

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

Vol. XX. No. 45. One Penny.

REGISTERED AS  
A NEWSPAPER.

Friday, December 14, 1928.

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#### The Prime Minister and the Distressed Areas.

The Prime Minister at question time in the House of Commons on Tuesday promised a full statement at an early date of the result of the Government's inquiries into the situation, though he could not say whether they included any special Exchequer grants. We warmly welcome his further announcement that an organizing secretary has been appointed at the Mansion House, whose duty would be to set up a general clearing house of information for the better co-ordination of the relief of distress. In a leading article printed before this announcement was made, we strongly urged the appointment of a director of relief, and are delighted that our demand has been anticipated.

#### The Right to Kill.

On Wednesday last the House of Commons indulged in the luxury of a free vote, and its result was profoundly interesting. Commander Kenworthy asked leave to introduce a Bill (which will of course go no further this Session) for the abolition of the death penalty, and secured for his motion a majority of one in a House more than half full—no mean achievement under the circumstances. The Bill obtained the fairly solid support of the Opposition parties, as well as the votes of nine Conservatives. We understand that Lady Astor is also a supporter though she was not among those who voted. This is the first time that the House has declared itself against the death penalty, though since the middle of last century the matter has been repeatedly raised. Among the arguments cited by the mover on behalf of his Bill were the danger of an irrevocable miscarriage of justice as well as the invidious duty imposed upon the executioner. In opposing, Mr. Radford dwelt upon the very real deterrent effect of such a penalty. In our opinion the question raises issues beyond those which concern the relations of victim and executioner. It is questionable whether the inevitable mantle of interest and dignity which the shadow of death may throw over a mean and brutal murderer as he or she stands in the limelight of the dock, is not an unhealthy and arbitrary stimulant to public interest and a direct incentive to the lowest ambitions of certain sections of the Press. We are inclined to think that the abolition of the death penalty would diminish the "news value" of the life stories of murderers and their relatives, and that this, though not the only consideration involved, is one which might well be thrown into the balance on Commander Kenworthy's side.

#### The Housing Subsidy.

The announcement by the Government that the subsidy payable under the Wheatley Housing Act of 1924 is to be reduced by £1 10s. a house after September, 1929, has brought consternation to all those interested in the housing problem. The subsidy payable under the 1924 act will now amount to £6 in urban districts and to £9 10s. in agricultural parishes. The argument in favour of this reduction put forward by the Government is that a fall in price is likely to follow such a reduction in the same way as occurred in the case of the earlier reduction. Those concerned in the building industry and others, however, point out that the number of houses built under the subsidy are not sufficient in number for a reduction in that subsidy to have any appreciable effect on price of building generally, and that the Government's reference to the effect of the earlier reduction is a bad case of post hoc ergo propter hoc. It is peculiarly unfortunate that

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.

#### God Save the King.

As we go to press the precarious suspense at Buckingham Palace continues unabated. To the uninitiated, bulletins tell little more than a tale of anxiety held day after day at straining point. The Royal Family go about their business with a courage and a quiet reserve which set the pattern of dignity for all in trouble. And in a wide sense all *are* in trouble. For all, without respect of creed, class, or party, are joining their emotional forces in an urgent hope that the King may live.

#### Local Government (Scotland) Bill.

The comparison between the Scottish and English Bills is interesting not only as an indication of the different conditions as regards Local Government in the two countries, but also because certain provisions of the Scottish Bill might very usefully be inserted in that for England, and vice versa. The general scheme of de-rating and administrative reform for Scotland is similar in principle to that proposed for England, but in view of the large number of *ad hoc* authorities still remaining in Scotland, it is even more drastic in its proposed changes. There is to be practically a clean sweep of the minor Local Authorities. These include not only Parish Councils, which correspond to our Boards of Guardians, and district Boards of Control (the lunacy authorities), but also the *ad hoc* education authorities. Moreover, all burghs of less than 20,000 population (there are only about two dozen with a population in excess of this figure) hand over their police and their major health services, as well as their roads, to the County Councils. The four biggest towns, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen, will remain education authorities, in other cases the county takes on the work. As in England, counties will be able to delegate their authority in certain respects, and in education committees the principle of co-option in electing women is compulsory. In district committees it is only optional and may include up to half of the members, but women are not specifically mentioned. Provision is made for the expenses of those attending County Council meetings.

