

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### The King.

The bulletins of the King have now shown for some days a slow but steady record of progress. Christmas preparations and festivities were all the brisker and merrier when the public realized that the sharpest sting of anxiety was removed. The deep affection and respect of his people will, we hope, carry the King through the coming tedious weeks of recovery and in common with all his subjects, we wish him a new year of complete restoration to health.

#### The New Perseus on Christmas Eve.

The most picturesque Christmas incident has been the rescue of women and children of different nationalities by the Royal Air Force from the Afghan capital over the border to Peshawar. The rescued included not only the members of the British Legation, but women and children of French, German, and Turkish nationality. The whole story is as full of thrills as the melodrama *The Green Goddess* by William Archer, with its wireless and airship escapes, which delighted us at Christmas a few years ago. But that was only the prediction of fancy; now we have the real thing, fortunately romance and adventure with no element of tragedy except the ill-fated efforts of King Amanullah, whose royal progress through Western countries we followed with interest, to introduce European customs in a country not yet ripe to receive them. But Afghanistan is not unaccustomed to rebellions, and it is hoped that order will speedily be restored.

#### The Government and the Mining Areas.

The Prime Minister made his promised survey of the Government schemes for the mining areas before the House adjourned last Thursday. He reported that the transference of workers was proceeding at the satisfactory rate of over a thousand every week, some of this conducted through the labour exchanges, and some by independent effort. He explained that the Government had offered a financial contribution to the more prosperous local authorities on condition that a certain proportion of men from the distressed areas should be absorbed, and that schemes for land drainage had been sanctioned on the same terms. Work is to be undertaken in the London parks mainly with labour from the distressed areas—we confess to a feeling of uneasiness at an influx of unemployed men for London. What about London unemployment and London overcrowding? No one has yet answered our anxious question as to how the transference of families described by Mr. Baldwin as the right plan can be effected in view of the great housing shortage which still exists in industrial areas especially. After discussing training schemes with a view to emigration and referring to the general trade outlook the Prime Minister described the proposed grant in aid of distress and promised that help must be given to all in need in the areas concerned, whether they were actually miners or not. Speaking later in the debate, the Secretary of State for Scotland explained that there would be a grant for Scotland in proportion to its requirements and that he had

summoned a conference of the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the Lord Lieutenants of the counties affected. The arrangements for pooling funds in order that the pound to pound grant may be available for all the leading schemes were made not quite clear, but we have no doubt that organizations such as that of the Friends, whose work has received high praise, will be able to make satisfactory arrangements for this. A careful survey of the areas is urgently needed. Are there no University departments of economics or schools of social study available to undertake this for the district within working distance? We close the year, however, on a more hopeful note. The persistence with which the subject is brought forward in Parliament the awakening of the social conscience of the nation, and finally the strong appeal of the Prince of Wales—it is well known that the King and Queen have been much concerned about the distress—leads us to believe that the coming months will show some improvement. But every man, woman, and child must do their share. As the Prince of Wales said, "We must recapture the spirit shown during the War" if we are to cope adequately with a problem of such magnitude.

#### Distress among Children.

The National Union joined with the National Union of Teachers, the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment, and the Society of Friends Coalfields Distress Committee, in a statement which was sent on their behalf by the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organizations to the Prime Minister, urging that the Government should give facilities for the passing of the Children (Provision of Footwear) Bill. This statement was sent before Mr. Baldwin made his announcement in the House of Commons, and was accompanied by a series of figures giving particulars of the conditions in a number of places in the distressed areas.

