

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Whitehall Whitewash.

The report on the investigation in the coalfields of South Wales and Monmouth promised by the Government, has now appeared. We must confess that we are greatly disappointed. We had expected a serious and comprehensive examination of the situation by the Government experts, but the Report is a slim 8 page leaflet. We are assured that the figures for infantile mortality or those for tuberculosis have shown no increase to give cause for anxiety. Turning to rickets "in some districts, but not uniformly, there is an increase in the occurrence of rickets," though we are told that nowhere does it affect a large proportion of the child population. "There could be no question, however, that in some areas mothers of young children suffer to an unusual extent from languor and anæmia." The reply to these reassuring statements is surely that the figures quoted do not touch the period when the evil effects were beginning to tell. Even an amateur knows that statistics do not automatically register the gradual undermining of health and vigour. In our opinion the Report is an utterly useless document compiled, of course, by men. What woman could have penned this sentence after a visit to the coal areas to-day: "Similarly, we think the dangers to be apprehended from the continued use of a diet such as we have described can be obviated without much difficulty"? Whatever its shortcomings, at least we hoped that official disapproval would be given to the wholly inadequate relief given by some unions to those whose unemployment benefit is exhausted, but the disgraceful figures are not even quoted though it is stated that the practice which prevails of relieving the wife and children and not the husband and father is "not regular" unless the man enters the workhouse. We wish that the Prince of Wales had gone to South Wales if this is the best that the Ministry of Health can do in the nature of a report of conditions there. Women voters should clamour for a complete investigation on entirely different and more adequate lines by trained women investigators.

Marriage Mortality.

The current *Monthly Review* of the U.S.A. Bureau of Labour contains an interesting analysis of labour turnover during 1926 and 1927 in certain selected Chicago industries employing both men and women in approximately equal numbers. In 1926 the average number of men on the pay rolls was 28,268; of women, 27,730. The rate of turnover for the men was 40.88 per cent; for the women, 52.70 per cent. In the following year the corresponding percentages were 31.36 per cent and 45.65 per cent. The women's turnover rate was thus 11.32 per cent higher in the first year, and 14.29 per cent higher in the second. One would naturally expect to find a larger turnover rate among women

workers, the obvious deductions being that here we have something in the nature of a measurement of "marriage mortality" in the industrial world. We are only surprised that the difference is as small as is here shown. It is necessary, however, to exercise some caution before regarding such a figure as typical of industry as a whole, since the nature of the industries selected for comparison, and the age grouping of the workers employed in them would affect the result.

Misplaced Leniency.

A glaring case of misplaced leniency in connection with child assault is reported from Ilkley. George Lund, aged 42, was charged with enticing an eight-year-old girl to a field and there assaulting her. The child was distressed, but by great good fortune, physically uninjured. One cannot, of course, use the word "uninjured" without this qualification, for the mental injury which may result from the memory of such an experience is impossible to gauge. At any rate, Lund pleaded guilty. He had, it appeared, served in the Army since 1904, and in 1913 was convicted for an assault on a schoolgirl of ten. The Chairman of the Bench, Mr. W. H. Barker, intimated (on what grounds we are not told) that the 1913 offence "was not an indecent assault, although it nearly approached it". He was therefore able to deal with the case as a first offence—fining Lund £15. The Bench, he added, "had decided not to send him to gaol, although *if the offence had been of a more serious nature* they would not have hesitated to do so". We observe that no woman sat upon the Bench whose members condoned the astonishing phrase which we have ventured to italicize. Had this not been the case, it is inconceivable that the court would have failed to visualize the danger of once more letting loose a moral degenerate of this type in the neighbourhood of Ilkley. As it is, we can only express our sympathy with the mothers of Ilkley, and add the hope that the magistrates concerned will be made aware of strong expressions of public opinion on their mishandling of the situation. Clearly Lund has a number of good friends somewhere, but we cannot congratulate them upon the cause which they have espoused.

The Future of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.

The Annual Council Meeting of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship will be held at King George's Hall, Tottenham Court Road, from 6th March to 9th March. As the first Council after the extension of the Franchise this gathering will have a peculiar interest and it is to be expected that a good deal of time will be given to the discussion of future policy. An interesting scheme of expansion in towns where no non-party women's organization exists will be brought forward, and a report will be presented of a provisional experiment in several places on the lines proposed. A change of name is proposed, as well as a change of policy, and Miss Eleanor Rathbone, who succeeded Dame Millicent Fawcett after the first extension of the vote, is not standing again for the Presidency. But notwithstanding those changes, perusal of the final agenda which has just been issued leads us to believe that the National Union may change its outward form but not its essential self. The long years of training in the struggle for the vote and a succession of able officers has established a tradition of Parliamentary work which cannot easily be set aside; and though different times call for different methods, the Union must surely continue to remain a political force that counts. The approaching General Election will help to keep this well in the foreground of the discussions, as plans for an election campaign in the constituencies will, of course, be under consideration.

Honour to Whom Honour is Due.

The Prime Minister was the chief speaker at the Queen's Hall meeting at the time of the N.U.S.E.C. Council Meeting last year. This year Sir William Joynson-Hicks has been invited to be the guest of honour at the Council Luncheon, at which of course all political parties will be represented. It will be remembered that Mr. Baldwin, speaking at the Queen's Hall, compared the Home Secretary to Joshua, who led the people into the promised land. Women of all political parties are glad to show their gratitude to one who never faltered in his determination to keep the Government's pledge. The annual parliamentary luncheons of the National Union are always an interesting feature of the council meetings. In addition to the chief distinguished political guests, societies from different parts of the country take the opportunity of inviting their Members as their guests.

The Need for Trained Women Rent Collectors.