'Keep fit on  
**cocoa**'

**BOURNVILLE**  
SEE THE NAME "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE OF CHOCOLATE

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**Cadbury, Bournville**  
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this proposed reduction should come at a time when there is already considerable unemployment in the building industry. It was a fear based on past experience of this lack of stability in the numbers employed in building which all along has been the stumbling-block in the way of getting the building trades unions to accept an adequate amount of dilution; they foresaw bad times coming. It is not as if the million and a quarter houses which have been built in the last ten years have as yet resulted in an appreciable diminution of over-crowding. The continuance of this is, of course, due to the fact that it has not been possible, even with a subsidy, to let the Wheatley houses at a price which the poorer paid workers who have families can pay. We find the new houses occupied, therefore, by the small families of the better paid workers, manual and otherwise. The reduction of the subsidy makes it more than ever essential that the scheme which has been put forward at several recent housing conferences by Mr. E. D. Simon—viz. that reduction should be made in the rent in accordance with the number of dependent children of workers with an income of under £3 a week—should be pressed. There is no reason why, under the present act, any local authority should not spend its subsidy on this principle, rather than using it, as is almost universal at present, in a flat reduction of rents. Cannot some of our readers induce their local authority to make the attempt.

#### The Symbol and the Reality.

The Mustapha Kemal's government at Angora has from time to time arrested our attention by the unswerving and almost ruthless precision with which it carries forward Turkish feminism by assuasion and decree. We now learn that a government order is about to be issued which will require all Turkish women in government employment to wear European hats instead of Oriental veils, and to be uncovered indoors. The motive of this peremptory requirement is, of course, the conviction that the headscarf is the last relic of the veil. We cannot help feeling that excellent as is the motive which lies at the back of this proposed decree, its issue denotes a somewhat topsy-turvy process of reform. We know in this country that the origin of the wedding ring is not without sinister significance, having its roots in an age when wives were to a larger extent that is the case now, the personal property of their husbands. Yet we regard it as more practically conducive to the improved status of women, to agitate for legal and economic reform than to call for the forcible removal of all wedding rings. When such pieces of symbolism lose their background of legal and economic significance, they lose their sting, and from henceforth stand or fall by aesthetic considerations alone. And aesthetic considerations do not, in our opinion, lend any force to Mustapha Kemal's glorification of the Westernized hat as against the Oriental headscarf.

#### French Feminism.

The *Evening Standard* reported last week a lively interview with the Duchess d'Uzes, the veteran French Suffragist, whose oratory and whose hospitality will be remembered by those who attended the Paris I.W.S.A. Congress in 1926. "The women of France," she is reported to have said, "have a new hope of winning the ballot" as a result of the "recent reshuffling of ministerial posts". She faced up to the fact that hitherto it has been the Senate rather than the Chamber which has blocked suffrage reforms, but pointed out that no prime minister has yet made woman's suffrage a matter of confidence on which his government would be willing to stand or fall. She did not, she said, approve of militancy or of the street demonstrations which were successful in England—leaning rather to a tax-resistance campaign as a last desperate resort to be held in readiness. "If we do not obtain satisfaction," she said, "it is possible that a campaign to refuse to pay taxes will be undertaken. If Frenchwomen suddenly cease contributing financial aid to the Government perhaps their voice will be heard."