#### The Passing of the Consultative Committee.

It is impossible not to regret the demise of the Consultative Committee of women's organizations, started on the initiative of Lady Astor soon after she entered Parliament. In the years when women were solitary units in the House, this committee served as a sort of spiritual bodyguard representing as it did the organized women of all shades of opinion in the country. It may be that its day is over, and that the desirable habit of consultation and collaboration has now been firmly established. But the luncheon in honour of Lady Astor at which it made its joyous exit was more like a simple family festival than a funeral feast. Mrs. Hubback and Mrs. Corner on behalf of the constituent societies testified to the admiration, the affection, and the sense of personal possession which they all feel with regard to Lady Astor, and at the same time paid a tribute to the perfect art of chairmanship displayed by the Chairman of the Committee, Lady Galway. In her reply Lady Astor was at her very best, and the intimacy of her speech strengthened the illusion of a family party. It seemed impossible that Lady Galway's closing remarks, so delightfully phrased, were to be the final words of this short chapter in the story of the women's movement. Might not this committee be resuscitated in another form to organize similar informal gatherings from time to time of representatives of women's societies with women Members of Parliament? Resolutions would, of course, be barred, but ideas of common interest might be ventilated.

#### The Representation of Women in the League of Nations.

The annual meeting of the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations was held on 29th November. While welcoming the resolution of the Assembly of the League recommending governments to take into consideration the inclusion of women in their delegations to the first conference

on the Codification of International Law, the Council makes several further recommendations. Among the most important are: that the Joint Committee of Women's International Organizations should be invited to send consultative delegates to this conference, particularly as the question of the nationality of women is to be discussed. The British Government is urged to include women among the technical advisers who accompany the British representative to the Council of the League, to send a woman as full delegate to the Assembly of the League, to include women as members of the Health Commission which will be reappointed in 1929, and to extend Dame Rachel Crowdy's contract in the Secretariat for seven years as in the case of other heads of sections. The Council noted with indignation that no woman was included in the list of speakers at the Anniversary Meeting of the League of Nations Union in the Albert Hall on 26th October, and considered quite inadequate the official excuse that only honorary presidents of the Union (who are drawn exclusively from Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers) are eligible to be invited to speak. It requested that the choice of honorary officers of the Union and speakers at meetings should be placed on a wider basis.

#### Broadcasting Education of the Women Voters.

"Women's questions" have by no means been overlooked in the past by the B.B.C. Many valuable short talks concerned with national and local politics (in the non-party sense) have been given, and we welcome the new series beginning on Monday, 7th January. The first series of daily morning talks will be given by Mrs. Crofts, on "Law and the Home." On Wednesday mornings Mrs. Oliver Strachey will give popular surveys of current events, more particularly from the women's angle. The hour selected for these talks is 10.45, when it is thought that busy housewives are able after the first round of daily duty to sit down for a few minutes' leisure. We hope that this hour may possibly also suit the domestic staff and that their needs will be specially borne in mind. The General Election is approaching when for the first time those who serve in the homes of others will be called on to express their citizenship at the polling booth; many of them are saying that they want more knowledge. The 10.45 habit should be set up both in parlour and kitchen.

#### Miss Eglantyne Jebb.

The death of Miss Eglantyne Jebb after a long trying illness removes one of the very few outstanding figures in social work to-day. She began her life work very young. The original

### THE WAY OF PEACE.<sup>1</sup>

There is no living man who has devoted himself more wholeheartedly and with greater effect to creating a lasting way of Peace, than the author of this book, and so this is a most fitting title for a collection of papers by him, written during the last ten years.

The papers are varied in scope, and some will appeal more than others. They deal with peace at home as well as abroad and one feels that the least convincing are those entitled "Conservatism and Peace." One also wonders if the writer could have written these with quite the same conviction since his experience of office, and his consequent resignation. Undoubtedly it is true there is really only one road to peace, and the sooner all parties realize it, the better for the nation.