Manchester is to be congratulated upon the appointment by its Public Health Committee of a woman rent collector for the Municipal Housing Estates in its area. And yet, in recording this step forward in the direction of an enlightened social policy with regard to property management, we cannot withhold a tremor of surprise that so obvious a move was not made long ago in the history of this particular enterprising Corporation. If any property calls for the ministrations of rent collectors with social purposes beyond the range of weekly payments and current repairs, it is these large new urban aggregations of household units, imported from widely distributed sources, without social cohesion, local tradition, or even the common neighbourliness that one is able to take for granted in the case of old-fashioned slum property. The trained women rent collectors on the new estates will find themselves faced with problems very different from those which their predecessors learned to tackle under the inspiration of Miss Octavia Hill. They will find themselves transported, as it were, from the second act of *Major Barbara* to the last act. Yet no lesser claim will be made upon their constructive administrative faculties, no smaller scope will be offered to their social vision.

Women and the 4th Poultry Congress.

Our attention has been called to the fact that not a single woman has been asked to serve on any of the nine committees nominated by the Board of Agriculture to carry out the preparations for the 4th International Poultry Congress, which is to be held at the Crystal Palace in July, 1930. We understand that a protest has already been conveyed to the Board, and it was explained that it was proposed later to form a woman's entertainment committee, on which women would be appointed. A good deal of indignation exists on the part of women poultry breeders and educationalists as they are personally and financially interested in the Congress. They not unnaturally resent the exclusion of women altogether from the Congress brochure, which will go to all parts of the world, especially as women have been well represented in the management of previous Congresses held in Canada, Holland, and Spain. Poultry breeding is an occupation in which women seem particularly to excel, three of the most successful breeders in England being women. Our correspondent writes that it is strange that at an important congress, the first of its kind since the enfranchisement of British women, a Government Department should pass women by in the appointment of Committees of management when so many women are engaged in the industry either on their own account or as the wives of farmers.

Miss Royden's Views on the Woman's Movement in the British Empire.

Miss Maude Royden, entertained by the British Commonwealth League, spoke of the advances made by the Woman's Movement in various parts of the British Empire. She noticed it was curiously irregular; in one country the advance would be social, but not political, and in another it would be mainly political. She had been immensely impressed by the very valuable work done by the women of New Zealand and Australia in the way of reducing the infant death-rate. In Australia the "travelling train" which provided lectures and demonstrations in up-to-date methods of agriculture is sent about to remote country districts. The Australian women had insisted that the train should have a section dealing with maternal and child welfare. This had been eagerly welcomed not only by the country women, but the section was sometimes mobbed by

fathers who wanted to know what to do in emergencies when there was no trained help available. In summing up her impressions, Miss Royden thought that "politically the Feminist movement is not so advanced over there as here." She would like to send them a woman Member of Parliament, so that they could understand how important it was to have women representatives, and what magnificent work had been done by our women in the House of Commons.

Saint Joan.

Last week brought round the five hundredth anniversary of St. Joan's momentous ride from Vaucouleurs to Chinon. Great things are to be done in its memory by a National Committee, and in time to come, each stage of her 400 mile ride will be marked by a commemorative stone. For our part, there is no Saint in the Calendar at whose altar we more gladly pay homage. She shines through history not only as the patron saint of oppressed nationalities groping for their lost self-respect, but of all women in revolt against conventions which fetter the spirit. There is hardly a church or sect to-day which has outgrown the need for her inspiration. Anniversaries are a useful spur to sluggish imagination. Let us hope that the present celebrations may rekindle in many minds on both sides of the Channel, a vivid picture of an uncanonized and as yet untried Joan, riding out of Vaucouleurs on her sturdy carthorse, clad in her ill-fitting borrowed military paraphernalia, at the head of the first six men, to feel the inspiration of her faith in herself, her "voices," and the certain outcome of her crazy project.

A Peace Play.

Women interested in peace will appreciate the sporting spirit of Miss Dallas and her friends in putting up £5,000 in order to present "The Rumour" at the Court Theatre. We are told the play is extremely clever and interesting, and hope our readers will make an effort to ensure a large audience. Now is the critical time; immediate support means success.

M. Poincaré and Votes for French Women.

M. Poincaré has replied to the petition conveyed to him after the recent Congress of Frenchwomen in Paris that he will in future give his support for votes for women and their eligibility for Municipal Councils. He draws the line, however, at their admission to the Senate.

Midwifery Training in China.

China is waking up to the necessity for improving midwifery education, and in an interesting leaflet reprinted from the *China Medical Journal*, Dr. Marion Yang describes the efforts which are being made. The two months course for "old-type" midwives started last year with thirty students who seem very keen to learn, but the teaching has to be entirely demonstration, as they are unable to read or write. In the comprehensive scheme which is suggested provision is made for a six months' and a two years' course.

Women Medical Professors in the 12th Century.

The Times of 14th February contained an interesting letter from Dr. Redmond Roche stating that mixed medical education really began in the twelfth century when the School of Salerno admitted women to the medical school. The department for diseases of women was handed over to women lecturers, one of whom lectured behind a curtain for fear of her beauty disturbing the students! (This recalls to our mind the remark of a noted dramatist that a distinguished male anti-suffragist would feel happier under certain circumstances if he could "take purdah.") About this period many other European universities in Spain, Italy, and France admitted women to their medical curricula and professorships.

Ideal Home Exhibition.

The *Daily Mail* Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia presents novel features, and special efforts have been taken to make it the "biggest, brightest, and the best yet held." Among the designers of "My Ideal Room" are Lady Londonderry, Lady Asquith, and Sir William Arbuthnot-Lane. "Bedrooms through the Ages" start with that of the prehistoric women, and end with the most modern bedroom of to-day. The cult of sunshine is shown in the Riviera sunshine house which has a sun bath room in the roof, to be used as a children's nursery or a recreation room. The Peter Pan Island will make special appeal to children, with its waterfall, lagoon, birds' nest boat, miniature castle, gnomes, and animals.

