

THE  
**WOMAN'S LEADER**  
AND THE COMMON CAUSE

Vol. XX.

No. 23.

One Penny.

REGISTERED AS  
A NEWSPAPER.

Friday, July 13, 1928.



FREE AND INDEPENDENT.

THE THREE LEADERS (*together*). "WANT A PILOT, MADAM?"  
NEW VOTER. "NO, THANKS."



OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

We have to thank the Proprietors of *Punch* for permission to reproduce the cartoon "Free and Independent," and this Equal Franchise see saw which is the title page of Vol. CLXXIV.

A FORTHCOMING FEATURE.

A feature of future issues during the summer will be a series of articles on the Woman's Movement by newly enfranchised young women voters. The first, which we publish to-day, is by Miss Elizabeth Ewing, who is already embarked upon a career of journalism in which we wish her all success.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
TO BE OR NOT TO BE, THAT IS THE QUESTION	185
WHISPERS FROM WESTMINSTER. By Green Bench	185
AND THE FUTURE? By Eleanor Rathbone . . .	186
FULL DEMOCRACY. By Ray Strachey . . . . .	187
LOYALTIES. By An Under Thirty . . . . .	187
VICTORY CELEBRATIONS . . . . .	188
EQUAL PAY AND THE I.L.O. From a Correspondent	189
WOMEN IN THE BAHAMAS. Marjorie Corbett Ashby . . . . .	190

Annual Subscription for Postal Subscribers: British Isles and Abroad, 6/6.  
Common Cause Publishing Co., 4 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1

NOTES AND NEWS.

The Kellogg Note.

A correspondent writes:—There are few readers of this paper who do not realize that some months ago America invited Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, and more recently at the British request this offer was extended to the smaller states of Europe also, to sign a treaty for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy in favour of the pacific settlement of all disputes. Some exchange of notes has taken place in which while Germany accepted the suggestion without criticism, both France and Great Britain put forward certain suggested reservations, and asked certain questions. In reply Mr. Kellogg made it perfectly clear that he recognized the obligations of the Covenant and Locarno Treaties might necessitate a signatory using force under certain conditions in the capacity of international police, and that such a treaty would be quite compatible with these obligations. No reference was made to the British suggestion of "freedom of action in certain regions of the world," a sort of European Monroe Doctrine. And it is to be hoped that our government may very quickly see its way to signing such a treaty, and that it will not be weakened by insistence on reservations or interpretations of this kind or by the French suggestion to couple with the Covenant and Locarno all military treaties of alliance for defence purposes, such as France has to-day with Poland and Serbia, some of whose provisions have not been made public, for these would hopelessly neutralize the effectiveness of the American proposals.

The Significance of the Note.

Many people are asking in what way such a treaty would add to the already existing machinery for world peace, the League of Nations. Firstly, it would close the loophole for war, which now legally exists—for under the Covenant after nine months' negotiations, if there is a failure to settle any dispute between two or more members of the League, they are entitled to fight about it if they are foolish enough to wish to. Now, although this may seem very unlikely, and in democratic countries is almost impossible, the bare fact weakens the security which nations feel that they will get just decisions, particularly where they are not legal decisions. For example, if there should be a dispute between two nations of unequal strength and it is known that the stronger of the two will fight rather than accept a certain decision first of all, nations are tempted to continue the hopeless armaments competition, in order to put them in the stronger position, and secondly, there is a great temptation, even if partly unconscious, to give a decision which will satisfy the stronger nation and so avoid war. But it would bring America into the comity of nations and might bring her in time to accept the natural consequences of such a treaty—in the case of a lawbreaker economic, and in the last resort military sanctions—obligations which all members of the League have had to accept and use in order to make their word effective. Then the creation and acceptance by all the signatories of peaceful methods of settling both legal and judicial disputes, and the creation of machinery through which this can be done, must follow. For England this would make another Naval Conference a possibility and might lead to a very large reduction of armaments. Women should do all they can through the Anglo-American Women's Crusade to bring this great ideal to fruition. The women in America are largely responsible for

Mr. Kellogg's invitation. Let us show we are strong enough to persuade our government to give them a warm, unqualified support.

A Portrait of Josephine Butler.

A correspondent writes: A portrait of a great saint by a great artist is now on view at the National Portrait Gallery. It is a picture of Josephine Butler by G. F. Watts, R.A., O.M. Probably many of our readers would wish to see it and they will be well advised not to delay their visit as it is uncertain how long the picture will remain where it now is.

Cliveden.

From the curve of the Thames north of Maidenhead, Cliveden Woods run steeply up to the great house which dominates that most beautiful reach of the river. Once upon a time it was the home of the Duke of Sutherland; now it belongs to Lord and Lady Astor, and like their town house in St. James' Square, it is, by reason of its wide and varied hospitality, more of a national possession than a private residence. Cabinet Ministers, trade union leaders, social workers, journalists, writers, duchesses, and the small unknown people who always find a place in Astor hospitality, have walked upon its wide terraces above the river, and disported themselves in its long drawing-room. During the war its varied life achieved a new facet, for a military hospital was evolved from its tennis court. Some of the denizens of that hospital remain at Cliveden to this day, in the little cemetery (a place of peculiar quietness and beauty) among the woods, one side open to the river and the sunset in the west. A Colonial mother who came after the war to fetch the body of her son home from Cliveden, on seeing this place, said that she would after all prefer that he should remain there. It is at Cliveden that on 18th July the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship will celebrate the triumphal end of the Suffrage Campaign. Some of those who take part in that celebration may feel that the immensity and the splendour of the place, its dignified portico and spreading wings, its massive terrace and unending gardens, its tennis courts, its woods and rides, its racing stables and riding school, are something of an anachronism, the survival of an age of privilege that is passing. Perhaps they are wrong. Perhaps the fact that so great and so varied a community can share this splendour is symbolical of a democratic age that has not yet fully dawned.

Savidge Tribunal Reports.

As we go to press we learn that the majority and minority reports of the Savidge Tribunal were handed to the Home Secretary on Tuesday. The Majority Report, signed by Sir John Eldon Bankes and Mr. J. J. Withers, is stated to accept the version given by the police officials, while the minority report, signed by Mr. Lees-Smith, refuses to do this and accepts the statement made by Miss Savidge. We shall return to the subject of these reports at greater length in another issue.

Industrial Disease.

At an inquest on two girls held a week ago at Battersea it was stated that the girls died of silicosis, a disease of the lungs due to inhaling injurious substances, and that three other girls and a boy employed at these works—those of "Poli-Varn Ltd."—the makers of a patent scouring powder—have died since January, 1927. This makes six deaths from a well-known industrial disease in *seventeen months*. The jury exonerated the firm from blame and returned a verdict of misadventure, which we take to mean that there is no regulation dealing with scouring powders and that the firm did not appreciate the danger of what they were doing. There is nothing in the newspaper report as to whether they appreciate it now. We hope at any rate that the Home Office will make whatever changes seem to be necessary having regard to the nature of the occupation and not to the sex of the worker.

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

EVERY FRIDAY. ONE PENN.