#### South African Women and the Vote.

General Smuts announced last week that he is prepared to make women's suffrage a principal plank in the South African party's platform at the next election. Meanwhile in the Nationalist party, opposition is reported to be weakening, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Havenga, having recorded his conversion to women's suffrage. The record of the Nationalist party has so far been a black one, and General Hertzog has

already vitiated an earlier premise of legislation, by the unfortunate but familiar qualification that it would not be made a matter of confidence, and Nationalist party voting would be free. It is to be hoped that his resolution may be greatly stiffened by the superior counter-bid of the Opposition.

#### Vote for Native Women in Ceylon.

A large increase of the electorate is foreshadowed in Ceylon, a message having been received from Mr. Amery by the Legislative Council that the Donoughmore scheme must be accepted as a whole, with modifications only in detail. Among other suggestions of this Commission were the recommendations that the present electorate be increased from 200,000 to a maximum of 1,850,000; and that all women, including natives, be given the vote at 30 years of age.

#### The Right to be a Catholic Voter.

Mr. James Cooper, M.P., speaking recently at an Orange meeting at Derrygonelly, unburdened himself of the following sentiment: "I have been opposed to votes for women, and am not sure that I am not still opposed to the measure, because I believe that there are more Catholic and Nationalist young women than Protestants." This is frank at any rate. We have known Socialists who opposed women's suffrage in past years, because they were convinced that new voters were likely to be Conservative voters. Lord Curzon himself openly added to his multitudinous reasons for opposing woman suffrage, the fear that women would be revolutionary voters. And now Mr. Cooper fears that they will be preponderantly Catholic. Well—they may be! But it is of the essence of representative government that the government shall represent the governed. Does he attach no political or moral value to this attribute? Or is he prepared to see a preponderantly Catholic population governed, by reason of certain deliberate franchise anomalies, by a preponderantly Protestant administration?

#### An Anglo-American Committee for International Discussion.

We welcome the new Committee for non-party discussions on International affairs between leading "men" in Great Britain and the United States. It is proposed that the members of the Committee shall consist of about fifty members from each side of the Atlantic. Archbishop Davidson has been elected President. The "men" we are glad to note include some women among the British representatives—Lady Astor, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Lady Violet Bonham Carter, and Mrs. Walter Runciman, but no American women so far. Anything that promotes friendly discussion between the two countries is of great value at the present time, but in view of the admirable work carried on by American women in the interests of world peace and harmonious relations between the old and the new world we are surprised that the original American list does not include women like Miss Jane Addams and Mrs. Chapman Catt, who have devoted themselves to such work and whose knowledge of international questions is everywhere acknowledged. We should have liked to see included in the British list some of those women who have taken such a prominent part in the Anglo-British-American Women's Campaign.

#### Ourselves.

We are grateful to those of our readers who have immediately responded to our appeal not only with guarantees but with letters which fill us with encouragement. We hope in due course to print extracts from some of these with a list of guarantors. We do not feel at all overcome with shame that we have to appeal to our friends for support. Most propagandist papers—especially if they are weekly—depend largely on some organization, individual, or group of individuals and we are proud that our little paper should rely on so wide a circle of friends. It has been suggested by one correspondent that a monthly issue might meet the case. The proposal to issue an attractive, self-supporting monthly is an alluring one, but we believe, and we are supported by nearly everyone whom we have consulted, that this change would defeat our ends. We all know excellent monthly papers whose usefulness is lessened by the fact that their news and comments are out of date. THE WOMAN'S LEADER wishes to serve as a weekly signpost to the woman voter and if our lease of life be renewed, as now appears probable, we have plans for still further increasing its usefulness, especially to the young newly enfranchised woman.