THE GOVERNMENT AND EQUAL PAY.

Now that the General Election is approaching, the political parties are naturally anxious to know what points interest the new voters, and it is undoubtedly the duty of a paper such as this to give them assistance. There are no doubt many things which interest the young women of the country, and many upon which their opinions are divided, but there is one upon which their unanimity is practically complete, and that is their demand to receive proper payment for the work they do. The vicious old custom of unequal pay, and the monstrous economic theory that a woman can do with less reward than a man, came into being during the years when women were politically negligible. But the young voters of to-day have grown up with a different set of assumptions, and they start free from the prejudices and sentimentalities of the Victorian era. To them, therefore, the prevailing custom of offering women the position of compulsory blackleg has no historic sanction, and seems nothing but plain injustice, and if the political parties are wise, they will take note of this fact before they issue their election programmes. It is not, of course, possible to institute equal pay throughout commerce and industry by act of parliament, but it is possible, and indeed it is necessary, that the government itself when acting as an employer should conform to the demands of the electorate, not to mention the principles of equity and justice. And therefore the next government, whatever its political complexion, will be wise to rectify the present monstrous situation which prevails throughout the civil service and local authorities.

In 1919, the doors of entry into the Civil Service were opened to women on precisely equal terms, and although for some years the normal systems of recruitment were not in full operation, they are now being organized, and the women who are entering the Civil Service in all grades now get there by equal and open competition with men. Once they are there they perform exactly the same work, and although the departments are putting up a long and obstinate rearguard action to maintain the segregation of women to separate sections, this fight is doomed to failure, and aggregation and interchange of work is steadily increasing. When a young woman enters the Civil Service on these terms, and takes up work which, had the chances of the examination been different, would have been taken up by a man, she finds that she is subject to a scale of pay entirely different and markedly lower than his would have been. Under the National Whitley Council agreement men and women begin at the same starting rate, and thereafter receive different increments and proceed to different maxima, the women always being on a lower scale. The result of this is that the Treasury is making an economy, which is in reality a compulsory contribu-

tion from the woman to the national resources, but one which does not excuse her from the ordinary liabilities of a citizen to pay her taxes in full. This is what prevails in the interchangeable posts. In the others, where men and women are doing similar and parallel, but not identically organized work, the usual custom is for the woman's maximum to be the man's minimum. In the executive grade, for example, the men start at £400 and proceed to £500, while the women start at £300 and proceed to £400, and there are cases in which the discrepancy is even greater and the woman's maximum is lower than the man's minimum. This state of affairs is intolerable; it is not only unjust to the women, but it is dangerous for the men, and within the last four years this fact has been realized by the whole of the existing Civil Service.

The principle of granting equal pay in the Civil Service was adopted by the House of Commons in May, 1920, and again in August, 1921, and no government which values its own stability can go back from this position. It is one thing to admit a principle, however, and another to translate it into fact, but it is obvious that there are many ways by which this reform can be put into effect, and that the initial cost to the Treasury would vary considerably according to the method adopted. The Federation of Women Civil Servants made a calculation in 1924, on the basis of allowing women to remain at their existing rates of pay, but to proceed by the men's increments to the men's maximum. This method which is, of course, very moderate and a small beginning, would bring the initial cost to no more than £150,000. The Treasury itself, however, has estimated that the cost of jumping all the women at once to the point they would have been at if they had been men, including in this estimate not only Civil Servants in Treasury grades, but also those in the grades closed to women, and teachers and the servants of local authorities, would be £12,000,000. Between these two estimates there is obviously scope for careful and detailed inquiry, and the demand which the Civil Servants are making, and which the women's organizations are supporting, is that the government should reaffirm its intention to adopt equal pay, and should at once establish a commission to inquire into the cost of the various practical schemes for enforcing it, with a view to putting one or other of them into effect within a limited number of months. It is useless for Mr. Churchill to say that the country cannot afford this change. The truth is that no government can afford to keep things as they are. This point is one of vital interest to the new voters, and it will be sheer madness if the party which enfranchised the young women neglect to do the one thing upon which these young women are eager and determined.

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE TREATMENT OF MOTHERS.

By JULIET WILLIAMS.

Public opinion is slowly becoming roused to the need for action to reduce the scandalously high rate of maternal mortality in this country, which is nearly double that of Holland and 80 per cent above Sweden and Italy. For married women between 15 and 45, maternity supplies the cause of more than one-fifth of the total deaths, and while the death-rate from other causes falls steadily, that from maternity has risen slightly in the last twenty years.

Although valuable efforts are now being made to provide ante-natal clinics and improved nursing facilities, it is improbable that substantial progress will be achieved until a complete change of attitude towards maternity on the part of the medical profession, the public health authorities, and indeed the public generally, has been brought about. Attention must be focussed upon the problems of avoiding injury and suffering for mothers, and efforts directed towards this end, comparable in magnitude with those now made to combat other forms of suffering, of which men, by experience, can form some conception.

The guarded official language of the Maternal Mortality reports covers a truly terrible set of facts.¹ The conspiracy of silence concerning the whole question of maternity renders possible the existence of a degree of callousness towards the

¹ See especially the 1924 Report on Maternal Mortality, by Dame Janet Campbell, pages 32 and 54.

sufferings of women at this time which would appear mediaeval in any other connection. We enforce the use of anaesthetics for operations upon animals yet allow our mothers to undergo hours of actually operative treatment involving severe laceration of major organs, without anaesthetic of any kind, or even adequate aseptic precautions. No doubt the report mentions extreme cases, but numbers could be cited which exhibit the same terrible indifference to pain in a lesser degree. Few people seem to be aware of the fact that anaesthetics are rarely, if ever, given to maternity patients in hospitals, unless operative methods are resorted to, no matter how great their suffering, although expert medical opinion supports their use as being of positive value apart from humane considerations, by reducing the risk of exhaustion and of laceration. They are normally utilized for wealthy patients (whose ability to select their medical attendant puts a premium upon avoidance of pain in their case) with good results.