SPECIAL TERMS FOR SOCIETIES

Send 6/6 to the Office of the Paper, 4 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1  
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Members of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship and Women's Freedom League attended the House of Lords to hear the Royal Assent of the Equal Franchise Bill. Photo shows: Some of the members at the House of Lords. The group includes Dame Millicent Fawcett, Miss Garrett, Miss Courtney, Miss Philippa Fawcett, Miss Macadam, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, Miss Catherine Marshall, Mrs. Strachey, Mrs. Swanwick, and Miss Ward.

#### MESSAGE FROM DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT.

"The Royal Assent has been given to an Act which at last gives the vote to women on the same terms as men. For those of us who have been working for this all our lives, it is an historic occasion. People used to talk about the fifty years struggle from 1868 to 1918 as our 'fifty years in the wilderness'. But it was far from being a wilderness. We had gains in many directions; and as a matter of fact we took just two years less than men to win household suffrage.

"We worked for the vote with ardour and passion because

we believed that it would benefit not women only, but the whole community. It is a remarkable fact—though it is no surprise to me—that in the short time women have had the vote social questions have received much more attention in Parliament than they have ever received before. It is therefore with hope and confidence that we look forward to the results of the new Reform Act. Surely the problems facing the world to-day will need the best service that men and women can give as intelligent citizens, and not least the enthusiasm of the younger generation."

#### "TO BE OR NOT TO BE, THAT IS THE QUESTION."

In the glow of victory, consummated on Monday evening by the King's Assent, all eyes turn towards the future. What will women do with their new accession of political power? Will it make any real difference to them—to the nation—to the world?

For an answer we may perhaps approach the sociologist, demanding of him some appraisal of the waxing and waning tenderness of our time; or we may consult the psychologist and the philosopher for more light upon the working of the human mind. But for the moment we are tempted to seek out a certain parchment-faced old oracle whose name is History, and ask her what she has to say. One must, of course, limit her terms of reference, for she is a garrulous hag, and in all probability if we ask her to discourse at large upon the position of women she will search her memory to its uttermost shadowy limits, and begin telling us obscene stories about the domestic habits of anthropoid baboons. It is her way in certain of her moods. Let us then ask her this simple question: "You have seen a number of franchise reforms during the past century or so. They have brought first one class, then another, into the charmed circle of political power. Tell us, we beg, whether it has made any difference—whether, for instance, if an intelligent outside critic were shown the Statute Book minus the franchise acts, he would be able to say, from the general trend of legislation, here and here a new social force seems to be making itself felt?"

Her reply would seem, to us, to take something of the following form:—

In 1832 there was passed a Great Reform Act which so combined a franchise measure and a redistribution measure, as to confer political power upon the *captains of industry*. Not upon the broad mass of the wage-earners, for the property qualification was too highly drawn for that, but mainly upon the employers. For the first time industry stepped into the arena of government and administration, as a political counterweight to agriculture. Within ten years it was strongly organized for the achievement of its dominant economic interest: a wide market for British manufactures, a free import of foreign corn and raw material. At the end of those ten years, themselves not without signal victories for unfettered industrial enterprise, the radical reform of the tariff began. The abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846 was one of many such victories. In fact the industrial interest shaped the course of politics, and painted the landscape of social life—for good or evil—to its own taste.

In 1867 a new measure of franchise reform so altered the borough property qualification as to bring within the scope

of enfranchisement *the great mass of urban wage-earners*. Now it so happened that in 1867 organized skilled labour was fighting for its very existence against the deficiencies of the Common Law, the prejudice of the Courts, and the tide of middle-class public opinion. In the decade which followed a series of Acts appeared upon the Statute Book which gave to Trade Unionism a definition, a legal existence and certain rights necessary to its effective conduct. Seven years later two working men appeared in the House of Commons, the forerunners of the second largest party of to-day. Incidentally it may be remarked that from that time onward, no mining accident went unchallenged before the public conscience.

In 1884 a third franchise reform took the logical step of lowering the county property qualification in such wise that *the agricultural labourer* followed his urban colleague into the political arena. Agriculture was then entering upon a long period of depression and all its burdens weighed upon the bent back of the hired labourer. He was then badly paid and unorganized. Badly paid and unorganized he remained. The social legislation which even in 1884 was beginning to transform the face of the towns was largely irrelevant to his needs and his difficulties. It is still largely irrelevant. Inarticulate as a serf, he remains to-day inarticulate as a voter.

In 1918 a hard-won franchise act, more revolutionary than any which had preceded it, swept in *all women over 30 who were ratepayers or the wives of ratepayers*. Already organized for the achievement of the vote, the enthusiasm of that battle carried their organizations forward to immediate activity as voters. It took, not seven years, but two, to achieve direct representation in the House of Commons. Widows' pensions, equal guardianship, equal divorce, new administrative rights and responsibilities, these and other women's measures crowded the Statute Book more thickly than the Trade Union reforms of the seventies. But young mothers continued to die in childbirth, and in industry the woman wage-earner derived comparatively little comfort from the new tide of legislation. But then the young mothers and the wage-earners were mostly under 30.

In 1928 the last step was taken and the enfranchisement of *the young women* was achieved by universal adult suffrage. At which point History closes her book and leaves us to divine her verdict. That verdict cannot, we think, be for one moment in doubt. It is simply this: that there is no automatic reaction to political power of economic and social advance; but that great things are possible for those who have the power and the will to stand together, to think together, and to act together. History has given us a warning and a hope.

#### WHISPERS FROM WESTMINSTER.

##### THREE PARLIAMENTARY METHODS.

Visitors to St. Stephens this week have had the rare experience of hearing debates conducted under each of the three Parliamentary methods. On Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday the Committee of Ways and Means worked under the guillotine or time-table method, on Tuesday we discussed the Finance Bill in Committee of Supply under the Standing Order which treats business originating in Committee of Ways and Means as exempt from the eleven o'clock rule; while on Friday the ordinary rules prevailed and that arch-obstructionist of the present Parliament (Mr. Hayday) was able to talk at length, assured that four o'clock was winging its way and with it Mr. Speaker's command "Order! Order!!" ending the day's discussion. The guillotine kills the possibility of obstruction and therefore speeches tend to be shorter. The time-table for the Rating and Valuation Apportionment Bill has been, however, too short. On Clause 3 which lays down the basis of apportionment for all industrial hereditaments—how immeasurably superior is the Scottish and Biblical legal expression *heritages*—only four out of nearly seventy amendments were discussed, while Clause 4 fell without a word of explanation or a question mark of any kind.

In this article for the Victory Number of the Common Cause I think I ought to express the wish that our women members would pay a little more attention to the details of the Committee of Ways and Means. One woman member, let my readers turn up the reports for the name, has shown, in the discussions on freight transport that there is no inequality of knowledge of commercial subjects between the sexes as far as she is concerned. While the Minister of Health must have enjoyed the flavour of her speeches, some of which seemed to have drawn

their inspiration from the waters of Marath. Curiously enough it was on this section of the Bill that the opposition got their only concessions. I suppose we unconsciously remember when discussing docks and harbours that in the days of Elizabeth the seamen from the banks of the Thames and the Avon, the Plym and the Dart, self-taught and self-directed, with no impulse but what was beating in their own royal hearts, went out across the unknown seas fighting, discovering, colonizing and carving out the channels through which the commerce and enterprise of Britain has flowed out over all the world. That our forebears in those days took shares in the new ships which John Oxenham or Walter Raleigh or Francis Drake fitted out for the famous voyages of the reign of the virgin Queen. So it was no wonder that members of all parties had scrutinized the freight transport section of the Rating Bill and that Mr. Neville Chamberlain gave them new definitions by taking over their amendments. It was a pity those sections were under the shadow of the time-table or one of the seaport members might have had time to be eloquent about the pageant of commercial sea-power to be seen daily about our ports.

