# THE NOMAN'S LEADER AND THE COMMON CAUSE

Vol. XX. No. 28. One Penny.	REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER. Friday, August 17, 1928
CONTENTS.PAGETHE SESSION226REVIEWS OF BOOKS :226	boldness and a willingness to reveal truths, however unpleasar in the eyes of constituted authority. They are, after all, bo supporters of the Government's own party; the one actua a Government official; the other the chosen head of one of t most impregnably Conservative municipalities in Great Brita
The Devouring Fire </td <td>Lord Astor and Testator's Families. The text of the Wills and Intestacies (Family Maintenand</td>	Lord Astor and Testator's Families. The text of the Wills and Intestacies (Family Maintenand
Annual Subscription for Postal Subscribers : British Isles and Abroad, 6/6.	Bill, introduced by Lord Astor in the House of Lords just befor its rising, has now been published. This will give ample the for discussion by legal societies, women's organizations and othe before it is reintroduced, if necessary in a revised form, ne session. It is a long and carefully drafted Bill, which in

### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### The Peace Pact in Danger?

News continues to come from the United States and from the Continent of the bad impression caused by the British reservations to the Kellogg note. So much dissatisfaction has been aroused that it is suggested in some quarters that the American Senate, which does not meet till the autumn, may not ratify the treaty. In an important letter from the Editor of the *Christian Century* published both in the *Manchester Guardian* and *The Nation*, Dr. Morrison points out that although we have reserved our "freedom of action" in "certain regions the welfare and integrity of which constitute a special and vital interest for the Empire's peace and safety " and have referred to the " comparable interest " of the United States, no such reservations has even been mentioned by the United States itself. We can only hope that wiser notions will prevail in our Foreign Office, so that we shall not run the risk of being placed in the awkward position of having wrought the wreck of world-wide hopes. Another interesting criticism of the note has recently been pointed out—that the right of going " to war immediately in self-defence " -though legitimate for a country like the United States which is not a member state of the League, is not open to all signatories of the Covenant, who have agreed not to fight until a certain period of time has elapsed after the dispute has been referred to the Council of the League. The difficulty of determining selfdefence is only too familiar.

#### The New Royal Commission.

The names of the members of the Royal Commission on the powers and duties of the Police have now been announced. They consist of six men and two women. Of the men's names, with the exception of the Chairman, Lord Lee of Fareham, and of Mr. Brownlie, a well-known Trades Union official, we must confess that they convey nothing to us, though that may be due to a deficiency in our knowledge rather than in their merits. The two women members-Dame Merial Talbot and Miss Margaret Beavan-are, on the other hand, very well known to us. They are both women of considerable experience and undoubted ability; the former noted for her services to Agriculture during the war and to Overseas Emigration since ; the latter recognized as one of the most effective Child Welfare workers in the country, also as an active magistrate and lastly, through the office which she now occupies as Lord Mayor of Liverpool. So far so good. But at the risk of seeming ungracious, we would venture to express the doubt that the choice of these women is, from the Government point of view, a triffe too "safe" to be wholly satisfactory in the eyes of those who desire to see the difficult and delicate problems which face the Commission tackled not merely with prudence and sagacity but with

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ce) ore ime ners ext an ingenious fashion adopts certain features both from the Scotch and New Zealand models. Its object is to secure that a testator's spouse, children, or other dependents shall, unless this is otherwise affected, be properly provided for by the will. This is achieved by authorizing the Court to interfere if the will does not comply with the requirements laid down providing that a certain proportion of the estate shall be left to spouse and child respectively. These have to be adequately provided for before claims of other dependents can be entertained. After the holiday Lord Astor will himself be contributing an article to our columns on the Bill. We feel ourselves that certain modifications will in the end prove necessary as it is unlikely that the House of Lords will accept provision being made compulsory for children who are no longer dependent, or for dependents other than spouse and children. We rather doubt also the wisdom of determining what proportion of the estate or what sum shall be necessary to avoid an application for interference being made to the court.