The principal defence offered by those responsible for the present situation is that the suffering of poor patients is less than that of the well-to-do, and is not sufficient to justify the expense of providing relief. The evidence of midwives and hospital sisters certainly does not bear out the contention that poor patients do not suffer greatly. There is a percentage of insensitive individuals in all classes, and some for whom birth presents little physiological difficulty; but that the great majority even

of so-called normal maternity patients in all classes do suffer intensely and ardently desire alleviation cannot be denied by those with personal experience of midwifery practice. Those in doubt should listen to the cries from the "labour" wards at the maternity hospitals. They have to have special sound-proof doors fitted to them! The need for justification would seem to lie not with those who would relieve intense pain, but with those who would permit it. In this connection it should be remembered that those responsible for the present situation do not include individuals with actual personal experience of maternity, such women doctors and midwives as have any voice in these matters being mainly unmarried.

The real reasons for the withholding of anaesthetics from hospital patients are financial, although obsolete medical objections equally applicable to ordinary surgical anaesthesia are sometimes advanced to stifle lay inquiries. It is not the cost of the drugs themselves which presents the difficulty, as the amounts required are so small as to be negligible; the problem is that of providing the services of a doctor to supervise every case. The Rigby-Junker system of self-administration makes it possible for the patient to act as her own anaesthetist in safety and prevents the risk of overdose, but the existing law prevents the use of anaesthetics even by this device, except in the presence of a doctor, and the majority of hospital patients are delivered by midwives, in the absence of a qualified medical man, although a band of students may be looking on.

The provision of one additional resident medical officer, at a salary of about £80 a year, is sufficient to overcome this difficulty in the largest of the London Maternity Hospitals. The General Hospitals, having a more numerous medical staff, could in most cases manage to supply the necessary supervision by a rearrangement of duties, once the need for this reform were recognized to be imperative. In the smaller country hospitals the difficulty could be met, as it is being met in the new maternity branch of a certain County Hospital, by arrangements with the local practitioners to provide the necessary service at a reasonable fee.

The cost of introducing the reform throughout the whole country would appear to run into very small figures and would provide benefits disproportionately great. Not only would the reduction of actual suffering present an inestimable boon to the individual mothers, and lessen the shock and fatigue entailed by maternity to an extent which must be reflected in the maternal mortality rate, but in addition the extra doctor, where provided, would be available for research into the whole problem of this high rate, as a result of which progress might at last be made in its reduction. A change in the whole outlook of the students would also follow upon the adoption of more humane methods in the training hospitals, ultimately resulting in an enormous decrease in the amount of suffering and injury permitted, not to say inflicted, upon women throughout the land.

It rests with the womanhood of this country to bring about this result by creating a public opinion strong enough to enforce these simple but vital reforms.

HOW TO ENJOY HEALTH.

This little volume consists of reproductions of articles which have been selected from different Red Cross journals. The collaboration of a man and a woman, moreover a medical man and a lay woman, in the task of popularizing facts relating to the good health of the community, is one of which we heartily approve. The contents are wisely, perhaps, very mixed, but it is not technical or scientific and every word is suitable for every man and every woman. The titles give some idea of the wide range: "The cost of noise," "The treatment of sleeplessness," "Medical aspects of tobacco," "Choosing a Career." Such articles should not be buried in the files of a health paper and we welcome their appearance in book form. E. M.

¹ *How to Enjoy Health*, by Claude Lillingston, M.D., and Norah Hill. (Hodder and Stoughton, price 2s. 6d.)

THE WOMAN'S LEADER
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LETTERS TO A NEW VOTER FROM AN OLD VOTER.—IV.

DEAR MADAM,

If you haven't taken the advice which I tendered you last week, and consulted some alternative oracle on the subject of non-party politics, you must read this letter with profound attention. For it concerns a matter of peculiar importance to you, not merely because you are a new voter, but because you are a woman.

POLITICS AND PARTY POLITICS.

In the first place, you must know that all politics are not party politics. *Politics* is not an easy word to define. Let us substitute the phrase *problems of government*, add the qualification that such problems may concern both legislation and administration, that is to say, the passing of laws and the carrying of them out, and leave it at that. It at once becomes obvious that politics are, as it were, all over us all the time. They determine what we buy and how we buy it, the conditions of our work, our streets, our education . . . one could continue *ad infinitum*. If we are practising members of the Church of England, we find that even the form of our corporate worship may become a political matter as it did when the revised Prayer Book was under discussion in Parliament. But not every political matter is a party matter; and the one just mentioned is a case in point. It might have been a party matter, had any of the three parties discovered that the revision of the Prayer Book, or its non-revision, accorded with the general principles of their party programme. But as a matter of fact they didn't. Among those who violently favoured "no change" were Conservatives, Liberals, and Socialists. It was a political question because with the present established relations of Church and State, it involved a problem of government. But it never became a party question.

Now, if one takes a general survey of the problems of government, one finds a number of questions in this position. There was, until recently, the question of women's suffrage. In the beginning, no party would inscribe votes for women on its party banner. In the end, they all did. Only for a brief period before the war was it in actual fact a party question, and that was when the Labour Party (to its eternal honour) made women's suffrage part of its programme to the extent of promising to oppose any alteration of the franchise which did not include women.