The day of exempted business gave Conservative back bench Members an opportunity to talk on amendments to the Finance Bill and as 1.30 a.m. drew nearer the face of the Government Chief Whip became a more and yet more interesting study in length. There was one revolt which if it had been backed by the official Opposition, as it was by the Liberals who agreed that there was no reason why injustice should be done to the super taxpayer, might have had serious consequences. The blessed word Simplification was shown to cover an increased taxation of some 60 millions in a generation and more than

forty Conservative M.P.s followed the hon. Member for York into the lobby against the Chancellor. They will return to the attack in the Report Stage. An amendment moved by the Conservative Member for Hartlepool deserves wider publicity than that of the order paper. He desired a rebate for cushioned tyred vehicles and so moved "after the second 'tyres' insert including tyres having a distinct and continuous air chamber running round the internal circumference of the tyre with a tread design so balanced and proportioned that constant displacement and recovery takes place under load."

I regret to say that it did not move Mr. Churchill either to tears or laughter and that none of his colleagues supported Sir Wilfred Sugden in the lobby. The Commons of Great Britain once more passed the Committee Stage of a Finance Bill and so earned a new application of the old song written of them during the hundred years war that they were "The skipper's mast. That, with their chattel and their goods maintained the war from first to last."

On Friday normal Standing Orders came into operation, and we talked out the Racecourse Betting Bill. The features of the debate were the ruling of the Speaker that the wide changes made in Committee had not made the Bill a new one, the uneasiness of the Home Secretary who, considering the abuse of the Committee stage, was ill-advised to refer to the obstruction on Friday as an abuse of the rules; and the fact that in addition to being the father of a large family of children the Member for West Nottingham has now made a reputation as the parent of a numerous progeny of lengthy and amusing speeches. There are rumours that the Government intend to take the measure up. If this be true they will initiate a lengthy and lively end to the present session. This week's smile was at the beginning of Friday's sitting. One of the attendants having observed that he had seen faces that morning belonging to Members who had not been to the House on a Friday for years, a Scottish Member said: "Well! the only subjects which will fill this House of Commons are shorter prayers and longer odds"!!

GREEN BENCH.

**FULL DEMOCRACY—Continued from page 187**

position of the slave, and fought for that, and the Women Suffragists cared for the position of women, and worked for that, yet the victory of both movements has added more than abolition and women's suffrage to the development of the world. For Liberty is in itself wider than the Liberty of any class which enjoys it; and each step towards freedom, whether it be political or social or moral, makes progress in all other directions easier and surer, and adds to the justice and the civilization of the world. We can therefore rejoice in our victory without alloy. We have won our cause, and by so doing we have helped forward an ideal even wider and greater and nobler than our own.

**National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.**

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A Garden Party to celebrate the attainment of

**EQUAL FRANCHISE**

and to meet

DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT, G.B.E.,

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Speeches. Music. Sketches by Miss Margaret Bussé.  
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Use and Beauty Stall. Sweet Stall.

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**AND THE FUTURE?**

Even in 1918 there were many newly enfranchised women voters—dwellers in comfortable Kensington or leisurely Leatherhead—who said: "That is enough." Parliament no longer deserves the reproach that it has granted the Vote to our chauffeurs and our gardeners while withholding it from Us, who pay such heavy rates and taxes and lend our capital to industry. The Women's Movement has fulfilled the greater part of its task and may leave the rest to Time." Accordingly they withdrew from the Suffrage Societies or dissolved them and transferred their energies to less "aggressive" women's societies, or to party politics, or to their herbaceous borders—as temperament inclined them. Fortunately there were others who took a different view. Having in pre-war suffrage days used the wrongs of underpaid women workers, of ill-treated wives, of destitute widows with young children for all they were worth as arguments for the Suffrage, they felt that they could not in decency push down the ladder by which they had climbed to their own enfranchisement until these less fortunate people had also reached the top. Further, they took a broad view of the meaning of "enfranchisement". The underpaid industrial worker had not yet got even her Parliamentary vote. She must be helped to get it. The unhappy wives and widows were for the most part politically enfranchised, but were they in a position to use effectively the weapon put into their hands? Obviously not; without organization the vote is nothing and these women had neither leisure nor means nor heart to organize. All they had was used up in the struggle to exist. So the aim "equal franchise" was maintained and enlarged to cover "a real equality of liberties, status, and opportunities" and the women's movement with this new mandate has secured equal eligibility, the opening of the legal professions, equal guardianship, equal divorce, widows' pensions, equal franchise, and many minor reforms.

What of the future? Doubtless history will repeat itself. Many—especially those who have got all they want for themselves out of the women's movement—will say again: "That is enough. The rest is not much and it will come of itself." They will have a better excuse than their predecessors, but will they be right? The answer each of us gives will depend on whether we agree that "the rest is not much". Has "a real equality" been nearly achieved? Of status—very nearly, except in the diplomatic, civil and municipal services, the Church and a few minor spheres. Of opportunities—emphatically not. In scarcely any profession or industry are opportunities really equal. Even the ground already won is continually threatened by the forces of reaction, as exemplified at the moment by the London Medical Schools and the National Association of Schoolmasters. Of liberties—it depends what you mean by liberty. Has a working housewife and mother equal liberty with her husband when she possesses not a penny in the world except what he chooses to give her; when the amount he can or will spare barely suffices for a household of three, yet she is practically debarred from the knowledge of how to prevent the size of the family rising to six or seven? To many of us it seems that her position in such a case is one of serfdom rather than liberty. Or has an industrial worker liberty when she is kept out of nearly all the more skilled and better paid jobs not by legislation, but by the impregnable forces of Trade Unionism in unnatural alliance with the hoary sex prejudices of employers? Even if "equality" could be proved in all such cases, many of us would not be satisfied that the task of the women's movement is over. We are beginning to use a new terminology. The word equality, suggesting a measuring tape or a pair of scales, is beginning to mean less to us. When we perceive some good thing which women urgently need for themselves or their children or the world, the question we ask ourselves is not "Do men need it? Have men got it?" But "How can women best work to secure this good thing, whatever men may do about it?"

Further, not merely the terminology but the boundaries of the women's movement are changing. Like other movements, it is becoming more international, especially within the bounds of the British Empire. Some of us are imperialists; some of us are not. But so long as imperialism is an unescapable fact, its responsibilities are also an unescapable fact, and these, for the women of this country, include the welfare of all those women in India and the East whose wrongs, as compared to the worst wrongs of our past, are as scorpions to whips.

With such a programme before us we cannot write "The End" to the story of the women's movement. So long as men are men and women are women and human nature is human nature, shall we ever be able to write it?

ELEANOR F. RATHBONE.

