.

The Fifth Commission deserves an article devoted largely to its work of this year, partly because it has distinguished itself by being the first Commission to elect a woman as its Vice-President. That honour has been accorded to the veteran, Miss Henni Forchhammer. A second Vice-President has been chosen at her request because she wished to be sure of an assistant when the President leaves before the end of the session and she takes his place; but she was the Commission's first choice. As usual the women from all the delegations which women accompany, are appointed to serve on this Committee. Mme Hainari is its rapporteur for the work of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and Dame Edith Lyttelton for the British Government's Proposal for a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the control of Opium in the Far East. The Reports of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other dangerous drugs and the report on the Child Welfare Committee completed this year's Agenda.

The first report considered was that on Child Welfare—and the chief questions discussed were the appointment of a woman—or several women, as Miss Forchhammer intervened to suggest—on the Board of Governors of the new International Institute of Educational Cinematography at Rome. Agreement as to the necessity of this appointment was general.

An interesting point was made by the French delegate, in the emphasis he laid on the need to include in the investigation on the effect of the cinema on children, study of its effects not only on moral, but on *mental* development.

Another important question to which reference has been made is the legal age of marriage. In an early Committee, Mdlle Vacaescu made a plea for its fixing as high as eighteen years, in the interests of the individual and of the race—a plea which was only modified by the Indian representative's reservation that certain factors of climate, maturity and so on, must be taken into account, for 13 or 14 (he argued) in India are equal to 18 in the West.

It is clear that the investigations so admirably begun into the Traffic in Women and Children in certain areas will be continued and extended as funds allow. The stage has not yet been reached when the Council considers the time ripe to suggest to Governments universally, the advisability of abolishing the system of licensed houses, but an investigation as a likely preliminary to this suggestion is to be undertaken; opinion against the system of licensed houses has received support from one country after another, including this year Roumania, Poland

a result of what they heard at the Board of Education an extraordinary meeting of the Elementary Schools Sub-Committee was summoned, from which instructions went out that Mrs. Bent's salary was immediately to be paid. Clearly the Board of Education takes the view that resolutions concerning the dismissal of married women teachers do not apply, and cannot be applied against the wishes of the managers to non-provided schools. So no test case will be fought after all—at any rate, the Leigh Education Committee has no intention of fighting one, for as was explained at a subsequent meeting of that body, Leigh cannot afford to take upon itself the burden of fighting the matter on behalf of the thirty or so Lancashire education authorities who are all pursuing the same policy. It is, however, anxious that the Association of Education Authorities shall fight it, as a national question to be determined on national lines. So indeed, are we. We too would welcome a decisive battle on a national scale. By all means let us have a legal decision regarding the position of women teachers in non-provided schools. Meanwhile we congratulate Mrs. Bent and the Church of England school managers who fought for her, on winning a very significant and inspiring little victory in the purlieus of the parish pump. There is one other satisfactory outcome of the disturbance to be recorded: It so happens that in the Leigh Education area, all the schools, with one single exception, are non-provided. The Education Committee very properly recognized the unfairness and inexpediency of retaining the women teachers of one school under the old marriage ban while those in all the other schools of the area were free to order their domestic affairs in their own way. They have thus rescinded the resolution, passed fourteen months' ago, requiring all women teachers to resign on marriage.

and Czecho-Slovakia. Several also have reported in favour of the employment of women police, as a result of their own experience, and a resolution advocating their wider use has gone forward.

France remains isolated in her opposition to any change from her system of licensed houses. Her delegate questioned the accuracy of deductions from the statistics that have been collected and went so far as to say that it is impossible "to abolish the system in countries obliged to maintain large garrisons." His contentions were forcefully answered by Dame Edith Lyttelton.