### A BRITISH NANSEN WANTED FOR OUR DISTRESSED AREAS.<sup>1</sup>

We have repeatedly during the last twelve months referred to the distress in the coalfields and have from time to time placed before our readers some of the numerous appeals for help of various kinds which have been organized. In the last few weeks, with the approach of cold weather, the sympathy of the public has been quickened and such appeals are multiplying. Last week at a conference of Lord Mayors and Mayors held at the Mansion House on the invitation of the Lord Mayor of London, a resolution in support of a National fund was carried and each municipality was asked to consider the best means of local support and take action accordingly. In the House of Commons the subject has again been raised; Miss Ellen Wilkinson, with, we believe, the concurrence of her fellow women Members, pressed hard last week for a Treasury grant in aid of the existing distress. Though it would be a mistake to allow the stream of voluntary help now flowing much more freely to dry up, we believe that such a grant must be required before the need is fully met. It is true, as was pointed out in reply to Miss Wilkinson's contention, that this catastrophe finds the country better provided with State and municipal machinery for distress than any similar event in past social history, though possibly only the cotton famine of the fifties can be compared with it in magnitude. But the resources of the Poor Law are already overwhelmed and relief given is only the barest minimum to prevent starvation. Unemployment insurance was never intended to cure chronic and incurable unemployment, though when a colliery closes down it wards off the full realization of privation. School meals, medical treatment of school children and other twentieth century methods of statutory relief alleviate suffering but cannot go far in the hands of bankrupt authorities. It is claimed that the Government proposals for reform at present before the country will remove some of the defects in local administration which have been brought into the limelight in the present crisis. They promote co-ordination in the work of the local authorities and they provide more adequate Treasury assistance for poor localities, but meanwhile the lifeblood of these districts is ebbing away. Something must be done at once.

We believe that abnormal situations call for abnormal remedies. The situation calls for a British Nansen—a first-class controller or organizer of relief appointed by the Government on lines to which we became accustomed during the war—the most experienced and strongest man or woman who can be found. The Ministry of Health has already pointed out the need for co-ordination of the different schemes for relief and some step of this kind is clearly necessary. The danger is not in our opinion that of abuse or even overlapping; the need is too widespread and the victims are neighbours living in small communities, sharing, we are told, what they have with each other. But with five or six public authorities at work besides innumerable voluntary relief funds, "adoptions," clothing and boot schemes, the result is chaos unless skilfully directed and organized. When once the public is assured that the situation has been tackled by a master hand; that statutory and voluntary means of assistance are falling into line in relation to each other and that

#### THE REPORT OF THE STREET OFFENCES COMMITTEE.

By CHRYSTAL MACMILLAN.

The long-awaited Report of the Street Offences Committee has at last been published. As was indicated by the trend of the examination of the witnesses, it deals mainly with offences in connection with solicitation for immoral purposes in streets and public places. But, because of the very narrow interpretation given to the terms of reference, it unfortunately omits to treat of other offences against decency and good order which fell within these terms. As a consequence the report fails to put the

<sup>1</sup> See note on the Prime Minister's announcement with regard to the appointment of an organizing Secretary after the above article was written.

a practical and thorough scheme for assistance for a calamity that must spread over a long period has been evolved, the response will be much more liberal and sustained than at present. Effectual relief of suffering must necessarily come first not only in the interest of humanity but of the future of our nation. We who have tried to do our share in recent years in distressed areas abroad cannot afford to allow our own people to deteriorate before our eyes physically and mentally.

But relief is not all. The League of Nations has sent advisors to help to restore broken down European States. Is it beyond our power to find a group of persons or individuals experienced in public business and finance to build up a new prospect of life in the valleys of South Wales and the mining villages of the North? We fully recognize the Government's efforts to encourage employment in the affected areas on work of public utility by undertaking to pay part of the interest on loans raised by local authorities and also, we believe, by offers of a grant towards their cost. But in some cases the initiation of such schemes is left to authorities not directly suffering from unemployment and too often the burden of even partially financing such possible schemes is too heavy to be borne. Reconstruction and relief must go hand in hand. The industrial transfer of a quarter of a million workers is necessarily a slow process, complicated as it is by the housing shortage which still exists. Here again we believe that methods applicable in time of war are called for and that the economic aspects of the present tragedy should be entrusted to an expert whose business it will be to explore every possibility of salvage *on the spot* as well as opportunities of migration and emigration.