**FULL DEMOCRACY.**

By RAY STRACHEY.

The granting of the Royal Assent to the Representation of the People Act of 1928 ends a chapter of British Parliamentary history, and completes the development of political democracy in the country which has for centuries been the leader of the world in this great social experiment.

The ideals underlying Parliamentary institutions have been prized by the British people from the days of Magna Charta, and their forms have been firmly upheld since the days of Oliver Cromwell; but, for all that, the main developments of the story lie in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and represent the struggle and effort of a century and a quarter.

The first stirrings of the movement for the real representation of the people were seen in the agitation for a Reform Bill in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. Between 1814 and 1832 Political Associations of unenfranchised working men were formed all over the country, and their agitation was considered highly dangerous and alarming by the authorities and the ruling classes. The demonstration at Peterloo in 1819, though entirely peaceful in intention, was dispersed by soldiers, and several people were killed; and in the fear which the recollection of the French Revolution inspired the activities of honest constitutional agitators were frequently suspended by imprisonment. At that time, of course, the demand for enfranchisement was very modest; it reached no further than the abolition of the rotten boroughs and the enfranchisement of substantial householders; and there was no thought of the inclusion of women at all, even though a number of women's associations existed to further the cause. The Reform Act of 1832 did not give exactly what the agitators had wanted, but it did lay the solid foundation for the developments which have followed. Its passage, however, did so little in the way of immediate reform that the Chartist agitation arose in 1838 to press for more democracy. These reformers at first included Women's Suffrage in their claims, and it was specifically mentioned in the first draft of the Charter of Rights and Liberties; but then, as later, the leaders were afraid to keep it there, fearing that the inclusion of anything so startling would prejudice the whole movement. However, the idea existed, and had adherents; and later it was bound to re-emerge.

The movement for further democracy went steadily on, even though the Chartist agitation lasted but a short time; and all through the middle and later years of the century the possibility of Reform Bills, and the precise terms in which they should be drafted, were a major pre-occupation of Parliament. Governments fell, and rose, and fell again upon these measures, and both the Whigs and the Tories were constantly trying to secure the maximum of credit by the minimum of concession. The enfranchisement of substantial householders was followed by extensions to working men who were small householders, and then to agricultural labourers; and still the women were kept in the background. Between 1867, when the first Women's Suffrage Petition was presented to Parliament by John Stuart Mill, and 1912 when the Women's Suffrage movement reached its height, the male electorate had been extended from 70,000 to 7,000,000, yet still the time was never "opportune" for letting the women in. But in the end that time came; and the two Women's Suffrage Acts of 1918 and 1928 have triumphantly completed the task of providing in our system of government for the full representation of the people of Great Britain.

The Women's Suffrage Movement, to those of us who were in it, stood primarily for the removal of sex disabilities. We cared for it and worked for it as part of the wider women's cause; as a reform of the same kind as the improvement of women's education, the Married Women's Property agitation, or the Repeal of the C.D. Acts. This was the aspect which gave the "Cause" so much driving power, and which called out the enthusiasm and the loyalty of so many workers. Now that it is won, however, we can see it in better perspective. We can realize that in addition to this aspect, it has also a general historic importance, and that the reform we have won means more than freedom for our own sex, and more than the power to clear away our remaining disabilities, and to do what good we can in the world. For it is the crowning of the long struggle for complete democracy, and clears our system of government, at last, from the reproach of being false and unreal.

Just as Liberty in America was a farce while negro slavery still continued, so Democracy in England was a farce while women were disfranchised. And although the Abolitionists cared for the

(Continued on page 186.)

**LOYALTIES.**

By E. C. EWING.

Many causes, good and bad, have made the "under-thirties" rise to prominence as a group in themselves. There is that given by the arrogant old adage that "crabbed age and youth cannot live together"—an adage perhaps intensified in a period where youth is free to hold its own brief. There is the fact that to cope with the huge conglomerate of modern society we have frequently to class people in groups, and that an addition naturally presents itself under a new label. And the granting of the Franchise in two stages has given the impression of two units within the women's movement itself. There is, too, a darker side to the fever of discussion and controversy which from platform and press rages round us, for the public is ever agog for what is new and bizarre, and to-day we, in our political capacity, are all this. A league of youth, then, is not an unmixed blessing; paradoxically it is at once the beginning of fair recognition and a step to be overcome, since absorption in the body politic means that separate and individual aims must be dovetailed into those common to our age and society, and thence to all ages and societies.

The crux of the moot question of how the new voters are to be organized, what difference they are going to make to politics and society, would seem to lie in these two points—that in the newness of our enfranchisement and of our entry into public affairs we are thrown together as one unit, yet that this same fact swings us actively into the great band, rich man, poor man, ploughboy, thief, which makes up society. And the question of conflicting loyalties can be met only by these two points being weighed against each other.

One society of young business women, the Junior Council of the London and National Society for Women's Service, is steering such a prosperous course that in itself it testifies to the place for such an organization. Its atmosphere of eager, ardent discussion, its quick-fire of fun and gravity and wit and earnestness rise surely from the ready, instinctive sympathy born of likeness in background, experience, age, problems. One's most willing reaching out to another generation can barely match the clubbableness of the people who foregather in Marsham Street of an evening, carrying the easy equality of a college group into a more diffuse and complex society.

In the women's movement in general it is an interesting point whether there is room for such separate groups as this of "under-thirties". There is, in the first place, a certain significance in the fact that the franchise will go down to history as an event in two chapters, that we, who know the beginnings of the movement only by hearsay, came into political rights by ourselves. Belonging to the movement in that we are personally in contact with its leaders, that most of them live to see us swinging out along their road, we are yet, for better or worse, distinct in many ways. Some of the white-heat of their ardour has gone, the need for headlong battling with circumstances has given place to the need for stabilization everywhere. The woman's question, from being a kind of bolt from the blue, a thing to be driven into society with might and main, has come generally to be recognized as one problem among the many in our social system, as one aspect of the perpetual adjustment of the individual to the outward facts and conditions of life. Inevitably, too, the people concerned have changed; the suffragist to whom the vote was all in all has given place to the woman who, intent on her own work, absorbed in a variety of interests, is, by the very fact of being a feminist, in honour bound to get on quietly with that work, finding the niche to absorb her energies. One of the main things about the "under-thirty" of to-day is, indeed, that normally she is barely aware of being an "under-thirty". But this gradual change is bound to create divergent attitudes within the women's movement, and therefore the question rises as to whether the young voter would work best in her own subdivision.

In spite of the success of the Junior Council, it will probably be agreed that a policy of isolation is bad if it excludes ultimate co-operation, if it leads to a narrowing down of interests to those of one type or generation. And ultimately one feels that the significance of the 1918 and 1928 Acts is not that they separate the new voters from those already enfranchised, but that they have marshalled the under-thirties under the old banners, associated them with the past of the movement, made it more real to them by bringing to their freer lives some of the urgency of bygone years, some echo of experiences beyond their actual ken.

Any movement worth the name must first and foremost possess the individual, sweep him out of the small groove in which his

(Continued on page 189.)