#### Berlin after 25 Years.

A " call " to the eleventh congress of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship has now been issued by the President, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, and the Hon. President, Mrs. Chapman Catt. This gathering will meet in Berlin from 17th to 22nd June next year, twenty-five years after the first Congress which was held in that city in 1904. This will be a memorable meeting. It will not only be a great anniversary after a quarter of a century of international work, but it will also be a testimony to the depth and sincerity of the new international unity which exists among the forty-two affiliated countries which will be represented. The Congress will in itself be an event of great interest, but even greater will be the opportunity of a visit to a new Germany. How the pioneers of twenty-five years ago would have rubbed their eyes in astonishment if they had been told that in 1929 they would be observing the results that can be produced in a free republic by an almost complete absence of maintaining armaments. If they had foreseen this, they might reasonably have jumped to the conclusion that the happy charges had been brought about by some extraordinary success in the competitive struggle of the nations for supremacy, instead of, as is the case, by a Truly in the whirligig of time's signal defeat in that struggle. changes he that loseth his life often finds it and it may be the poor who inherit the earth. "Berlin after twenty-five years" is a very suitable subject for a meeting during the autumn and winter season and officers of women's societies are advised to find a place for it on their programmes.

#### The Right to Physical Exhaustion.

A sharp controversy has arisen in the field of international sport over the admissibility of certain women's athletic events for the international Olympic programme. Of ten women's

### THE WOMAN'S LEADER.

AUGUST 17, 1928.

#### **REVIEWS OF BOOKS.** THRILLERS.

THE DEVOURING FIRE, by Lord Gorell. (Murray, 7s. 6d. net.) THE HOUSE OF DREE, by Gordon Gardiner. (Sampson Low, 7s. 6d. net.)

THE PROFESSOR'S POISON, by Neil Gordon. (Longman's, 7s. 6d. net.)

It is strange that at the present time our gayest hours are spent reading stories of crime. But it is certainly a fact. The demand for thrillers comes from highbrow and lowbrow, from rich and poor, from young and old, from Cabinet Ministers and from errand boys; and it is eagerly supplied by all who can write at all from our leading novelists (or economists) downwards. The astonishing thing is that so many of the crime stories thus produced are good of their kind, and that there is so much variety among them. I can mention three all quite different from each other, but any one of which I can vouch for, as suitable to beguile hours of sickness or weariness, though why one should be beguiled by reading about very wicked deeds is more than I can tell !

Here we have first, in *The Devouring Fire*, the history of a horrid murder and its detection. It is the detection, of course, in which we take so much interest, but if the criminal had merely stolen a hat pin, instead of embedding it in somebody's heart, the puzzle would hardly provoke one's interest. It is a very good puzzle and the clues most carefully thought out. I was proud of myself because I guessed the solution at least in part, some way before the end of the book. I challenge the other detective "fan" readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER to do the same.

The House of Dree is not exactly a detective story : it concerns the work of an intelligence officer during the war in struggling against the wicked plots of enemy spies, and also against an older and more terrible form of crime. It is very good in its kind, and has a delightful Scottish setting. The atmosphere is that which has been made familiar and delightful to us by Stevenson and Buchan : a foreground of dour common sense against a background of melancholy, natural beauty, and uncanny unnatural fear.

The Professor's Poison also has to do with high politics, but with those of the post-war League of Nations age. The crimes with which it is concerned are not mere paltry individual murders, but wholesale massacres of populations by deadly poison gas. The Professor quite accidentally discovers a particularly deadly gas, and happens to refer to it casually in a lecture. He is amiably surprised and disgusted when he finds all the governments and all the criminals of Europe at his heels. He is determined not to give away his secret till he has discovered an antidote, and then to publish both to the world. Till then he will not yield to bribery or fear of death. He is a charming character and the story is very gaily told. It seemed fantastic when I read it, but a recent tragic event makes one feel that it is not, after all, so far from life. I. B. O'M.