Now I think that there are always bound to be some political questions, like the question of the revised Prayer Book, which do not fall obviously into party programmes, because they unite people who are temperamental Conservatives, temperamental Liberals, and temperamental Socialists. And so long as such questions exist, people will form organizations on their behalf; since it is only by organization that they can be effectively advocated. One such organization which I have specially in mind, is the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, which was once the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. It unites people who want certain reforms of law, administration and custom, for the improvement of the position of women, but who belong to different parties and hold the most divergent views on such subjects as free trade, socialism, de-rating, and other matters which appear on party programmes. There are a whole host of organizations in this position: the Penal Reform League, the Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child, the League of Nations Union—to quote one or two at random. The reason why I have the N.U.S.E.C. especially in mind is because I myself happen to have grown up in it. But the point is that these organizations will do active political work, though they will not do it on party lines. They will draw up bills, and persuade political parties to support them. They will question parliamentary candidates at elections and try to obtain pledges from those candidates to support their particular measures. And sometimes the members of these non-party organizations care so much for these particular measures, and so little for the general programme of any particular party, that they are prepared to vote for any candidate, whatever his party, who is sound on the particular measures. I myself, though I belong to a party, and really believe in its general

programme of government, would find it quite impossible to vote for my party candidate if I believed him or her to be opposed to the advancement of women. But that is by the way. The great thing to remember is that these non-party organizations exist, they exist for all kinds of political purposes, and a new voter who has not made up her mind whether she is enough of a Conservative, Liberal, or Socialist as the case may be, to join a party, may very well find that there is some particular problem of government which she really does care about—it may be the organization of international peace (in which case she had better join the League of Nations Union) or the advancement of women (in which case she had better join the N.U.S.E.C.). And by joining such organizations she may feel that her vote is being made to count; since organizations whose members have votes are the more likely to be sympathetically listened to by governments and parties—their advice is more likely to be taken in matters of legislation. Not that it always is taken. By no means. Oh dear no! Not even when they all speak with one accord as the women's organizations did recently to the Minister of Health about his block grants! Still it may be, and it sometimes is; so I repeat that the more voters there are behind any particular political demand the more likely is that demand to receive sympathetic attention from governments and parties.

But why, you may ask—and many of your contemporaries actually do ask—should it be necessary to talk about particular organizations for the advancement of women in these days of equal franchise? That of course, is another question; and one which undoubtedly needs an answer from

AN OLD VOTER.

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NOTES ON A VOYAGE

S.S. *Otranto*.

Between Suez and Colombo.

28th January, 1929.

I have been reading at my leisure on this beautiful ship the *Life of Lord Curzon*, by the Earl of Ronaldshay; and several of his actions in regard to the position of women have become clearer to me in consequence. For instance the book shows in more than one practical incident that he was by no means a die-hard as an anti-feminist, but was more than usually ready to modify his actions by accommodating them to the changing political circumstances of his times. For instance, in 1893 he had vigorously opposed the admission of women to the Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society, and had succeeded in getting their admission rescinded even after it had been sanctioned by the Council. In 1913, when Lord Curzon himself was President, and therefore, to a special degree responsible for the financial solvency of the Society, he completely changed his view, and pressed the change he had formerly banned. The Society had lately, very largely through his influence, abandoned its former residence in inconvenient rooms in Burlington House, and had bought a fine mansion, Lowther Lodge, within a few yards of the Albert Hall; an additional number of members was therefore urgently required in the interest of financial solvency, and Lord Curzon, as President, warmly urged the making of the election of women once more a possibility. He worked hard in support of what he had formerly condemned. "Their," i.e. the women's, "contribution to the sources of the Society," as he pointed out in the Presidential Address on 16th March 1913, "will add to our power of usefulness in the future." (Vol. iii, p. 65.)

I feel practically certain that similar considerations—apart from their financial bearings—also influenced his attitude as Chancellor of the University of Oxford. He there became an advocate of opening the immense educational advantages of Oxford to women. So far from holding back he was foremost in procuring for women a share in the great heritage which Oxford was then offering to men only. He had within the years which preceded the war been a candidate for the Lord Rectorship of Glasgow University, and had been elected by a narrow majority. The figures were: Lord Curzon 947, Mr. Lloyd George 935, Mr. Keir Hardie 122. During his installation, which was again and again postponed to suit Lord Curzon's convenience, he was enthusiastically supported by the girl and boy students. I think they went the length of taking the horses out of his carriage and dragging it themselves. This experience was not wasted upon him. The fact that he went almost direct from being Lord Rector of Glasgow to become Chancellor of the University of Oxford was not without its influence for good on the position of women. I was in Oxford about this time with many of our best friends in the University, and the tone among them was that, though rejoicing in Lord Curzon's unexpected width of view in regard to women, they rather resented that he had not revealed this in Oxford until after his Glasgow Rectorial election had taken place. It was all very well, they said, to be discreet, but he might have told us.

MILlicent GARRETT FAWCETT.

THE BADNESS OF HER.

Our Irish correspondent writes:—The speaker had touched on the question of married women working. Up rose a severe-looking dame of about sixty. After the usual compliments, she continued, "as to married weemen working I don't hold with it at all. I know a married lady who was principal of a school and her husband was principal of the boy's school too, and it was a right good salary he had and she had no call to work (N.B. Married women teachers are not dismissed in Ireland). The lady, she just worked on, even when the childer were comin'. Three of them she had and as for what the lady speaker to-night says about ante-natal work why she worked in that bad air." Why bad air, queried the luckless speaker. "Couldn't be anything but bad air, with all them school childer breaths in it," said the severe dame. "Any way, she worked on and she was just three months off retiring with her pension, when she took ill and died. She had wrought hard to get that pension, but it was not intended by the Lord she should, so she died just three months from her goal." The severe dame sat down. The badness of the married lady principal was clearly undeniable and nothing more was to be said.

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

19TH FEBRUARY: SICKNESS INCIDENCE (WOMEN).