### THE VICTORY BREAKFAST.

The Women's Freedom League are to be warmly congratulated. The Victory Breakfast was a thing happily conceived and most happily realized. The Hotel Cecil hardly knew itself on the early morning of the 5th as the women and the men who had fought side by side for so many years crowded in in their hundreds for the festal meal. The room in which the breakfast took place was decorated with the beautiful banners of the League, with their motto, "Dare to be Free." The most expert journalist would be excused from any attempt to give a complete list of the distinguished people present. Mrs. Pethick Lawrence presided and near to her were Dame Millicent Fawcett, Mrs. Despard, Mr. Pethick Lawrence, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Sir Robert Newman, Mr. Frank Briant, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mrs. Walter Runciman, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Lady Rhondda, and, somewhat unexpectedly, Mrs. Besant.

Apologies for absence were read from the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, Lady Astor, and others, and the speakers were the President, Mr. MacDonald, Sir Robert Newman, Mr. Briant, Mr. Pethick Lawrence, Lady Rhondda, Mrs. Stedman (for the under thirties), Dame Millicent, and Mrs. Despard, with a few words also from Mrs. Besant.

Mr. MacDonald, with his characteristic Scotch love of the mystical in things, aptly spoke of "this sacramental meal," and Mr. Pethick Lawrence, with his special gift for the right word, called to the mind of his militant friends the many former victory breakfasts at which had been celebrated the release from prison of various groups of them. Dame Millicent, who was accorded a rousing reception, addressed herself to the rising generations with fullest evidence of the great sympathy she always has for them, for they are very near to her heart. To them her message was, "Go on, Go on, Go on!" with a humorous allusion to a certain famous occasion in the past familiar to many of her hearers, when a labour leader with a stentorian voice engaged in a battle of the gods against a persistent hubbub that had pitted its strength against his. Mrs. Despard, founder and for many years president of the League, was greeted with musical honours, and, in a very few words, and after paying a graceful tribute to Dame Millicent, endorsed her call to youth to carry on. Among others for whom the breakfasters demonstrated their special affection were Mr. Lawrence, who only just escaped a musical ovation from constitutional and militant alike, and Mr. C. P. Scott, of the *Manchester Guardian*, whose name evoked loud cheers when his letter of regret for absence was read. A few moments also were spent, not sorrowfully but proudly, in thought for those leaders, Mrs. Pankhurst, Constance Lytton, and others, who had passed from sight. The gaiety, the friendliness of all sections with one another, the sense of solidarity which the suffrage movement has always engendered, the conscious renewal of strength and courage for fights yet to come—of all these things, as well as of good cheer in the more physical sense, was this victory breakfast compounded. A. H. W.

### THANKSGIVING FOR EQUAL FRANCHISE.

The service of Thanksgiving and Dedication on the attainment of Equal Franchise arranged by the League of the Church Militant was held at St. Martin-in-the-Fields (by kind permission of the Vicar) on Tuesday evening. Representatives of many organizations were present as well as a large number of women and men who had taken part in the Suffrage Campaign. During the first hymn banners of women's organizations were carried up the aisle and placed in the chancel until the close of the service, when they were carried in procession while Dr. Ethel Smyth's "March of the Women" was played. The Rev. Claude Hinscliff, founder of the League of the Church Militant and a lifelong worker for the enfranchisement of women, recalled many stages in this long battle for justice and expressed his confidence that the sacrifice and spirit which had attained this victory could not fail to achieve much when applied to the problems of the future.

### EQUAL FRANCHISE: A MASS OF THANKSGIVING.

As an Act of Thanksgiving for the passing into law of the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Bill, the 10.30 Mass at Westminster Cathedral was offered by request of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance "in thanksgiving for the enfranchisement of women". After Mass an evergreen wreath tied in the colours of the Alliance and bearing the inscription, "To our Patron St. Joan in gratitude for the enfranchisement of women" was placed at the shrine of St. Joan by Miss Gabrielle Jeffery, founder of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. Dame Millicent Fawcett, Miss Garrett, and Mrs. Despard were there as well as Miss Underwood and Miss

Reeves representing the Women's Freedom League, Mrs. Tidswell and Miss Froud on behalf of the National Union of Women Teachers, Miss Auld from the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship and Mrs. Abbott and Mrs. Aldridge from the Open Door Council, and Miss Sterling representing the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship.

### BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

#### FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

The third and best conference of the League took place on Friday, 6th July, at the Royal Society of Arts.

Delegates from thirteen associations overseas and from twelve British associations were present, with Mrs. Corbett Asby, president, in the chair. Following her opening speech, the delegates stood in grateful memory to Mrs. Pankhurst, and warm messages were sent to Miss Royden and Miss Collisson on tour in Australia. Miss Newcomb moved, and Miss Clegg seconded, the following resolution, which was carried unanimously:—

That this Conference of the British Commonwealth League warmly thanks H.M. Government for the grant of Equal Franchise to the Women of Great Britain, thus securing to them that citizenship enjoyed in India and in all the self-governing Dominions with the regrettable exception of South Africa. The urgent problem of nationality was dealt with as follows:—

This Conference of the British Commonwealth League urges the Governments within the British Empire in sending in their reports on nationality to the Preparatory Committee of the first Codification Conference of the League of Nations to state that:

(a) There is a strong demand from Women's Organizations throughout the Empire that the law should give a woman the same right as a man to retain or to change her nationality.

(b) That the British and Australian Parliaments have unanimously adopted resolutions in favour of a woman retaining her nationality on marriage with an alien, it to be open to her to make a declaration of alienage.

(c) That many members of the Nationality Committee of the 1926 Imperial Conference were in favour of a change in the law which would provide for the British woman an opportunity of retaining her British nationality on marriage with an alien.

This Conference further urges that there should be no further delay in setting up the Committee of Experts to which this subject was referred by the 1926 Imperial Conference. It further urges that this Committee of the Codification Conference should include Women Members.

This should strengthen the agitation already undertaken by the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship. The British Government is, alas, very conservative in its views.

Resolution 3 on Women and Representation had the advantage of being spoken to by Mrs. McDonnell, Australian substitute delegate to the assembly.

Resolution 4, on Franchise in South Africa, was of course carried unanimously, as was the subsequent resolutions dealing with Bermuda and Quebec.

Resolution 7, on Marriage Maintenance and Divorce Laws, brought up instances of the varying practices not only between different parts of the Empire, but even as between neighbouring States of Australia. The Conference did not attempt to discuss the basis of co-ordination which will be dealt with next year.

A long discussion took place on the situation arising from the convention prepared by the I.L.O. on machinery for fixing minimum wages for homeworkers. The problem is dealt with elsewhere.

Miss Phipps gave a brilliant summary of the existing legal inequalities between men and women, touching the royal succession and the House of Lords, nationality right to pensions, income tax and bankruptcy. Women, she reminded us, are excluded from the diplomatic and consular services. Further, the solicitation laws differ between immoral men and immoral women, and a woman is charged as a "prostitute," thus defaming her character before her trial, which is contrary to a fundamental principle of British law.

Miss Dorothy Elliott spoke of women in industry. In 1921 at the last census there were 5,000,000 women in industry, or 3,558,000 excluding those in domestic service. Compared with the 1911 census, textiles showed a steady number employed, but the metal and engineering trades showed an increase of 128 per cent for women employed as compared with 12½ per cent increase for men.