#### (Continued from next column.) MEMORANDUM ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICE OF HOSPITALS.

This Memorandum, issued by the Joint Committee of Women's Organizations to promote Equal Opportunities for women with men in the Medical and Hospital Services, formed by the N.U.S.E.C., is now ready. It contains invaluable information and facts and figures with regard to the present position of women in these services and we hope that all our members will get copies, which can be obtained from Headquarters, price  $2\frac{1}{2}d$ ., post free.

## Is an International Language Possible ? E. SYLVIA PANKHURST. Published by the ACADEMIA PRO INTERLINGUA (British Section), 6d. (post free), from MORLAND PRESS, Carey St., London, S.W. 1 and A. HODSON, 36 St. Peter's Hill, Grantham.

DELPHOS (the future of International Language) By E. SYLVIA PANKHURST. Published by KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO., Broadway House, Carter Lane, London, E.C. "To-day and To-morrow Series," 2/6.

events offered for inclusion six have been accepted and four disallowed by the International Amateur Athletic Federation. The rejected items comprise the 800 metres race, the long jump, putting the shot, and the 200 metres flat. There seems on the face of it to be little difference between some of these items and the high jump and 80 metres hurdles which were accepted, but the ground of the decision, carried by a substantial majority, led by Canada, Great Britain and Ireland, but against the vigorous opposition of Lady Heath, was the supposed physical unfitness of women for certain physically exhausting forms of athletic effort. Well-doubtless some of these competitive efforts are exhausting enough. Almost as exhausting perhaps, as the rapid child-bearing which some women are called upon to sustain. But here again we have the old story of sex discrimination in a matter which affects men and women equally. The memory of Dorando fainting in the Shepherd's Bush Stadium amid the plaudits of an international crowd, or of Tunney's blind and bloodstained opponent regaining consciousness to fight a last round under the fevered ministrations of his second, does not seem to suggest to anyone that men should be prohibited from engaging in such activities. Yet are not the athlete's heart and the boxer's ear familiar results of such individual enterprise? Let us be logical. If it is the business of the community to protect the individual from himself (a disputable point of course) let the individual be protected irrespective of sex. If not, let freedom be impartially extended to those who choose to exhaust themselves in efforts which if they may be socially useless are at any rate socially harmless.

#### A Practical Victory.

The International Woman Suffrage News for August reports the success of a campaign carried on by Madame Blanche Schweig, a member of the French League for Women's Rights, against the prohibition of night-work to women s Rights, conductors. Their right to work on the shift which ends at 1 a.m. has now been definitely established. Such isolated instances of progress have a distinctly valuable educational effect on public opinion apart from the particular class which they concern. The absurdity of tying women up in their various occupations with the red tape of rules and regulations which do not apply to men must sooner or later be apparent to the most short-sighted.

1928 will obviously live in History as the year in which the great line of Franchise Acts were brought to their logical conclusion in the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act, which in every respect gives women identical voting rights with men. The above would qualify it to rank among red letter years in the Woman's Movement. The second most notable event with regard to the causes for which THE WOMAN'S LEADER stands is the agreement of Great Britain among other great countries of the world to sign the Kellogg Peace Pact. Whether this will prove the mighty weapon against the outbreak of war all hope, will depend on the will to peace among all the signatory states and more particularly among those who, like the United States, are not bound by the Covenant of the League with its refusal to allow a state to revert to war even in self-defence without the League, and on the reservations put forward both by Great Britain and France, which may mean little or much.

The Session has also been notable by the wide public interest aroused in various aspects of the administration of laws relating to solicitation and to public morals generally. The Street Offences Committee held a large number of public sessions. The view supported by ourselves, such as the abolition of laws relating specifically to prostitutes or to solicitation and the refusal to accept police evidence only with reference to annoyance arising out of solicitation cases, were ably put forward by "The Association of Moral and Social Hygiene" among others. It was clear that the personnel of the Commission do not share this point of view and their report, which will not be presented till the autumn, is awaited with some anxiety.