Mr. Snell asked the Postmaster-General what was the average number of days of sick leave per head taken during each year of the last three years by women clerical officers, writing assistants and members of the established typing grades, respectively; and what was the average number of days of sick leave per head taken on account of gastric and nervous trouble respectively, in the case of each of the above grades during the same period in each of the main sub-departments of his department.

Sir W. Mitchell-Thomson: The answer contains many figures, and with the hon. Member's consent, I will circulate it in the Official Report.

Following is the answer: I regret that figures are not available which would show the incidence of sick leave for each of the grades mentioned separately for three years. The general sick leave rates of the Female Clerical and Supervising staffs of the Post Office, which include the grades referred to, and other grades, were as follows:—

	London.	Provinces.	Scotland.	Northern Ireland.
1927	13.3	13.9	10.8	9.4
1926	12.9	10.2	14.2	12.7
1925	14.0	13.2	12.7	22.3

These figures cover staffs of about 4,300 in London, 1,250 in the provinces, 300 in Scotland and below fifty in Northern Ireland. Figures for 1928 are not yet available. As regards nervous trouble, a special analysis of the cause of sick absence of the London staff was made in 1926 with the following results:—

Grade.	Staff.	Average days per head due to—	
		Gastric Trouble.	Nervous Trouble.
Women Clerical Officers	2,922	.68	2.1
Writing Assistants	1,707	.56	1.0
Typists	305	1.29	2.8

20TH FEBRUARY: UNEMPLOYMENT TRAINING (BENEFIT).

Major Cohen asked the Minister of Labour whether, if a married man is selected for training at one of the Ministry's training centres, his wife receives unemployment benefit during his training.

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: Married men at the Ministry's training centres are as a rule in receipt of unemployment benefit (including the allowances in respect of a wife or other dependents) if they are being trained for employment in this country, but not if they are being trained for employment overseas.

Major Cohen asked the Minister of Labour whether, if an unemployed man and wife are both given training at the only centre in the country where married families can be trained, benefit is withheld, and if so, will he consider giving the organization which undertakes to support the family while training that benefit.

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: I understand that the training at the centre referred to is for employment overseas. As I explained in reply . . . to the previous question unemployment benefit is not paid to those undergoing this training.

Major Cohen: Can the Minister explain why unemployment benefit should not be paid?

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: The reason is this. When we were training persons for employment in this country, it could be reasonably assumed that a man would later take up insurable work, but we are also training persons for employment overseas, where normally speaking they are likely to go out of the field of British insurable work. . . . The situation is being met by giving men who are training for overseas an additional allowance which will take the place of benefit.

Mr. Beckett: Could not the right hon. Gentleman see his way to treat this as a debt of honour?

21ST FEBRUARY: STREET OFFENCES (COMMITTEE'S REPORT).

Sir R. Thomas asked the Home Secretary whether he proposes now to introduce legislation to carry out any of the recommendations of the Street Offences Committee's Report.

Sir W. Joynson-Hicks: The important recommendations of this Committee are still under consideration.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P. Hon. Treasurer: Miss MACADAM. General and Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HORTON.

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

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

6th-9th March.

Attention is once more drawn to the arrangements for the Annual Council Meeting which are announced this week under "Coming Events." We believe that to outsiders, both the Reception on Wednesday evening, and the Public Luncheon on Friday afternoon, will prove of particular interest, and we extend a very special invitation to any visitors from other countries who are interested in the woman's movement. We shall be very glad if such visitors to London would make themselves known to us, either at Headquarters before the Council meets, or at King George's Hall during the meeting.

AGE OF MARRIAGE BILL.

As our readers will have seen elsewhere the Committee stage of this Bill which Lord Buckmaster has introduced in the House of Lords at our request was postponed from Thursday of last week until Wednesday, 27th March.

MRS. NEILANS.

We offer our sincere sympathy to Miss Alison Neilans on the death of her mother, Mrs. Neilans, who died quietly at a great age, at the beginning of last week.

GENERAL ELECTION FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Already received	167	8	0
Blyth, Miss		5	0
Corbett, Mrs. Adrian	5	5	0
Courtauld, Miss S. R.	3	3	0
Crosland, Miss		5	0
Finke, Miss E.	1	0	0
Freeth, Mrs.	1	0	0
Godwin, Mrs.	2	2	0
Howell, Miss Lilian	1	1	0
Lancaster, Miss E. M.	3	0	0
Lucas, Miss A. A.	5	5	0
Lyttelton, Dame Edith	1	0	0
Margesson, Miss	1	1	0
Marriage, Miss E. T.	1	0	0
Montgomery, Miss	1	0	0
Murray, the Hon. Mrs. Graham	2	0	0
Neal, Mrs.	1	0	0
Oulton, Mrs.	10	0	0
Pollock, Mrs. A. G.	2	2	0
Reckitt, Miss Juliet	1	1	0
Reid, Mrs.	10	0	0
Richardson, Mrs. M. K.	1	1	0
Ridding, The Lady Laura	10	0	0
Royden, Miss A. Maude	1	1	0
Simon, Mrs. E. D.	2	2	0
Spicer, Miss Charlotte	1	1	0
Spicer, Miss Harriet	10	0	0
Stepney, Lady Howard	2	0	0
Stopes, Dr. Marie	1	1	0
Taylor, Mrs.	1	1	0
McD. Teacher, Miss A.	1	0	0