She laid down two general conclusions:—

(1) That women's rates had risen 25 per cent more than men's.  
(2) That women had not nearly achieved equality, since there was a definite "woman's" wage.

### EQUAL PAY AND THE I.L.O.

From the feminist point of view the results of the recent International Labour Organization Meeting in Geneva leaves us half satisfied. On the positive side we have, attached to a new Draft Convention on "the creation of wage-fixing machinery," a recommendation calling the attention of its prospective adherents to an important over-riding principle of I.L.O. policy. Let us quote it in full:—

*The General Conference of the I.L.O. thinks it right to call the attention of Governments to the principle affirmed by Article 427 of the Peace Treaty that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.*

So far so good. It is as well that those Governments who adopt the Convention should have their attention called to a pious opinion, which like the disarmament clause of the Treaty of Versailles, is accustomed to command a general theoretic assent. But in practice it does not carry us very far. The proper place for such an affirmation is in the Convention itself, and the proper form, a more precise and water-tight definition of the principle than is contained in the phrase "equal remuneration for work of equal value". It should not be a matter past the wit of an intelligent draftsman to devise a wording which would render it beyond the competence of any wage-tribunal governed by the Convention to promulgate a time or piece rate specifying differential payments based on sex. As things are, with no further definition of the principle and with the principle itself in the wrong place, we find it difficult to conceive of a wage-tribunal so inept that it could not, if it chose, "drive a coach and horses" through the obligation to secure "equal pay for work of equal value".

To the excuse that the Convention is concerned rather with the machinery of wage-fixing than with the principles of wage-determination we can attach little weight. Its very first Article appears to open a loop-hole to the wider question of the standard of life by imposing upon signatories the obligation to create wage-fixing machinery where "wages are exceptionally low". It would seem a perfectly consistent step to add the obligation that such machinery shall operate by the imposition of a "rate for the job" (whatever that rate may be and however determined) irrespective of the sex of the person who earns it.

That then is our criticism of the new Draft Convention in its relation to the world-wide demand of organized women for the abolition of economic sex-privilege. The question is: what can be done about it? We understand that some of its critics have suggested an appeal to the International Court at the Hague with a view to securing a declaration that the whole Convention, by reason of its failure to embody an over-riding principle imposed by the Treaty, is *ultra vires*. We cannot however, believe that any such attempt would be likely to meet with success, since the Convention, though it fails specifically to reaffirm the principle of "equal pay", contains no actual contravention of it. The principle of "equal pay" is as a matter of fact one of several economic principles affirmed by Article 427 of the Treaty, which contains also the assertion that labour shall not be regarded "merely as a commodity" and that wages shall have reference to current costs of living. Yet none of these other principles are reaffirmed in the Draft Convention, which would therefore, if *ultra vires* on one count, be *ultra vires* on a host of others. Moreover, not only do we believe that any attempt to challenge the legality of the Convention would be doomed to failure, we believe also that the attempt itself would create a deplorable public conflict of principle between feminism and economic internationalism which would be likely to prejudice all future efforts to safeguard the economic position of women on international lines.

It is possible that had the Auxiliaries of the International Alliance for Women's Suffrage and Equal Citizenship made a concerted attempt to influence their respective national delegations before these came with tied hands and shut heads to Geneva, a better result might have been achieved in the present case. It is through such action that any future advance must lie. Meanwhile the present achievement is not wholly negligible. It leaves us half-satisfied—a sensation whose familiarity is not without pleasant associations in the past. Our meals have not always ended with the "half loaf" or even with the crumb.

X. Y. Z.

Further, women are being displaced by juvenile labour. Mrs. Abbott spoke on women in the professions. Women in the medical profession had a theoretic equality; in law in 1926 there were only seventy-six women barristers, and four women solicitors. The standard regarding women in business was set by the great employers, of whom the government was the worst offender both in the Civil Service and in the teaching profession.

Mr. R. R. Bakhale, a delegate to the British Commonwealth Labour Conference, gave us a magnificent paper on women in industry in India. Working conditions and hours were the same for men and women, but wages for women were only about 50 per cent of men's; in many cases of industrial work on the plantations the monthly wages were on the average 14s. 3½d. men, 11s. 2d. women.

There was growing industrialization and migration towards the city, the low wages of men forced women to work, and there was a great demand for the cheap and conscientious labour of women.

Still, women by their work were becoming more free and independent, and there was no restriction on the kind of work women could do. There were no maternity benefits. Education and organization were needed; not one in a thousand could read or write and there were not one thousand organized in trade unions.

Mrs. de Grey Stewart spoke on women in Canada, and told the same tale of lower wages even in the teaching profession, but spoke of openings for women as farmers.

Dr. Grace Boelke spoke on Australia. Women could enter all professions save as miners and slaughterers. No women could serve on juries nor become chief justices, but women could claim maintenance according to the man's social standing, and the family could not be disinherited. Miss Ferguson spoke of the backward status of women in Quebec, and Mrs. Cameron Swan on the perpetual tutelage of married women in South Africa. Spinsters and widows have now escaped, and there is equality in divorce and in inheritance. The married woman's domicile and nationality follows that of her husband, and the husband may alienate a woman's unmovable property without her consent or rendering her any account.

The afternoon finished with remarkable speeches of a few minutes from women employers engaged in whole manufacture, engineering, farming, building.

The delegates had hardly time to recover when they reassembled at a delightful dinner to welcome the guests of honour, Lord Olivier, General Sir George McMunn, and Lady Heath. Lord Olivier sounded a solemn note in reminding us of our obligations as demand for labour took the men from their homes and made life much harder for the women. Sir George McMunn reminded us in the midst of our pre-occupation with the development of self-government of India that two-fifths of that vast country was still governed by native princes. They were meeting shortly in council in London to discuss their relation to the crown.

Lady Heath held us spellbound with the account of her flight over Africa. She seemed interested in every phase of life—aviation, transport, economic development of the country, and the lives of the native women.

The Council of the League at its business meeting on Saturday planned future work. Finance is the great difficulty since each part of the empire is first concerned with its own work.

Mrs. Bigland ended the conference by a lovely garden party next door to Penn's old meeting-house, Jordans.

#### LOYALTIES.—(Continued from page 187.)

practical life must run. To do that it needs a broader basis than one group or generation can give. Especially is this important in the case of the women's movement, which, regarded widely, is one which affects the whole basis of society, and is so difficult of attainment that it is easy to be arrogant or dogged or indifferent, hard to stand up four-square to facts and not be found wanting in wisdom or poise or keenness. The new voter, be it confessed, is sometimes alienated by events of early days, by the strain put on the whole personality by that struggle, and, in turn, she is at times a prey to reaction, responsible for jarring in her contact with even admired leaders. But the only justifiable effort is that which strives to see the movement steadily and to see it whole, to see it as the sum of countless aspirations and view-points. That done, it must be brought into line with other social and intellectual problems and advanced alongside them. And it is hard to see how this can be achieved except by one united movement evolving through its cycles of change, with all its members alive to varying points of view and bent on subordinating them to that central loyalty and common purpose which band them together to-day as in the past.