It seems almost as difficult to secure any marked progress in dealing with the questions of Opium traffic and manufacture as with that of armaments. The British request for an inquiry into opium smoking in the Far East, is prefaced by a summary of the past efforts to suppress the trade and the manufacture. This summary leads up to statements of the serious and increasing failure to control smuggling—a failure which has caused the British Government to doubt the efficacy of further measures to diminish consumption. Hong-Kong is, or was, "inundated with smuggled opium which can be bought at a fraction of the price of Government opium, and wholesale prosecutions and convictions have failed to stem the tide." To the ordinary person, applying common sense to the situation, the method adopted by the Hong-Kong Government to regain control of the situation seems unconvincing. It has been, so to reduce the price of Government opium that the smuggled opium is no longer attractive. One fears the effect on vested, Government, interests of the rapid (fourfold) increase of sales of Government opium. The British Government, faced with a request from Hong-Kong to purchase extra supplies from Persia, fortunately felt sufficiently doubtful of the method to sanction this; the difficulties have resulted in the request for a Commission of Inquiry which is before the Committee, after general welcome by the Council. It is to be hoped that the results of the investigation, which will come before the next Opium Conference, may so expose the roots of the evil, that effective measures to check *manufacture* may at length result. The work of the Central Board, which is to be set up now that the Convention of 1925 has at least received enough ratification to bring it into force, also gives rise to hope that the illicit traffic may be drastically dealt with. In India, to take one example, that in cocaine is said to be 40 times the legitimate traffic.

In the full Assembly, as noted before, repeated welcome has

(Continued on next page.)

SOME CONSERVATIVE IDEALS.¹

By MARJORIE MAXSE.

The first question that is often asked is—why must we have political ideals crystallized into the shape of political parties? Is it not far better to judge each question on its merits? But think of the chaos which would ensue if there were not political parties with some permanent principles guiding them, with some continuity of thought, with some definite purpose.

Those of us who have a definite political faith, and who definitely believe that Conservatism is for the good of the country know that the principles of the party are the most important thing.

Conservative principles have been summed up many times but I think if any Conservative to-day were asked to give his definition of Conservatism and Conservative ideals, he would probably choose the summing up of Disraeli which was quoted by the Prime Minister two or three years ago, and that is "the maintenance of the institutions of this country, the preservation and development of our Empire, and the improvement of the conditions of the people." These are the fundamental ideals of the Conservative party.

The Conservative Party, basing itself on our long-established institutions, is essentially a national party. It does not legislate for any one section of the community or seek to protect the interests of one section against those of another, it seeks the welfare of the country as a whole, bearing in mind its responsibility towards all citizens.

We have also a deep-rooted belief in the maintenance and extension of justice—justice which gives all men equality before the law and which is protective towards the citizen, rather than aggressive.

The Conservative Party has always been known as the Imperial Party, and the development of the Empire has always been a cardinal belief in every Conservative, not with any spirit of Empire aggrandizement, not with any spirit of getting any further personal or national wealth, but peacefully and with the idea of better administration rather than sequestration.

Partly because of our belief in the Empire you will often hear the Conservative Party described as a War Party; a party of jingoes who are out for aggrandizement. That remark is entirely untrue. The Conservative Party is the Peace Party. No party in recent political history has achieved so much for peace, in the cause of world peace, as has the Conservative Government under the administration of Mr. Baldwin. Recent history is too well in our minds for it to be necessary for me to do more than refer to Locarno and the Peace Pact; to the work we have done at Geneva with the League of Nations, and to the fact that the British Government has abandoned what used to be considered the life and safety of the British Empire, and that is, the two-power standard.

Our third ideal is "the improvement of the conditions of the people." We have often been described as a party of reaction, as a party of capitalists. But there is no political party in this country to-day which desires progress and the betterment of conditions more than the Conservative Party, and that claim can be justified by the actual work that the Conservative Party has done for the improvement of existing conditions. I would recommend you to study for yourselves our record of social legislation—in such matters as the franchise, factories, mines, trade unions, insurance, health and education—during the last hundred and twenty years.