Finally the adequate treatment of the problem of the distress areas must include both training schemes and provision for the enforced idleness of unemployment. There are still places which do not possess training schemes for the unemployed or even normal provision for free time such as libraries, evening classes or social centres. In a previous issue we described how rather than hang about idle, colliers in some South Wales villages are without payment cobbling the boots of the school children. Increased facilities for useful occupation have not only a psychological but an economic value and money spent in this way as part of the treatment required is well spent.

Our demand for better organization and a more constructional policy must not, however, prevent immediate generous response on our part to the cruel need. Contributions of money, warm clothing and boots for men as well as women and children are urgently needed and needed at once. The various appeals are well known to our readers, and we are confident that each will do her share according to her ability. In addition to gifts of money or clothes, women's societies are in some places already considering the possibility of initiating schemes of adoptions and may have opportunities of co-operating and possibly bringing their experience to bear on schemes which emanate from the local Town Hall or the local churches. It surely only needs the full realization of the state of affairs to rouse the whole country to action.

present law of solicitation in its proper perspective in relation to other laws dealing with street order. It therefore does not supply all the material which should have been collated for the information of the public, so that it might have been able properly to judge what changes in the law were necessary.

The Committee proposes that existing legislation, both general and local, in England and Scotland, relating to solicitation between the sexes should be repealed. This is to the good, since the present laws vary in different parts of the country and are such as to be effective almost entirely against women. It is to the good also that it proposes that there should be no solicitation

legislation directed specially against prostitutes; that future legislation should apply equally to men and women, and that it frankly acknowledges what has so often been pointed out, that in present practice the evidence of annoyance which is accepted is often perfunctory.

The Report proposes two new offences as follows:—

(1) Every person who in any street or public place importunes any person of the opposite sex for immoral purposes shall be guilty of an offence. In this section the term importunes shall be construed as referring to acts of molestation by offensive words or behaviour.

(2) Any person who frequents any street or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation so as to constitute a nuisance shall be guilty of an offence: provided that no person shall be convicted of an offence under this section except on the evidence of one or more persons aggrieved.

One weakness of both these proposals is that they require proof of an immoral purpose, and so make it necessary for the police to continue to act as a morals police and the court as a court of morals. The Report also so far as the first proposal is concerned rejects the proposals of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Street Offences Bill, that annoyance should be an essential element in the offence, and that the person annoyed should make a complaint. The second proposal, however, does provide for proof of annoyance, although disguised under the description "nuisance," and does require the evidence of the annoyed person. It is evident that the Report has not faced up to the logic of the situation. It does allege that "the gravamen of the offence from the point of view of the criminal law resides not in its immorality but in its interference with the rights of other persons." Quite so. Then why not give effect to these principles? Proposal (2) partly does so, since it requires the evidence of the person aggrieved, that is the person whose rights have been interfered with. Proposal (1) tested by these principles fails in both respects. It creates an offence of which the gravamen resides in an immoral purpose, and requires no proof of interference with the rights of any other person. For if the other person concerned is in no way annoyed how have his rights been interfered with?

To give effect to these principles would lead back to the proposal in the Street Offences Bill which is definitely based on them. That measure makes it an offence wilfully to annoy another by words or behaviour if such other makes a complaint. It makes no reference to an immoral purpose. It requires proof of interference with the rights of another and protects both sexes from interference by a person of either sex.

#### THE LEAUGE COUNCIL AT LUGANO.

By HEBE SPAULL.

The fifty-third meeting of the Council of the League of Nations is meeting this week. It was to have met at Geneva on 3rd December, but in view of Sir Austen Chamberlain's illness it was postponed for a week and, in view of both his and Herr Stresemann's health, arrangements were made to hold the session at Lugano instead of at Geneva.

The two disputes which for so long have baffled the Council again figures on the Agenda, but, as there are hopes that the Hungarian-Roumanian dispute may be settled by the direct negotiations which have been instituted, only the Polish-Lithuanian dispute is likely to be discussed at length by the Council. The Conference at Königsberg between the Poles and Lithuanians appears to have been a failure, but the Council is certain to insist on a full report of the negotiations.