To those of us who have been bitterly disappointed with the rather slow and timid support that the Conservative Government has given to the work of the League of Nations, and the real hindrance to its progress that they have been in refusing to sign the Optional Clause, and enter into All-in-Arbitration Treaties, or make any courageous contribution in the direction of reduction of armaments—one feels unconvinced that there will be time to wait until the whole Conservative Party realizes it. It may be that a time may come when these issues will seem so vital that men and women of peace from all parties may feel it right to sink their party differences until such a basis to the future of civilization has been secured. Lord Cecil has at any rate taken one step in that direction by resigning. Perhaps this was in his mind when he wrote "The Party System and Peace." But it is in the papers on "Nationalism and Internationalism," "Co-operation as the basis of Peace," "The Moral Basis of the League," "International Arbitration," "Disarmament and the Future of the League," that readers will find most interest

<sup>1</sup> *The Way of Peace*, by Viscount Cecil. (Philip Allan & Co., 12s. 6d. net).

quality of her mind showed itself early in her decision to train as an elementary school teacher after she left Lady Margaret Hall, and her useful survey of social conditions in Cambridge, published many years ago, and remembered by social students of a past generation, was one of the first of its kind. After some years of social work in Cambridge the call came which led to her life work, and during the second Balkan war she visited Macedonia on behalf of the Macedonian Relief Fund. But the work for which she is best known was in connection with the Fight-the-Famine Council and the Save the Children Fund, of both of which she was one of the founders. This Save the Children Fund became an international union operating in forty different countries, and when the Committee for Child Welfare of the League of Nations was formed, Miss Jebb was appointed one of its assessors. With her poor health it was nothing short of miraculous how much she was able to accomplish. She travelled widely through Europe, and at least one model village due to her constructive genius bears her name. Those who have seen her, a frail, almost ethereal figure, among the children she loved in far-off lands, and not less with her devoted fellow workers, will realize that there are sad hearts in many countries to-day.

### QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

WEDNESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 1928: UNIVERSITY ELECTORAL REGISTERS.

*Mr. E. Brown* asked the Secretary of State for Scotland if he is aware that, owing to the date on which the University Registers in Scotland are made up, young women under 30 in the Scottish universities will be unable to vote at the next General Election; and will he state if the Government intend to take steps to bring in a bill to remedy this.

*Sir J. Gilmour*: My attention has already been drawn to the date on which, under the existing practice, university registers are made up in Scotland. I have suggested that under their existing powers the governing bodies of the universities should direct the 1929 Registers to be made up to 1st May, 1929, the 1928 registers being continued till that date. This would ensure that women qualified under the 1928 Act to vote for the Scottish University constituency will be able to exercise their votes, in common with the new electors for other constituencies, on or after 1st May, 1929. The four universities are at present in consultation on the matter, and I have no reason to suppose that any difficulty will arise in carrying out this arrangement.

and most inspiration. These essays give to many who have not had the fortune to work side by side with Lord Cecil, and benefit by his broad outlook and by watching his fertile mind tackle each international problem as it comes along, a similar understanding of the work of the League, and the problems that still lie before it. Two of the articles were written for America, one on Disarmament—before the failure of the Naval Conference, and the other on "President Wilson and Peace." One could have wished that the book could have ended with one on the present American situation. In the light of the recent Kellogg Pact it is interesting to see how vitally important Lord Cecil felt it in the earlier years of the League to "close the loophole of war" in the Covenant. He says in 1925 "we want the principle recognized that a country that wantonly makes an aggression against its neighbour is guilty not only of a crime against that neighbour, but a crime against the whole of the community of nations. We have got to get to the conception of an International Peace... so that every nation will be prepared for that alone, to make any sacrifices, however great, in order to maintain it." Lord Cecil in every article shatters for ever the idea that the splendid isolation of a nation is anything but national selfishness. "With regard to individuals it has long been a commonplace. Indeed civilization is little more than the progress from isolation to co-operation" and that "Internationalism—the recognition that the common interests of the nations enormously outweigh or rather absorb the individual interests of any one of them" has made progress, is shown in his clear analysis of the League's work in all its aspects. In every sense a balanced and critical analysis, but swayed throughout by a firm belief in the solid basis of the idealism that underlies all its work and its future progress.

One can only hope that this book will fall into the hands of many who have not yet had the fortune to come into contact with, and so feel the inspiration of its author. E. D. LAYTON.

### MATERNAL MORTALITY.

By H. S. ANTHONY.