In every way we have consistently tried to keep to the three ideals which I set before you at the beginning of the lecture, and in the words of the Prime Minister, "we have maintained in this country a standard of life for those at work and a standard of care and maintenance for those not at work which, taken together, are unparalleled in any other country, and in any other age." It is a national achievement and a national record of which I think we may very well be proud.

I have not come down here to-day to make a propagandist speech, but I do want to make an appeal to women to take an active part in political life. There is definitely a sphere for their work both inside the party and round it. We have got a few women Members of Parliament and though I like to think that we have got quality and not quantity, I should not be sorry to see that quantity increased. We have got to have more women candidates, but we have got to find constituencies,

(Continued at foot of next column.)

¹ Notes of Miss Maxse's speech at N.U.S.E.C. Summer School, 6th September, 1928.

DISTRESS IN THE MINING AREAS.

We print below a letter from the Secretary of the Lord Mayor of Newcastle-on-Tyne. Last week we printed a similar letter from Cardiff. During the period of distress following the floods in Westminster last January, everyone seemed to send warm clothing for distribution. But Westminster is central; it can be visited; everyone knows it. The mining areas of Durham, Northumberland, and South Wales are out of easy reach, out of sight. But the suffering in Westminster was on a small manageable, very temporary scale compared to that in those stricken districts. We make a very earnest appeal to our readers to send clothing before the fine weather is over. Parcels may be sent to the addresses given below, or in the case of South Wales to "The Mining Areas Relief Fund, City Hall, Cardiff." Donors may, if they wish, write on the outside cover, "In response to THE WOMAN'S LEADER Appeal."

DISTRESS IN MINING AREAS: MANSION HOUSE FUND.

Madam,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter with reference to the supply of clothing by way of supplementing the above fund.

The articles principally required are boots, shoes, and underwear for *women and children*.

For the purposes of the administration of the fund in the Northern Coalfield, Committees have been appointed for the Counties of Northumberland and Durham respectively. The Secretaries of the two Committees are T. R. Williams, Esq., c/o The County Accountant, Moot Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Harold Jevons, Esq., Shire Hall, Durham.

The proportions in which money and gifts in kind have hitherto been allocated, have been one-quarter to Northumberland and three-quarters to Durham.

Yours faithfully,

R. N. WEDDERBURN,

Lord Mayor's Secretary.

Lord Mayor's Chamber,
Town Hall,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

THE FIFTH COMMISSION AND OTHER MATTERS.

(Continued from preceding page.)

been accorded to the Kellogg Pact. Most delegates, with the exception of M. Politis, of Greece, whose decisiveness seems to have deserted him, have pointed forward from it to disarmament, as the only possible witness to the sincerity of the signatories. The striking speech of Mr. Mackenzie King, first delegate for, and Prime Minister of Canada, had this as its starting point, and deserves mention. He held the Assembly, as he told with great simplicity the story of how the unarmed frontier between U.S.A. and Canada had actually been for a century a *cause* of peace between the two, and of internal prosperity. It is simply a fact of history—if the nations would learn from history—and he did not labour the obvious moral.

In the Press gallery was a prominent American publicist known as an opponent of America's entry to the League. It was his first experience of an Assembly, and he suddenly realized the possibilities it offered of reaching with such facts an audience unlike any other in the world. His "reaction" was very rapid and very interesting. "Look here," was his exclamation—"How can we get in quick?"

(Continued from preceding column.)

and the Party Headquarters is not all-powerful. Women will come into their own. They will bring something of a new spirit into the work which is being carried out. Everyone of you here has got something from life—some advantage, of education, of money, of circumstances, whatever it may be. Is it not your duty as Conservatives, or as members, if you like, of other parties, to give back something of what you have got? Is it not, in the words of the Prime Minister, our duty "to try to put back into the pool of the nation's life as much as, or more than, we have had ourselves."