## WOMEN IN THE BAHAMAS.

Entertained to luncheon by the British Commonwealth League, Miss Moseley, owner and editor of the *Nassau Guardian*, gave a most interesting account of the Bahamas. Columbus discovered the islands before the mainland, but sailed from the peaceful, hospitable island since it offered him no gold. Later it was depopulated to work the mines elsewhere. It became a haunt of pirates, among whom were two notable women, until the time of the first Royal Governor, Woods Rogers, who suppressed them.

During the American war of independence the islands remained loyal, and their sturdy British character is due to the 7,000 to 8,000 refugees under Lord Dunmore who flocked over from Virginia and the Southern States. Next year the island will celebrate 200 years of self-government under the British flag.

It would be a fitting climax if women were included as full citizen voters and eligible in time for this celebration, since it was clear from Miss Moseley how large a part they play in the public work, education, and hygiene of their country. Miss Moseley mentioned long uphill but always successful campaigns for maternity and child welfare. Nassau is largely dependent on American tourists, but more British visitors are arriving, and there is close connexion with Canada. There is no colour problem since there are no legal disabilities on the coloured people, and out of twenty-nine members seven or eight are generally coloured. Children attend the same schools, though the white children are almost entirely in the paying schools, and coloured and white women sit together on committees. Naturally the colour question is used as an excuse against the grant of the vote to women; "a colour problem" might arise.

Miss Moseley is an admirable example of woman's work. It was at the request of the community she became editor of the *Nassau Guardian*, founded 84 years ago by her grandfather. She has occupied the position for 24 years and has served on two commissions. The population is 5,500, and of the 3,000 islands twenty are settled.

We hope Miss Moseley will return fired by our success to back up with her powerful press the just cause of woman's emancipation.

M. CORBETT ASHBY.

## KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL AND WOMEN STUDENTS.

As reported last week, the Board of Management of King's College Hospital invited five representatives of the Joint Committee on Women in the Service of Hospitals to meet the same number of their representatives on 5th July. The delegates appointed to represent this Committee—which has been organized by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship as an outcome of the Conference called by this Union last May—were:—Mrs. Adrian Corbett, representing the N.U.S.E.C. and leader of the deputation; Mrs. Barton (Women's Co-operative Guild); Miss Beard (Association of Head Mistresses); Dr. Higgins (St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance); and Mrs. G. Horton, as Secretary of the Committee. Mrs. Corbett spoke from the lay woman's point of view, and gave some of the reasons—such as the increasing demand for women doctors under local authorities, the probable extension of the National Health Insurance Scheme, the growing demand for women general practitioners—which make the recent action of certain London Hospitals in closing their doors to women students so very serious. Miss Beard, Head Mistress of Putney High School, Dr. Higgins, herself a general practitioner (as is also her husband), and Mrs. Barton were able to bring strong arguments, based on their wide and varying experiences, in favour of the contention that women medical students should have equal opportunities with men. Apparently the only reason which has made this Hospital take this decision is that all but one of the other Hospitals have done so, and in consequence it fears the loss of a number of "desirable" men students.

*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.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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

## WOMEN IN THE SERVICE OF HOSPITALS.

A meeting of the Joint Committee was held on Tuesday, 3rd July, at 50 Porchester Terrace, by kind permission of the Hon. Mrs. Franklin, when delegates for the deputation to King's College Hospital were appointed, five representatives having been invited to meet the same number of members of the Board of Management of that Hospital, on Thursday, 5th July. A report of this deputation is given elsewhere. Immediately after the committee meeting, Mrs. Franklin entertained the members and representatives of the Press to tea, when Mrs. Corbett Ashby and several members of the Committee outlined the work being undertaken.

## HALLAM (SHEFFIELD) BY-ELECTION.

The Parliamentary Questionnaire was sent to all three candidates at the above by-election. Mr. Hobman (Lib.) and Mr. Flynn (Lab.) have replied in the affirmative to questions including those on Equal Pay and Opportunities, an Equal Moral Standard, Training of Unemployed Women, Employment of Married Women, Nationality of Married Women, and Information on Methods of Birth Control. Mr. Hobman considers that the State should take a lead in the experimental adoption of Family Allowances: Mr. Flynn has not replied to this question. As regards protective legislation being based on the nature of the work and not on the sex of the worker, Mr. Flynn has replied in the affirmative, while Mr. Hobman writes: "I approve on the whole, but rigid uniformity is difficult under present Factory Laws." Mr. L. W. Smith (C.) writes that while in sympathy with many of the endeavours of the National Union "it would be difficult for me to give you categorical replies to your carefully prepared questionnaire at the moment," since the matters referred to would require more study than is possible "during the hustle of a sharp election." He adds: "I can assure you, however, that should I be returned to Parliament all these problems will have my careful and sympathetic consideration as and when they arise in the legislative chamber."

## SUMMER SCHOOL: "DEMOCRACY."—4th-11th September.

An outline of the arrangements for the Summer School was given in the issue of 29th June, and readers can obtain registration forms and full particulars on application to the Secretary, N.U.S.E.C. Lectures on the "Ideals of the Liberal Party" and on "Security and Disarmament" will be given (engagements permitting) by Mr. Walter Layton, the well-known economist, whom some of our members had the pleasure of hearing at the luncheon held during the Council Meeting last March.

## GARDEN PARTY TO CELEBRATE EQUAL FRANCHISE.

The programme for the Garden Party to be held on Wednesday next, 18th July, from 3.30 to 8.30 p.m., at Cliveden, Taplow, Bucks (by kind permission of the Viscountess Astor, M.P.), is now complete, and includes Speeches, Music, Sketches by Miss Margaret Bussé, an American Tennis Tournament, a "Use and Beauty" Stall, and a Sweet Stall.

It is difficult to exaggerate the beauty of the gardens at Cliveden, and we look forward to a large and representative gathering, both of old suffragists and new voters, who will wish to take advantage of this opportunity of meeting together to celebrate a great victory and to congratulate honoured leaders.

Tickets for the Garden Party, including entrance and tea, are 5s. each, or after 6 p.m. 3s. each. Groups of 10 or more can obtain tickets at half-prices. Societies who arrange motor-coach parties of 32 or more can obtain tickets, including entrance and tea, at the very reduced rate of 2s. each. Return tickets from London to Cliveden by motor-coach are 3s. return, and cheap day railway tickets to Taplow 2s. 10d. return. As Cliveden is 4 miles from Taplow, arrangements have been made for busses to meet trains. The fares from the Station to Cliveden will be 4d. each way. A motor-coach will leave Dean's Yard at 1.45 and start back from Cliveden at 6.45. Applications for tickets, both for the party and for travelling by motor-coach, should be made as soon as possible to Headquarters.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## POLICE AND PUBLIC CRITICISM.

MADAM,—The report of the Savidge Inquiry Tribunal has been delayed until the middle of July, after the Press had announced that it would be presented by the end of June. Meantime, articles are appearing in the Press which suggest that the Metropolitan Police are indulging in a form of "ca-canny" or "work-to-rule" strike and that their future attitude depends on whether or not the Savidge report vindicates them! The Home Secretary "hopes" that "before long the police will resume their former activity". Are we to understand from this that if the Metropolitan Police are criticized, or if the Courts occasionally acquit persons whom they have charged, then the police will cease to function?