During one of the many wars in which England engaged in the eighteenth century, a fine body of troops under a certain Sir Richard Strahan was disembarked on the marshy island of Walcheren, *en route* for the scene of action; and there, while awaiting week after week their orders to proceed, they gradually wasted away from fever, until at last a small, weak, miserable remnant were led home, who had never even seen the enemy.

On which occasion some wit produced a quatrain:—

"The Earl of Chatham, with his sword drawn,  
Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strahan;  
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,  
Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham."

Those men's lives were sacrificed to the Moloch of carelessness and incompetence; and in the same way the lives of many child-bearing women are being sacrificed in this country to-day. Nearly 3,000 deaths of mothers occur annually, and the majority of them are preventable. The Ministry of Health has stated the facts unequivocally. Among one of the factors it mentions as of the first importance is a roused and educated public opinion. Public opinion is, we believe, very definitely aroused, and among other courses of action it calls upon the Ministry of Health to initiate or assist in certain measures. Let us beware of falling into the errors of Strahan and Chatham, "that Serbonian bog where armies whole have sunk."

Chiefly to avoid this danger, to prevent both apathy and overlapping responsibilities, or irresponsibilities, a Committee on Maternal Mortality was recently formed, with Miss Gertrude Tuckwell as honorary secretary, which has now held two public meetings, both excellently attended, at the Central Hall, Westminster. At the second of these, on 30th October, a report was presented<sup>1</sup> in which the position of affairs in regard to maternal welfare is summarized, and comments by informed correspondents have been added, on what is most grievously lacking. (We were surprised not to find here any mention of a need emphasized at the last Annual Meeting of Women's Institutes: that the high charges made in respect of telephones installed by rural midwives should be given special attention.)

Between the first and second public meetings of this Committee the Ministry of Health has set up two Departmental Committees: one to co-ordinate and stimulate research into questions relating to the prevention of maternal mortality; the other to consider the training of midwives (including its relation to the education of medical students in midwifery). Three of the members of the latter Committee are also members of the unofficial Maternal Mortality Committee.

Another notable recent development has been the presentation to Parliament of the Local Government Bill, of whose probable effect on Maternity and Child Welfare work several delegates spoke. The substitution of the present earmarked percentage grants by block grants not earmarked for this service was regarded with extreme suspicion and indeed disfavour by the meeting. This subject, too big to deal with adequately here, has been and will be referred to elsewhere in this journal.

The report includes a valuable summary of the activities of Local Authorities with regard to maternal welfare. It is very noticeable how uneven these are in different districts. To take two instances only out of many: it is generally agreed that ante-natal care must form the basis of sound modern obstetric practice, and that puerperal sepsis is the preventable cause of a great number of maternal deaths; yet "there are County Councils who apparently have no ante-natal centres", and out of forty-eight counties, of which forty-two sent reports, only twenty-two reported that beds were specially kept for the treatment of puerperal sepsis.

As for the returns from County Boroughs, considering that their record for maternal mortality is in the aggregate worse than that of all the other districts, urban or rural, in England and Wales,<sup>2</sup> it is perhaps not surprising to read that with regard

<sup>1</sup> *Maternal Mortality*, published by the Maternal Mortality Committee, 13 Chester Terrace, S.W. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Protection of Motherhood*, by Dame J. Campbell, p. 4.

to the provision of maternity homes or beds in a maternity hospital for (a) complicated cases, (b) patients whose homes are unsuitable for confinements, (c) ante-natal observation, (d) treatment of puerperal sepsis "it is impossible to get a correct survey of what is really provided... as the replies are exceedingly indefinite. The word 'adequate' is frequently used to describe the service, and no definition given." Respecting County Boroughs in general the report concludes that "roughly speaking, it appears that about forty-five (out of seventy-nine) are putting into force half or more of the provisions for which a grant in aid can be obtained. We have been much impressed by reports from certain areas where the work appears admirably organized and carried out... Why should we not have equally good service everywhere?"