Next came the Savidge case with all its repercussions. There is no doubt that the storm raised will have materially helped the cause of women police. The names of those to be appointed to the Royal Commission to consider the powers and duties of Police have just been announced and include two women.

#### Haworth Parsonage.

Some weeks ago a pilgrim spirit led us up Church Lane—that significant little back-alley of Haworth village, which leads from the steep High Street up past the church vestry and the school house to the grey stone wall of Haworth Parsonage garden. We expected, as Brontë pilgrims have learned to expect, that the garden door would be fast shut, and that external glimpses of the steps and house to be scholar from the riging moor old Brontë home would have to be stolen from the rising moor behind the Parsonage or from the dour churchyard in front of it. Lo ! on this occasion it stood open. We entered warily. A rank little garden littered with builders' débris was around us. To our right an open front door, Charlotte Brontë's parlour, the little arched staircase, Charlotte Brontë's bedroom, the "children's study "—all open, empty and dismantled, but to the Brontë lover, intimate and familiar as a reiterated dream. The very air was alive with the personalities of Anne and Emily and Charlotte Brontë. We trod very softly, for the place whereon we stood was holy ground.

#### The New Bronte Museum.

That unexpected dismantlement was, it now transpires, the prelude to a new era of publicity for Haworth Parsonage and its ghostly inhabitants. On 4th August, the old house, somewhat renovated, and denuded of its later trappings, was formally opened as a Brontë museum to house the pathetic hoard of personal relics, manuscripts, first editions, etc., which the Brontë society has collected and will yet collect. It is by the generosity of Sir James Roberts, a former native of Haworth, that this goal of many pilgrimages now becomes accessible to the public. He has purchased the Parsonage and handed over its title deeds to the Brontë Society. His memory goes back a long way, even to the " frail and unforgettable figure of Charlotte Brontë, who more than once stopped to speak a kindly word to him," and it was wholly fitting that he and Lady Roberts should perform the opening ceremony which confers upon the Brontë Society an ideal home. Perhaps some of our readers may feel tempted to mock at the fervour of localized veneration with which we, and others choose to surround the memories of three Victorian women novelists of widely varying genius. Well -it would take too long to expound the peculiar intensity of their appeal : the drama of their lives, their smouldering passions, their white-hot integrity.

#### THE SESSION.

Of the Acts which have been passed few specifically affected women apart from men with the following exceptions :-

(1) The insignificant little National Health Insurance Act (which The Times erroneously described as embodying most of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on National Health Insurance instead of only a tiny proportion) which made new regulations for married women who leave off being employed

(2) The Criminal Law Amendment Act, which amended the 1922 Act so that cases may be brought up to a year after an assault has been perpetrated.

An attempt was made by Lord Astor at the request of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship to persuade the House of Lords to ask for an inquiry into the Laws governing testamentary provision for wives, husbands, and children. This failed, but the character of the debate and the tone of the Press both pointed to the possibility of a smaller bill based on

the New Zealand model being acceptable. Such a Bill was introduced by Lord Astor the last week of the session, and is described in another column.

An important feature of the year has been the campaign against Maternal Mortality which has resulted in the appointment by the Ministry of Health of two Committees—one mainly medical to deal with the causes of Maternal Mortality and the other to make recommendations on the supply and training of midwives. The attempt of the N.U.S.E.C. for an improved provision for Maternity in the National Health Insurance Act failed. It is melancholy in this connection to have had so recently to record a reduction in the grants allowed by the Ministry for milk to nursing and expectant mothers. We fear also that the proposed substitution under the new rating proposals of block for percentage grants in the health services will inevitably have a reactionary effect on these services.

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#### THE WOMAN'S LEADER.

#### NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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

### SUMMER SCHOOL AT OXFORD.-4th-11th September, 1928.

Applications for the Summer School to be held at St. Hilda's College, Oxford, from 4th–11th September should reach Head-quarters as soon as possible. The School, which is being held particularly for the newly enfranchised women, will consider problems of DEMOCRACY, INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS AND THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT. Some of the subjects dealt with will be Local Government with special reference to the new Government Proposals for rating reform ; the Ideals of the three main Political Parties; the History and Meaning of the Woman's Movement, including lectures on Women in Industry, Women in the Professions, the Legal Status of Wives and Mothers, and Family Allowances; Security and Disarmament, and Arbitration with special reference to the Kellogg Peace Pact. Full particulars with regard to the School can be obtained on application to the Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster.

#### NORTH ABERDEEN BY-ELECTION .- WOMEN VOTERS.

The N.U.S.E.C. Parliamentary Questionnaire has been sent by the Scottish Federation to the Conservative, Liberal, and Labour Candidates at the above by-election. Dr. Laura Sandeman (C.) has answered all the questions. She is in favour of Equal Pay and Opportunities; of abolishing the present Solicitation Laws, of legislation which will (a) place on the father of an illegitimate child equal responsibilities with the mother, (b) strengthen the machinery with regard to the payment of affiliation orders; of the separate taxation of the incomes of married persons; and of equality between men and women in the League of Nations. With regard to Restrictive Legislation, she says: "While I am in favour of equality of work and pay between men and women, this question involves too great possibilities to be answered by an unconditional affirmative to the employment of married women, " I cannot bind myself ' to provision for women as well as men in any scheme for the training or relief of the unemployed, "where relief work can employ women"; to the complete abolition of recognized brothels within the Crown Colonies, "while in sympathy I cannot bind myself"; to the Nationality of Married Women, "cannot reply without further consideration"; to the giving of information on methods of birth control at Welfare Centres, in my opinion to urge the establishment of clinics to encourage birth control would be unwise as part of a Government policy to Family Allowances, " if returned the question will have my careful consideration when it comes up for discussion.

Captain Wedgwood Benn (Lab.), who was one of the best friends of Women's Suffrage when a Liberal Member of Parliament, wrote to the Scottish Federation as follows : " I think you know I have always given the warmest support to the cause of Equal

Citizenship, and my interest has by no means abated." Mr. Rutherford (Lib.) replied in the affirmative to the questions on Equal Pay and Opportunities, Restrictive Legislation, Unem-ployment, Equal Moral Standard, Taxation of the Incomes of Married Persons, Women in the League of Nations. To the question on the appointment of an adequate number of Women Police he replies : " This matter should be determined by each Local Authority according to their needs ; the status, of course, should be on equal terms." With regard to the giving of information in Birth Control, he has crossed out " with respect to methods of birth control" and answers: " all helpful information should be given when asked for "; on Family Allowances he replies, "this matter involves considerable readjustment of finance. The objective is sound, but whether it is financially possible under existing conditions of service requires consideration."

#### WOMEN POLICE.

The statement with regard to the Duties of Women Police, drawn up by representatives of thirty-two women's organiza-tions in 1926, has been sent to the Women Members of Parliament who took part in the recent deputation to the Home Secretary to discuss with him the development of the work of Women Police. This statement, it may be remembered, was drawn up as a result of a deputation to the Home Secretary, organized by the N.U.S.E.C. at the end of 1925, when he suggested that women's organizations should send to him a statement of what they considered should be the duties of women police.

(Continued in preceding column).

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LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35/37 Marsham Street, S.W. I. Women's Service House will be closed entirely for the whole of August and up to Monday, September 3rd.

**E**DINBURGH EQUAL CITIZENSHIP SOCIETY (in co-operation with the Glasgow S.E.C. and W.C.A.). Week-end School at the Buchanan Hostel, East Suffolk Road, Edinburgh, from 28th September to 1st October. Subject: The Equalities still to be won by women. Speakers: Miss Elizabeth Abbott, Mrs. Horton, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, Miss Picton-Turbervill. Inclusive fee £1 15. Applications to the Secretary, 40 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh.

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