THE WOMAN'S LEADER
EVERY FRIDAY. ONE PENNY.

SPECIAL TERMS FOR SOCIETIES

Send 6/6 to the Office of the Paper, 4 Tufston Street, Westminster, S.W. 1
1/8 for Three Months. SUBSCRIBE TO-DAY.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.¹

By DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT, G.B.E.

This is a very brilliant book, written with great skill by the accomplished hand of Miss Gwen John. It deals with one of the most interesting periods of English history and shows how gloriously our country emerged from great perils, passing through the storms and tempests of contending factions, led as it was from 1558 for more than forty years by a courageous woman of commanding genius and unwavering patriotism.

It is not easy under present conditions to realize with what overwhelming difficulties the young Elizabeth had to contend. Born in 1533, the sole child of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth, from her very early infancy, was placed under the stigma of illegitimacy; her mother was beheaded in 1535, and Elizabeth then a baby child was held to be disgraced and unworthy of her lineage. Nevertheless Henry was too true a son of the renaissance to allow any child of his, legitimate or illegitimate, to grow up uneducated, and under the good influence of Katherine Parr, Henry's fifth wife, both Mary and



Elizabeth Tudor were relegitimized and received once more into some semblance of royal favour. For as Miss John remarks "Henry, though terrible, was no barbarian." Roger Ascham, the great Cambridge scholar, was appointed Elizabeth's tutor, and retained through life a great appreciation of her qualities. In after years, speaking of her, Ascham said "I taught her words; she taught me things." One cannot help wondering what those things were. They might very well have been "courage, placability, steadfastness, loyalty." She never cherished idle resentment or wasted her strength in futile wrangling. Her tutors were astonished at her proficiency in learning, not merely because she mastered many languages, but because of her grasp of the significance of what she studied. Divinity and statecraft were her special subjects, but it was her application of knowledge and the magnanimity of her outlook which moved Ascham to enthusiasm. She was, as her mother had been before her, a sincere adherent of the Reformed Religion. When the news reached her in 1558 that she had become Queen of England she instinctively knelt down and prayed.

¹ *Queen Elizabeth*, by Gwen John. (Heffer & Co., Cambridge.)

As long as Mary Tudor lived, influenced as she was by her Spanish marriage and by fanatical Bishops and friends, Elizabeth's life was in constant peril. In 1554 she was imprisoned in the Tower and she felt it was very probable that she would suffer there the same fate which had befallen her mother. But her energy and steadfastness never failed her. She asked leave to take exercise in the rooms that had been assigned to Anne Boleyn before her execution, and determined in her own mind that if she were condemned to die by the hands of the executioner she would ask that the instrument should be the sword and not the axe. But Mary, although she richly earned the dreadful epithet which will always be associated with her name, had, at moments, a sisterly heart for Elizabeth: on being sent for from the Tower to appear before Mary and the assembled Bishops for cross-examination by the latter, Mary reproved Gardiner for the inhumanity of his examination of the princess. On another occasion Gardiner, while Elizabeth was still a prisoner, advised her to confess her fault and put herself at the Queen's mercy. Elizabeth replied that as she had never offended against the Queen in thought, word, or deed, she craved no mercy. Again when the assembled Bishops sought to entangle her upon sacramental mysteries Elizabeth paid them in their own coin by reciting the now well-known verse:—

"Christ is the word who spake it,
He took the bread and brake it;
And what His word doth make it,
That I believe and take it."

The ashes of that fire are hardly cold even to-day, but it must be remembered that they were not ashes at all in the sixteenth century, but a flaming fire.