Another matter on the Agenda which is of special interest is the appointment of the members of the Permanent Board of Control which is one of the main provisions of the Opium Convention of 1925 which has just come into force. It will be recalled that the required number of ratifications to the Convention were only received this summer, which is the reason why the Convention has been so long in coming into force. According to the terms of the Convention, the United States of America was to be invited to nominate someone to serve with the Council in making the appointments. America has, however, declined the invitation of the League for the same reason that her delegation left the Opium Conference of 1925, namely, that the Convention did not go far enough. The American Note concluded, however, by stating that "the United States recognizes that the traffic in narcotic drugs can be controlled only by international co-operation, and, in continuation of its efforts to that end, will, in addition to observing its obligations under the Hague Convention, endeavour to furnish information as the permanent Central Board may request."

#### CAN FORCE DRIVE OUT FORCE?<sup>1</sup>

By KATHLEEN E. INNES, B.A.

Are the economic and military sanctions, as embodied in Article XVI of the League Covenant "morally defensible, politically desirable, and technically feasible?" That question, which was discussed in a recent debate between Mr. W. Arnold Forster and Mrs. Swanwick, is the starting point of this article.

Many people believe that the gradual substitution of force on the side of law, for force used in the anarchy of war, is the way to permanent peace. In the last resort they envisage the use of military measures under sanction of law, to stop a war which has been started in contravention of Treaty pledges—and they quote the analogy of the police force for maintaining order, as a parallel to the military measures they envisage—measures which they refuse to call war. The historical analogy of the growth of law within a nation supported by a police force, is a tempting one to pursue, but there is a good deal of loose thinking connected with it.

Those who advocate military sanctions in a world that has not disarmed must face the fact that they are not going to use an orderly and controllable weapon to restore order. They are going to let loose a world war, quite as terrible as the last—and the refusal to call it war will not lessen the horrors.

This has a direct bearing on the morality of military sanctions. Their advocates say that to refuse to employ them against a clear case of international crime is to abet the criminal; and they pose the admittedly very difficult problem: "What in such a case, if you refuse sanctions are you going to do? Are you going to see the injured nation overrun and refuse aid? Is that morality?"

At the risk of a deadlock, the counter-question needs to be put: "What are you going to do with your military sanctions? Are you going to let loose all the immorality of war, the lying propaganda, the dishonour it brings inevitably to many men and women, the suffering and death to millions of people innocent of its cause? Morality versus morality, are you so sure your solution can be defended as moral?" These immoral "effects" would result even if military sanctions worked exactly as planned—a highly doubtful assumption. If the attempt to apply them led, as it almost certainly would, to alliances and counter-alliances to call the result anything but the old-styled war would be deliberate blindness. "But," say their defenders, "the use of military sanctions in the Covenant is that though it may never be possible to apply them, they act as a deterrent." This comes so near to bluff that its morality is doubtful, and it is surely bad psychology. It is rather like trying to prevent a child from doing something, by a threat which it has reason to think may not be carried out. Every wise parent or teacher knows the folly of this, and we believe it is equally unsound when applied to a nation. The gambling chance that it is worth while may be taken, with the excitement of the possible evasion of the penalty acting as a spur rather than a deterrent. In other words, sanctions as a deterrent are likely to lead to political scheming to secure the alliances which they are designed to avoid.

The breakdown of military sanctions into alliances is a danger so great and so highly probable, as alone to make it the height of unwisdom to contemplate trying to use them; but it is left for those who reject them to think out what they would do if faced with a situation demanding action.

Would they employ diplomatic and economic sanctions? These are certainly in a different category. In the closely connected modern world they would have a very great moral effect from the moment they were called into play. People argue, rather confusedly, remembering the effect of our blockade on Germany, that they would be worse than war. But our blockade of Germany took place in addition to and as an accompaniment of war, and further, was carried on as a result of war passions long after the Armistice. A severing of economic relations as a penal measure would be likely to bring the local war between two Covenant breakers to a close much sooner, and certainly with less suffering, than a general war arising from the employment of military sanctions. It could be gradual and it could be stopped directly the end of stopping war had been attained.