ALISON NEILANS,  
Secretary.

Association for Moral and Social Hygiene,  
14 Great Smith Street, S.W. 1.

## THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MADAM,—At the recent International Labour Conference in Geneva the central point of interest for women was, undoubtedly, the consideration and adoption of a Convention on Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery. Incidentally they would have been interested to discover, as I did in a brief interview, that Miss Bondfield (Workers' Representative on the Minimum Wage Committee) was bitterly opposed to any attempt to insert in that Convention Principle Seven of Article 427 of the Treaty of Versailles: "the principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value."

The motives of those who opposed the insertion of the Treaty principle in the Convention are easily understood. They feared that it would wreck the Convention and delay for "humanity" one of those advances towards social justice which they so earnestly desire. Oblivion to the facts that half "humanity" are women, and that social justice is inevitably hindered by the perpetuation of injustice towards half the human species is a common enough human failing, as we in the woman's movement painfully know. In the case of the Minimum Wage Convention it was accompanied by a second oblivion, equal in density: oblivion to the fact that considerations of expediency and prejudice do not affect the binding nature of Treaties.

The International Labour Organization was brought into being by Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles (and the corresponding parts of the other Peace Treaties). A Preamble established general ideals. Article 427 of the Treaty of Versailles lays down Nine General Principles for securing social justice. The High Contracting Parties explicitly state that these principles are neither complete nor final. They are laid down as what may be called the irreducible minimum. All are equally referred to as of "special and urgent importance."

Among these principles are:—  
Second: The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.

Third: The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.

Fourth: The adoption of an eight-hours day or a forty-eight hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been obtained.

Seventh: The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

It is obvious that the International Labour Organization would not be competent to adopt a Convention which permitted Member States ratifying it to impose a 72-hours working week. (Variations on account of climatic conditions, etc.—Article 405—must be stated within the Convention.) Nor would the International Labour Organization be competent to adopt a Convention which permitted Member States to forbid or evade the right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers. It is as obvious that the I.L.O. is not competent to adopt a Convention dealing with wage rates which would permit Member States ratifying it to award unequal remuneration to men and women doing work of equal value.

But this is exactly what the International Labour Organization has done. It has adopted a Convention on Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery which by omitting all mention of the Seventh Principle of Article 427 of the Treaty of Versailles, will permit Member States ratifying the Convention to create or maintain such Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery as may have power legally to impose an unequal wage rate on women doing work of equal value.

The insertion in a recommendation of a reminder to Governments of the existence of the Seventh Principle of Article 427, emphasizes rather than otherwise the irregularity of the Convention.

It has been argued that this Convention is not a Wage Convention, but merely a Machinery Convention; and that no Convention could contain a principle so definitely touching wage rates as does the Equal Pay principle of the Treaties. Certainly no international convention can define an international minimum wage which must differ in each country according to a variety of circumstances. Nor could it define, either for a country or a trade, what is work of equal value. These are national problems for nations to decide. But what the International Labour Organization in Convention concerning wage rates is, under its constitution as determined by the Peace Treaties, obliged to do, is to lay down those broad, essential principles which must govern wage rates. One of these principles is "the principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value."

It is unquestionable that this Convention is a wage convention, touching the problem of wages as nearly as any international convention can. Its unique purpose is the establishment in Member States of machinery with power legally to fix and alter wage rates in certain trades or parts of trades—in short to raise wages. Within the scope defined, this Convention is a wage raising Convention. Unless the Seventh Principle of Article 427 of the Treaty of Versailles is no more than a "scrap of paper" it must equally be a wage equalizing Convention for men and women doing work of equal value.

The adoption by the International Labour Organization of this Minimum Wage Convention minus that clear Equal Pay Principle of the Peace Treaties raises a question of vital interest to every woman and every woman's organization, national and international, adhering to the policy of Equal Pay. The question is, primarily a legal one, involving the competence of the International Labour Organization to adopt a Convention which permits of the contravening of a principle of the Peace Treaties and of its own constitution thereunder. Such a question can only be decided by the International Court of Justice, which has already given several Advisory Opinions on the competence of the I.L.O.

While, however, the question is in essence a legal one—women may be thankful that it is so, and that for once they have treaties to rely on—your readers will be among the first to realize that any failure by women's societies which hold the policy of Equal Pay to challenge the Convention in its present form and to seek redress will be disastrous for the woman's movement, and will react unfavourably on the struggle for equal economic status for many years to come. It would make difficult, if not impossible, the challenge of any future Wage Convention which may—which certainly will—be framed on this present precedent. Moreover, failure to take such action as is necessary to bring this matter before the International Court would imply the tacit acceptance of the setting up of an international wage standard in direct conflict with the declared policy of such women's organizations, and the tacit approval of a breach of that very principle of the Peace Treaties which is of most vital importance to the women of every nation.

I am, etc., Yours faithfully,  
ELIZABETH ABBOTT,  
Open Door Council.

## AN EMINENT IRISH CITIZEN.

Among the recipients of honorary degrees at Trinity College, Dublin, on 30th June, was Miss Margaret Huxley. The *Irish Times*, commenting with much satisfaction upon this selection, describes Miss Huxley's work on behalf of the nursing profession in Ireland. It has covered a period of some 40 years, and has included primary responsibility for the foundation of the Dublin Metropolitan technical school for nurses, also active participation in the establishment of the International Council of Nurses.

## ASSOCIATION FOR MORAL AND SOCIAL HYGIENE.

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or

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1. Complete recognition of Equal Moral Standard in law and custom.
2. Abolition of "maisons tolérées" throughout India and the British Crown Colonies.
3. Repeal of the existing Solicitation Laws.
4. Opposition to all proposals to graft compulsion on to the national Venereal Diseases treatment scheme.

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene has, for over 50 years, done the pioneer propaganda and research work on all these subjects.

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Can you help us with donations?

Full particulars: SECRETARY, A.M.S.H.,  
Orchard House, 14 Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

## COMING EVENTS.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18. 3.30-8.30. Garden Party to celebrate the passing of the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Bill, at Cliveden, Taplow, Bucks (by kind permission of the Viscountess Astor, M.P.). Tickets, including tea, 5s.

Kensington and Paddington S.E.C. JULY 14. 3 p.m. Pembroke Lodge,

Edwardes Square, W.8. Garden Party to meet Members of Executive Committee of N.U.S.E.C. Chair: Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Speaker: Dr. Stella Churchill.

## WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE.

JULY 27-AUGUST 10. International Summer School, Westhill, Selby Oak, near Birmingham. Study subject: "New Theories of Government in relation to International Peace." Particulars from 55 Gower Street, W.C.

## TYPEWRITING.

M. McLACHLAN and N. WHITWAM—TYPISTS.—  
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TO LET, Cottage in the Chilterns. Very well furnished. Three bedrooms, large living-room, kitchen, and back kitchen garden. Available now. For long or short period. Very moderate terms for long let.—Apply, Box 1,487, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham 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, 2s. 6d.; workers, 1s. Suiting fee: Employers, 10s. 6d.; workers, 2s. (Victoria 5940.)

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 13th July. 6.30, Miss Bondfield, M.P., "The Fellowship of the Holy Ghost."

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