I have dwelt upon Elizabeth's extraordinary ill fortune as a child; the tragic death of her mother, the continued enmity of her father, the death of her brother, and the estrangement from her half-sister. But there was one aspect of these miseries which really added to Elizabeth's future happiness. All through the first years of Mary Tudor's reign the dismal procession of martyrs for the Reformed faith wended its way week in and week out to the cruel fires of Smithfield; the accession of Elizabeth automatically quenched these cruel flames, and thus ensured for the beautiful young queen the enthusiastic love of her people. The reception she met with in London in 1558 was rapturous and overwhelming. "It is hardly too much to say," writes Miss Gwen John (p. 30), "that on the day of her coronation all England was respectfully but wildly in love with the 'lovely and loving young queen.'" She was indeed "of all sorts enchantingly beloved."

(To be continued.)

PRUDENCE AND PETER.²

Prudence and Peter is a truly delightful book for children and grown-ups alike. The idea of working in cookery recipes with a story makes most amusing and entertaining reading.

Mrs. Barber is a really old-fashioned cook. *Prudence and Peter*, the girl and boy twins, are interested in cookery, and are allowed to practise various recipes.

This book is alright for the pre-war children. They were allowed cream, butter and eggs, on which to practise omelettes. They were given and could be spared, scraps of meat and vegetables to make dishes. Food was cheaper then. But how about the post-war children?

They are not allowed to make five or six rabbit sautés, make omelettes and pancakes, which, if they turned out a failure, are given to their dogs; no, not even in the richest homes. Eggs and cream are dear now, and experimental cooking can only be done at intervals. Of course, Mrs. Barber is not wasteful, but she allows her "pupils" plenty of materials. However, the recipes are excellent (although some of them are extravagant), and the Ewing family seem to get great satisfaction out of them.

Mrs. Barber's tips and hints are all worked in with this fascinating story, and some of them will be found very useful to the modern housewife, while the children who read this story will take more interest in cooking. In the appendix are recipes for those who want to know the exact amount of any ingredients. These refer you to the number of the page that tells you the way "Mrs. Barber does it."

I'm sure both children and grown-ups alike will enjoy this delightful book; and make as much use as possible out of Mrs. Barber's recipes and excellent tips and hints in the art of cooking.

RACHEL HUBBACK (aged 13).

² By Elizabeth Robins and Dr. Octavia Wilberforce, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (Ernest Benn, 7/6.)

DISINHERITANCE.¹

The text of Lord Astor's Bill, which has now been published, occupies eighteen pages, but its procedure can be briefly summarized. It is not by any means a Bill to increase litigation, because, while it enables a husband, wife, child, or other descendant or "dependent" to apply to the Court to enforce his rights under it, the executors or administrators of an estate are authorized to compromise his claims or to satisfy them on the principles which the Bill lays down. The Court can refuse to make an order in favour of any applicant who has behaved unreasonably.

Scales of Provision.

The Bill is not retrospective, but it applies to any will that has been made or had a codicil added to it after its passage into law. It lays down a certain minimum scale of provision for spouses, issue, and "dependents" which the Court may at its discretion enforce in spite of the provisions of the will. A wife or husband can be given the income from one-third of the "aggregate estate," which includes property made over in the lifetime, but not furniture and other personal chattels, but cannot claim under this Bill more than £3,000 a year. It is possible that when the Bill is re-introduced the limit may be altered to £2,000 a year. The value of any settlement, insurance policy, or transference of capital is to be taken into account, and the rights of a widow under the Bill are to cease upon her re-marriage unless the executors find some special reason to the contrary, such as the welfare of infant children.

Children can be awarded one-third of what would be due to them in the case of intestacy—with an upward limit of £10,000 in capital. The same rules apply to grandchildren or other descendants whose claims would have been valid in the case of an intestacy.

The claims of "dependents" are limited to three pounds a week or any sum that was being paid under the order of any Court—whichever may be the larger. Nothing can be claimed by "dependents" until the spouse and descendants have been adequately provided for. "Dependents" are defined as persons whom the testator supported voluntarily or otherwise, in his lifetime, and for whom, in the opinion of his executors or of the Court, he ought to provide by his will. The rights of a female "dependent" cease upon her marriage, unless the executors find good reason to the contrary.