If the attempt, moreover, to employ these "reasonable" sanctions were to break down, it would not be as disastrous as the breakdown of military sanctions into alliances and world war.

(Continued at foot of page 349.)

<sup>1</sup> Contributed on behalf of the Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, W.C.

#### THE GOSPEL OF DR. MARIE STOPES.

Ten years after the publication of *Married Love*, the book through whose medium Dr. Marie Stopes put her own peculiar gospel "across the footlights," there appears its sequel, *Enduring Passion* (Putnam, 6s.). We prophesy that a great many people, seeing this title in the Press or in a shop window, will go their way vociferating renewed protestations against the latest disgusting work of a disgusting author. This they will do none the less fervently because they will not have read the book. We are personally acquainted with a number of such critics, and therefore speak with perfect confidence of their existence and behaviour. But to continue our prophecy: *Enduring Passion* will appear in numerous pornographic shop windows up and down the country, in the mixed company of Aristotle, Boccaccio, and Miss Victoria Cross. It will on that account, share the fate of *De Partibus Animalium* and the *Decameron*, in being widely read by the wrong people for the wrong reasons. Like fire when it escapes from its grate, or like tar transposed from the high road to the carpet, it may therefore do a certain amount of harm—or at any rate add fuel to a flame of obscenity which is already brightly burning.

Meanwhile much larger numbers of married persons will read it, as they read *Married Love*, because it bears upon a subject which is of practical and legitimate interest to them. Some may be intimidated by a kind of "strong silent English" reaction from Dr. Stopes' emotional phraseology, and by her curious habit of wrapping up the cutting-steel edge of her scientific mind in swathes of literary chiffon, which resemble the mental garb of those who have nothing definite to say. Others may be diverted from the main thesis by the various extraneous and irrelevant foibles in which Dr. Stopes' work abounds. Others, again, may be antagonized at the outset by a preconceived view that the physical side of marriage is a disgusting aspect of human life, and that any recognition of its significance apart from the socially utilitarian function of propagation is an offence against chastity. This, of course, is the traditional ecclesiastical point of view. And others, yet again, may still cherish the belief that the ordinary medical practitioner, available for consultation in the event of pathological hindrances, provides already a sufficient illuminant for the proper conduct of married life.

But we dare wager that of the many married people who will read this book, the great majority will rise up and call its author blessed. They know well enough that the gospel of Dr. Marie Stopes is a gospel that the civilized world needs very urgently. It is not, of course, primarily the gospel of birth control—though it is certainly in connection with that particular propaganda that her name is most frequently before the public, and it is equally true that the most comprehensive up-to-date textbook on that subject is the work of her hand. Yet an intelligent perusal of *Married Love* and its arresting sequel should suffice to dispel that misconception. Dr. Stopes is neither the first person nor the only person who has advanced birth control propaganda, and grasped its social and economic significance. But she is both the first person and the only person who has shouted from the house tops with an effective carrying voice, the message that there is such a thing as a technique of married life which demands and repays consideration, study, and experiment. And she is perhaps both the first and the only person who has vividly realized the immense amount of human happiness which runs to waste, the immense volume of physical and spiritual maladjustment which is generated by the failure of innumerable married couples to master the technique which in varying degrees governs their physico-spiritual relationship. Contraceptive birth control is, of course, for certain persons under certain circumstances, a necessary condition for the successful practise of this technique. Thus it is a subsidiary and incidental part of Dr. Stopes' gospel. To the uninitiated or to the peculiarly fortunate, the marriage relationship may seem a uniform, instinctive, and straightforward business. To thousands and perhaps millions, it is not so. Yet lives are lived out, or muddled out often enough, in the charmed circle of two tongue-tied and isolated human experiences, into which no illuminating ray of generalized experience ever creeps.