Total received 23rd February £212 5 0

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

MADAM.—It would be interesting if Lady Iveagh would explain exactly what she meant in her letter to you when she said that the result of the amendments to Clause 96, i.e. the addition of the words "progress" and "welfare", "will be greatly to strengthen the new power conferred by the Bill on the Minister to take action where Local Authorities fail to maintain the required standard of Health Services." Surely, as was

argued by Sir Leslie Scott, the retention of the words "regard being had to the standards maintained in other areas whose financial resources and other relevant circumstances are substantially similar" means that these standards must be applied in deciding what is "a reasonable standard of efficiency and progress" and whether the "health or welfare" of the inhabitants . . . has been, or is likely to be, endangered." In resisting an amendment of Sir Leslie Scott's to leave out the comparison with other areas, which would really have strengthened the power given to the Minister by this Clause, Sir Kingsley Wood argued that this would be unfair to the Local Authorities. Is it not clear that the Government only added these words because they appeared to meet the point of those who are seriously concerned at the removal of the inducement of the percentage grant, and, at the same time, constituted no real danger to the autonomy of Local Authorities? It is well known that the Local Authorities have only agreed to Clause 96, because they are convinced from their experience of the actions of the Ministry of Health in the past, that it will only be enforced in the case of the really backward authorities. If they are right, then the new clause can never take the place of the percentage grant as an inducement to the Authorities now above the minimum to continue to develop their Health Services.

SHEENA D. SIMON.

Broomcroft, Ford Lane,
Didsbury, Manchester.

A LAYWOMAN'S THOUGHTS ON THE DUTCH PICTURES.

MADAM.—I read with great interest the article under this heading in your last issue. With one sentence at least all will agree. It is quite evident the criticisms do come from a laywoman. One must, however, express gratitude for a quite new departure in art criticism. It has never surely occurred to any critic except the writer that a guiding principle in the selection of pictures for exhibition should be the inclusion of an "adequate number of suitable pictures by competent women." How fortunate that the Berlin Congress meets this year, for it affords an opportunity for the international recognition of this principle, so fundamental to the truly artistic character of any exhibition. Only one anxiety clouds the happy contemplation of this prospect. To be really effective the resolution to be carried by the Congress should be retrospective and should apply to exhibitions of paintings by deceased artists. It is clear from the article that such is the desire of the writer. The details will one fears, present difficulties, but these only exist to be overcome. The discovery of unrecognized women whose work should rightly be placed side by side with that of Rembrandt and/or Franz Hals would create a sensation in the art world.

The writer refers to the prosperity of the seventeenth century. One seems to remember books by some one called Motley, describing among other matters battles and sieges during the last years of the sixteenth and the early years of the seventeenth century, when the cheerful sunny land which so delighted A. W. H. was submerged by the opening of the dykes, and the portly and prosperous housewives starved rather than surrender. Rembrandt, be it noted, grew to manhood under the post-war conditions of the seventeenth century.

With regard to religious painting, it is a pity that A. H. W. did not notice the *Pilgrim Christ* in the large room and the *Crucifixion* and other drawings in the print room, all religious. The relations between bareness of a church interior and religion seems singularly out of place in art criticism.

It will doubtless afford great satisfaction to our art friends in Holland to know that whatever be their failings, one British woman likes them. This remark is characteristic of that trait in our national character which is found so endearing by foreign friends.

DORA MELLONE.

7 Booterstown Avenue,
Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

THE REAL FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

MADAM.—As an old subscriber to THE WOMAN'S LEADER I should like to thank Lady Stephen for her vindication of Florence Nightingale, as portrayed in *The Lady with a Lamp*.

Considering the enormous debt the country—nay the whole world—owes to Florence Nightingale, one wonders how Captain Berkeley could have had the heart to write this iconoclastic play. Had the disagreeable side of Florence Nightingale, thus shown, indeed been the truth, gratitude at least might have stayed a soldier's hand; but deliberately to travesty facts shows that gratitude is not one of the ingredients that went to make up this play, but rather a very shrewd notion that there would be money in it. Money made by showing a false picture of a dead woman.

Possibly Captain Berkeley's generation was not taught "De mortuis nil nisi bonum" in its full subtlety.

I have often noticed that a book, or play, which "downs a woman", specially by making her merely unlikeable, is successful. But I hardly think it is necessary that THE WOMAN'S LEADER, which I among others believed to be a feminist paper, should help to put more money into Captain Berkeley's pocket by prominently advertising this untrue representation of the noble dead.

A. ESTCOURT-OSWALD.

Pinkney House, Colchester.

CHARLOTTE CARMICHAEL STOPES.

MADAM.—Mrs. C. C. Stopes' death leaves a blank in the first rank of Shakespeare scholars. She was a close research-student of that period of literature and a writer of some eminence. Her books are numerous and valuable for reference, the fruit of years of hard study and patient drudgery. Till eyesight failed she was a constant visitor to the British Museum and the Record Office, and in spite of uncertain health and other drawbacks, she was a model in this as in other branches of work, of industry and enthusiasm. She was one of the pioneers of the Higher Education of women in Edinburgh, her native city, and fought the fight for their intellectual emancipation before the University was opened to our sex. She was distinguished in philosophy and science and gained a diploma in 8 subjects

—this corresponded to 1st Class Honours for the M.A. Examination—later, for the *Vote* she lectured and wrote constantly. Her *Sphere of Men* is a classic. She leaves a large circle of appreciative friends of all types, who can testify to her unflinching generosity in every way, and to the originality of her cheery talk with its strong vein of Scottish humour.

A. J. MACGREGOR.

Woodlands, Ottery St. Mary,
Devon.

"THE CAUSE."

MADAM.—I am grateful to Miss Kelly for her letter to you last week and for enabling me to see the annual reports of the W.S.P.U. for 1913 and 1914, which are in the same form as those for earlier years and bring the record down to March, 1914. I am most anxious to make the whole position clear, and shall be very grateful if any of your readers can tell me how I can see the final report and the closing of the accounts. It is very difficult to obtain accurate information about the W.S.P.U., since its books and papers were subject to constant raids by the police, and its records only exist where they have been preserved by individuals.