The Court's Discretion.

While these are the general directions of the Bill, the Court has very wide discretion as to applying or varying them. It can take into account "the status, character, and conduct of the parties, particularly in relation to the testator and to the management of property"; "whether the spouses were living apart at the date of the death"; whether the surviving spouse is capable of providing for the children; the means of the parties and their facilities or opportunities for making a livelihood; any explanation left by the testator of unusual provisions in his will; and, indeed, anything which it may think material to the issue. The Court may make an order for less than the above scale, or it may refuse to make an order at all. It may also order the estate to be distributed in accordance with the law of intestacy. The executors or administrators can take the same matters into account when deciding whether or not to make a provision for a claimant. The Bill does not, by itself, give any interest in the property to a claimant.

"Personal chattels" are not to be included in the "aggregate estate" for the purpose of these computations, but they may be dealt with under a compromise. Personal chattels are defined to mean carriages, horses, stable furniture, and effects (not used for business purposes), motor-cars and accessories (not used for business purposes), garden effects, domestic animals, plate, plated articles, linen, china, glass, books, pictures, prints, furniture, jewellery, etc.

There are special provisions for the case of lunatics and of wives and divorced wives in receipt of alimony. Lunatics are to have sufficient support according to their station in life. An allowance legally secured to a spouse is to be continued by the executors during her life or until re-marriage, but it is not to exceed a third of the income of the "residuary estate—

(Continued on next page, column 2.)

¹ We print the above extract from an article on Lord Astor's Bill in the *Observer* on Sunday, 16th September, by kind permission of the editor.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS.

By BERTHA MASON.

THE 1ST OF NOVEMBER.

On 1st November, 1928, the triennial elections for borough councils will take place in London. On the same day the annual elections for provincial county and non-county boroughs will also take place throughout England and Wales.

Barely five weeks remain before the polling day for the practical, active work of stimulating interest in municipal administration and in matters which vitally affect the well-being of the inhabitants of the borough. Every year we become more amazed at the extraordinary little interest taken in municipal elections, which no citizen can afford to ignore, i.e. no really good citizen. The work entrusted to borough councils is of supreme importance to the men, women, and children of every borough in London and in the provinces. In matters of health, education, morality, housing, transport, maternity and child welfare, recreation, the influence for good or for evil of a borough council is felt every day one way or another by every inhabitant in the Borough.

Therefore it follows, or ought to follow, that all good citizens should take an active interest in the qualifications of those who on 1st November will stand for election and further, if called upon should be ready to serve themselves on these local authorities.

It is obvious also, if we think even for a moment of the problems which our local administrators are called upon to deal with and if possible to solve, that the presence and practical assistance of suitable women as well as suitable men are needed on all borough councils.

That the need for the help of women in local government is great no reader of THE WOMAN'S LEADER will deny. We make no apology therefore for calling attention to a few facts and figures which demand consideration at this juncture.

We will deal first with London, where all the councillors retired in 1925 after three years' service. The 1,366 seats thus vacated were filled (barring two) on 2nd November (1st November in 1925 fell on a Sunday) for three years. The number of candidates who went to the poll approached 3,000. Of this number 343 were women, of whom 140 were returned.

The number was slightly increased on 9th November by the election of aldermen.

Statistics which we have taken this month show that the number of women serving now on London borough councils is 162, viz. 149 councillors and 13 aldermen. Bermondsey has to its credit 11 women councillors and 2 aldermen, total 13. Kensington is a good second with 12 councillors but no alderman. The only Metropolitan borough council without a woman member is Wandsworth. It is good to think that the opportunity is at hand for the election of at least one woman in Wandsworth.

We believe and hope that many of the retiring women councillors are standing for re-election. Both women and men, if good councillors, are worth twice as much during their second term of office as during the first, for they have learnt the ropes and have three years' experience of the work. We hope that if suitable the retiring councillors may be given a chance to use their experience for the benefit of the electors for a second term.