Turning to national organization for maternal welfare the report outlines the benefits to which women may be entitled in this respect under the National Health Insurance scheme. The whole difficult question of national insurance in relation to motherhood is touched on. This is a question which needs tackling in its entirety: an undertaking on which no political party or national society has yet, so far as we know, embarked.

With a marked absence of exaggeration or heat, the report deals with this whole complicated and difficult matter, and we have all reason to be grateful to the Maternal Mortality Committee for its effective work. Its members will know as well as we do that certain aspects and difficulties have not been mentioned, they are indicating at what points they think the present evil conditions most vulnerable. If any of our readers, as individuals or through their local Societies, feel that they could usefully co-operate in this work, or wish to have help and guidance in work they are already undertaking in their area, they should get in touch with the Hon. Secretary, or with the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, which is represented on the Committee.

### NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: Miss ELIZABETH 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.

### OUR SOCIETIES IN THE DISTRESSED AREAS.

The Ilkley Save the Children Committee, which is a sub-committee of the S.E.C. with co-opted members, organized a street collection in aid of the children of distressed miners on 15th December. The amount received was £104 0s. 3d., and in addition a considerable quantity of clothing.

### DAME MILLICENT'S JOURNEY.

The good wishes of all our members will go with Dame Millicent Fawcett, when she leaves England on 5th January, for a visit to Ceylon with Miss Agnes Garrett. Her visit will be an inspiration to those engaged in the active struggle for the vote for the women of Ceylon.

### CONGRATULATIONS.

We wish to convey to Miss Atkinson, on behalf of our members, our congratulations on her appointment as Justice of the Peace for the Farnham bench. We should also like to congratulate the district on obtaining the services of one who has already done so much for the welfare of the neighbourhood, particularly of the women.

### MONTHLY LETTER.

Our Societies will be receiving a letter from the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee this week, and the Monthly Letter for January will be replaced by one dealing with Annual Council business.

*POLICY.*—The sole policy of THE WOMAN'S LEADER is to advocate a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women. So far as space permits, however, it will offer an impartial platform for topics not directly included in the objects of the woman's movement but of special interest to women. Articles on these subjects will always be signed, at least by initials or a pseudonym, and for the opinions expressed in them the Editor accepts no responsibility.

## COMING EVENTS.

## FABIAN SOCIETY (WOMEN'S GROUP).

8th January, 8 p.m. Caxton Hall, S.W. 1. Miss Susan Lawrence: "Women in Industry."

## MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

10th January, 8 p.m. 61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E. Sir Michael Sadler: "Ruskin's Social Ideals." Chair: Sir Fabian Ware, K.C.V.O.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Edinburgh W.C.A. 16th January, 8 p.m. Gartshore Hall, 116 George Street. Lady Leslie Mackenzie, F.E.I.S.: "From the Highlands and Islands to Kentucky." Chair: Lady Findlay.

## OPEN DOOR COUNCIL.

10th January. 12.45 p.m. Pinoli Restaurant, Wardour Street. Luncheon. Mrs. Abbott, "Progress of the Open Door Council."

## UNION OF WOMEN VOTERS.

28th January, 8 p.m. 55 Chancery Lane, W.C. Miss M. Scott, A.R.C.M. (Founder of Society of Women Musicians): "Is there Equality of Opportunity for Women Musicians?"

## ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

21st January. 6 p.m. St. Patrick's Clubroom, Soho Square. Mrs. Corbett Ashby, "Our International Responsibilities." Chair: Viscountess Dupplin.

## TYPEWRITING.

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## POST WANTED.

AU PAIR.—Young Austrian Lady (in England) seeks post London, in order to improve her English, and have opportunities of sight-seeing. Fond of children, musical; fluent French. References exchanged.—Box 1,522, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1.

## PROFESSIONAL.

PUBLIC SPEAKING.—Classes, Lectures, Private Lessons Speech Club.—Miss Lucy Bell, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. 1.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Expert advice on Openings and Trainings for professional women; interviews 10-1 (except Saturdays) or by appointment.

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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