R. G. STRACHEY.

53 Marsham Street,
Westminster, S.W. 1.

MADAM.—One assumes that there are considerations of honour that deter Mrs. Strachey from publicly stating the authority on which she has mis-stated the facts concerning W.S.P.U. finances. For it is unthinkable that an author whose work bears the stamp of courageous honesty so unmistakably as *The Cause* does, and who has in the main succeeded so well in the necessarily difficult and delicate task of the contemporary historian, would not have taken pains to consult the best authority available to her in such an important matter.

Taking a broad view, and speaking as one who is proud to have been a "militant," I feel that she has chronicled our share in the women's movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with a sense of proportion and a degree of comprehension of its meaning and spirit that are remarkable in one who was outside it.

To me these chapters are in a sense the measure of a great book.

MARY PHILLIPS.

2 Horbury Crescent, W. 11.

EVENTS THAT MUST NOT BE MISSED.

We propose from time to time to give under this heading information of dramatic, artistic, and literary events of special interest to our readers. Under "Forthcoming Events" we shall continue to chronicle notices of meetings mainly of women's organizations which are sent us. We invite the co-operation of our readers in this, and shall be glad to have suitable events brought to our notice.

The Lady with a Lamp. By Reginald Berkeley. Garrick Theatre (transferred from Arts Theatre Club; see "The Real Florence Nightingale," page 388, in issue of 18th January, and on page 11 issue of 15th February.

Exhibition of pictures by working men and women. Tate Gallery, S.W. 1.

Ideal Home Exhibition. Olympia, Kensington, W. 14. Till 2nd March, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets 2s. 6d. and 2s.

Exhibition of Dutch Pictures, Burlington House, Piccadilly, W. 1. Closing date 9th March, 9.30 to 6 p.m.

"My Flight Round Africa." Lady Baily will speak on her recent flight, on Wednesday, 6th March, 6 p.m., at 41 Cadogan Square, S.W. 1, under the auspices of the Women's Engineering Society. Tickets from the Secretary, 46 Kensington Court, W. 8.

The Rumour, by C. K. Munro, Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square. Every evening 8.30; matinee Thursdays and Saturdays. See Note "A Peace Play," on page 26.

BROADCAST FEATURES.

Monday, 4th March, 10.45 a.m.—Law and the Home: How Property is divided when the owner leaves no will; Mrs. Crofts (5XX only).

Wednesday, 10.45 a.m.—A woman's commentary. Mrs. Oliver Strachey (5XX only).

Wednesday, 7 p.m.—Public Departments (all B.B.C. stations except 5GB). 6th March: International Affairs.

Wednesdays, from 6th March at 7.25 p.m. Mrs. Sidney Webb. Four lectures on "How to Study Social Questions." London and Daventry.

COMING EVENTS.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

6th March. 4 p.m. At Home at 17 Buckingham Street. Speaker: Mrs. Dalton, on "Some Problems of Race affecting the Women of the West Indies."

FABIAN SOCIETY (WOMEN'S GROUP).

12th March. 8 p.m. Caxton Hall. Mrs. Swanwick, M.A. "Women in the Future: Life and Function." Chair, Mr. H. W. Nevinson.

GUILDHOUSE W.C.A.

4th March. 3 p.m. Final Practice of Songs for Guildhouse Musical Festival.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

6th and 7th March. 10.15-2.30. London School of Economics, Aldwych, W.C. Conference on Forced Labour and on Contract Labour. Tickets (free) from the Secretary, L.N.O., 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.

MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

7th March. 8 p.m. 61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E. Mrs. Barbara Wootton, "Equality as a Social Ideal." Chair: Professor Graham Wallas.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

6th-9th March. Annual Council Meetings. King George's Hall, Y.M.C.A., Gt. Russell Street, W.C. Wednesday, 6th March, 2.30 p.m.,

First session; 8.45 p.m. Reception at King's College for Women, Campden Hill, W. 8. Thursday, 7th March, 10 a.m.-12.45 p.m., Second session; 2.5 p.m., Third session. Friday, 8th March 10 a.m.-12.45 p.m., Fourth session; 1 p.m., Public Luncheon, Criterion Restaurant; 3-5 p.m., Fifth session; Saturday, 9th March, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Sixth session. All sessions open to the public. Tickets and further particulars from the Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., 15 Dean's Yard, S.W. 1.

Acton W.C.A.—7th March, 3 p.m. The Committee Room, Acton Municipal Offices. Miss Mary Stewart, "The Cinema and Education."

Gillingham W.C.A.—4th March, 7.30 p.m. Arden Street. Members' evening.

Preston W.C.A.—5th March, 7.30 p.m. Orient Cafe, Friargate. Debate, "Is the Woman Candidate Necessary?"

Kingston, Malden, Surbiton and District W.C.A.—1st March, 3 p.m. Miss Ward, "The Work of the N.U.S.E.C."

UNION OF WOMEN VOTERS.

11th March. 8 p.m. 55 Chancery Lane. Mrs. Helena Normanton, "The Woman Peer in History and Law."

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

26th April-9th May. Meetings of the Executive and Standing Committees in London. Particulars from the Secretary, 117 Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

TYPEWRITING.

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POST WANTED.

YOUNG Dutch Girl of very good family would like to spend April-May in good English family, to improve her English. Au pair or small remuneration. Willing to help in household.—Mrs. van Biema Nykert, 105 Westbourne Terrace, W. 2.

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DRESS.

GOWNS well cut and fitted by experienced dressmaker. Terms from 21/-. Ladies' own materials made up. Renovations a speciality.—Grace Mayman, 168 High Street, Notting Hill Gate. Phone: Park 2943. Appointments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 3rd March, 3.30, Stanton Coit, Ph.D.; 6.30, Maude Royden, "The Suffering of God."

EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1, requires and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Holiday engagements. Registration: Employers, 2/6; workers, 1/-. Suiting fee: Employers, 10/6; workers, 2/-. (Victoria 5940.)

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