It is encouraging to note that in London as in the provinces the number of women borough councillors is slowly increasing. There are now serving in London, as already stated, 162 against 128 in October, 1925. There will be 1,366 vacancies to be filled on 1st November next, so there is still room for an increased number of women councillors without causing any anxiety!

But if this desirable increase is to be attained, women's organizations and individual women must bestir themselves and create the enthusiasm required for success. It is for them in the few weeks which remain to draw the attention of women voters to the true meaning and importance of local government, to its bearing on the health, morality, and happiness of the community, to the duty and responsibility of making the best use of the vote, to the importance of sending to the councils men and women of high character and disinterested motives, men and women who will put the well-being of the community their serve before all personal motives and party political considerations.

(To be continued.)

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.

CONFERENCE IN SOUTH WALES.

Another of the Conferences arranged by Societies in different parts of the country, is to be held on Tuesday, 2nd October, at Cardiff. This one-day conference, which is being organized by the South Wales Area Group of Women Citizens' Associations, will consist of a morning session dealing with the future work of the Union, and an afternoon session to discuss Restrictive Legislation and Married Women and Paid Work. Mrs. Coombe Tennant, J.P., will preside, and Miss Macadam will be representing Headquarters. A public luncheon is to be held, and in the evening a public meeting on "The New Voter: Responsibilities and Opportunities," when the speakers will be Mrs. Coombe Tennant and Miss Macadam, and the chair will be taken by Miss Collin, M.A. The Conference promises to be a great success, and many of the surrounding Societies are sending representatives and showing active interest in it.

CONFERENCE IN BIRMINGHAM.

A conference similar to that in South Wales is to be held towards the end of November under the auspices of the Citizenship Sub-Section of the Birmingham N.C.W. Fuller particulars of this will be given later.

CHELTENHAM BY-ELECTION.

The Parliamentary Questionnaire has been sent to all three candidates at the above by-election. Miss Florence Widdowson (Lab.) has replied in the affirmative to all questions, with the following qualifications. In the case of the question relating to protective legislation being based on the nature of the work and not on the sex of the worker, she replies: "I would oppose all unfair legislation affecting women"; and her answer to the question on Family Allowances is: "I am personally in favour of Family Allowances for all by means of State Grants." No replies have as yet been received from Sir Walter Preston (C.) and Sir John Brunner (Lib.).

FACTORIES BILL.

The National Union is inviting other women's organizations to join with it in asking the Home Secretary to receive a deputation to urge that under the new Factories Bill restrictive regulations should be imposed equally on men and women.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RIGHT TO BIRTH CONTROL AND ABORTION.

MADAM,—I notice in a foot-note to the letter of Miss Stella Browne in your issue of this week, that you promise, next week, comments upon this letter. May I ask whether your comments may make quite clear to your readers the position taken up by the organization of which THE WOMAN'S LEADER is the official organ, on the subject of abortion? To define my request more closely, may we—who do not belong to this organization—know, at what stage between conception and birth, killing is considered justified, and exactly on what grounds? I notice that the recent Women's Conference at Brussels issued a declaration to the effect that they considered killing "justifiable and necessary" where the mother's "professional activity" is at stake. Would this include (for instance) induced premature labour at 6 months, followed by killing the infant (who would certainly be described as "not likely to live"), or would this be reprobated, and if so, on what ground? As I propose to make a statement to a woman's association of an international character to which I belong, I ask this question in order that my statement—which will begin with a quotation from Miss Stella Browne's letter, may be clear and in no sense calumnious.

(Mrs.) MARGERY SMITH.

Dinberd Hall, Llangollen.

[Our comments are as follows: THE WOMAN'S LEADER adheres to the policy in this matter of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. That is to say, we demand freedom for all married women to practise, or not practise, contraceptive birth control, according to their individual needs and ethical views. In order that this freedom may be effective,

we demand that information concerning the most generally approved methods of contraceptive birth control shall be made accessible for such married women as desire it, at maternity and infant welfare centres which provide the normal contact between the working mother and a qualified disinterested medical practitioner. We draw a sharp distinction between the prevention of pregnancy and the destruction of pregnancy, and our policy has never led us to challenge the existing state of the law in this country which prohibits the termination of a pregnancy except under medical direction for medical reasons. Therefore we could not support any resolution which coupled a demand for access to contraceptive knowledge with a demand for legalized abortion. We do, however, join with Miss Stella Browne in deploring the *non possumus* attitude which appears to have been displayed in Brussels by the British Labour women. We consider that whatever may be the merits or demerits of (a) access to contraceptive knowledge; (b) legalized abortion, both are eminently suitable subjects for discussion at an international women's conference, and we cannot for a moment tolerate the suggestion that such discussions should be limited by the discretion or the susceptibilities of any body of men. Miss Susan Lawrence is credited with the phrase: "If our men had known birth control was to be discussed they would not have let us come." We find it difficult to believe that Miss Lawrence really said this. She used to be a good feminist. But if she did, then we are both surprised and shocked.—Ed.]

DISINHERITANCE.—Continued from page 262.

i.e. exclusive of settlements or insurances in her favour." The Court may order the legal allowance to a divorced wife to be continued, but it is not to exceed a sixth of the income of the "residuary estate."

Any person may contract to waive his rights under the Bill, provided he does so "for valuable consideration." That is to say, he must have received something worth having, in exchange for the surrender of his right to take proceedings.

Rights to make a claim under the Bill can be ruled out by a marriage settlement.

Where a testator has not disposed by will of the whole of his property, the whole estate may be brought under the operation of the Bill. Where there is no will at all, the Court may intervene to limit the provision for a lunatic spouse, to create trusts in the case of a spouse or children unable to manage their property "in a proper businesslike manner," or to provide for a "dependent."

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COMING EVENTS.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

9th OCTOBER. Jumble Sale at the Quest, 92 Clarendon Road, W. 11.

EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE.

24th OCTOBER, 1.15 p.m. Hotel Cecil. Victory Day Luncheon. Speakers: Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Alison Neilans, Mrs. Abbott, Miss Doris Stevens. Chair: The Viscountess Rhonda.

LEAGUE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

4th OCTOBER, 5.30. Junior Y.M.C.A. Hall, Cheltenham. Public Meeting on "The Ordination of Women." Speakers: Lady Barratt, C.B.E., Canon Rogers.

MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

11th OCTOBER, 8 p.m. 61, Westminster Bridge Road, S.E. Public Meeting: Captain Eckersley, "Broadcasting."

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Edinburgh S.E.C. and Glasgow S.E.C. & W.C.A. 28th SEPT.—1st OCTOBER. Weekend Summer School. Buchanan Hostel, E. Suffolk Road, Edinburgh. Subject: "The Equalities still to be won by Women."

Sutton and District W.C.A. 7th OCTOBER, 3 p.m. Miss Rathbone, J.P., and Mrs. Abbott. Debate "Restrictive Legislation."

Public Meeting (organized by Women's Societies) on "Public Responsibility for the Borough Council." OCTOBER 11th, 3 p.m. St. Mary's College, Lancaster Gate, W. 2. Speakers: T. Hancock Nunn, Esq., and Miss O'Kell, Sanitary Inspector. Chair: Alderman H. Kenyon, J.P.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

1st OCTOBER, 6 p.m. St. Patrick's Clubroom, Soho Square. Miss Fedden, "Nationality of Married Women." Chair: Mrs. Mathews, M.B.E.

TYPEWRITING.

M. McLACHLAN and N. WHITWAM—TYPISTS.—
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