It is upon this charmed circle that the message of Dr. Marie Stopes has burst, with its queer mixture of religious exhortation, flowing metaphor, spiritual uplift, and practical advice interspersed with precise and detailed medical instruction. That this last is perfectly sound, we are assured by an orthodox and unemotional medical practitioner to whom we referred the matter for an expert verdict. He went further and stated that he had himself purchased the book, and that it was his intention to recommend it to married couples in his orbit, as occasion arose.

Well—we know well enough that all over the country there exist husbands and wives whose external existence is characterized by complete uneventfulness, but who owe to Dr. Marie Stopes elements of knowledge which have made a very real difference to the conduct of their daily lives. Many of them perhaps will not have the courage to testify openly—many may have even forgotten the origin of their improved technique. In any case their individual testimonies may not penetrate the hectic hostile clamour which surrounds Dr. Stopes' movements, and which with a peculiar degree of frank guilelessness she always manages to lash into its maximum fury. She is made in the mould of an uncompromising and pugnacious pioneer and it is the usual fate of such persons to reap, in their lifetime, less than they have sown. But we will venture to conclude with a final prophecy—which is that in the records of unwritten history Dr. Marie Stopes will hold a place with those who have most potently and profoundly influenced the conduct and happiness of their generation. M. D. S.

#### MIDLAND CONFERENCE OF EQUAL CITIZENSHIP SOCIETIES.

By A BIRMINGHAM CORRESPONDENT.

Representatives from nine Midland and West of England Societies, Birmingham, Leicester, Sutton Coldfield, Malvern, Hereford, Stroud, Church Stretton, Ebley, West Bromwich, affiliated to the N.U.S.E.C. attended an all-day conference in Birmingham on 29th November. Mrs. Ryland, Chairman of the Citizenship Sub-Section of the Birmingham Branch of the N.C.W., took the chair in the morning, when there was an informal discussion on the present work of the N.U., suggestions for the future, means of interesting new voters and finance. Miss Macadam and Miss Rathbone led the discussion, and made those present feel that now that we had obtained the weapon of equal franchise our work was, in a way, just beginning.

Various methods of attracting "under thirties" were described, including supper clubs, study circles, younger groups, indirect methods through other societies, and despair of any method in one locality, where the Unionist Association appeared to be absorbing all the available young thought. In this connection Miss Rathbone pointed out the importance of the influence of a non-party organization on the newly enfranchised.

The afternoon was given up to a discussion on "Protective Legislation." Dame Ethel Shakespear, President of the Birmingham branch of the N.C.W., was in the chair. Mrs. Abbott spoke first and Miss Rathbone second. There was not much discussion by the delegates present, perhaps they felt that not much remained to be said, or else that if it came to any practical issue there would probably be identical action by each side.

After tea Miss Rathbone presided at a meeting arranged for professional women. The subject was "Equalities still to be won by women." Mrs. Blanco White spoke on women's position in the home and industry, and Miss Macadam on various remaining inequalities of opportunity. She warned the audience that five London hospitals had now closed their doors to women medical students, and that to misquote: "Evil examples may corrupt good provincial hospitals."

The Birmingham Citizenship Sub-Section was delighted to welcome delegates from neighbouring societies, and exceedingly grateful to the speakers for their hard work, and the interest which they evoked, which made some of those present feel like the old lady of ninety who, encouraged by recent achievements, had just decided to subscribe to Headquarters as well as to her local society.

#### CAN FORCE DRIVE OUT FORCE?—Continued from page 348.

Diplomatic and economic sanctions carefully graded, are, we believe, the most hopeful solution to a knotty problem. If they alone were looked to, disarmament could proceed much more rapidly; and there is the likelihood that they would be recognized as international law and respected by third party States such as the U.S.A., thus helping to solve one of the greatest of our own special problems.

Our own Government has always laid stress on the fact that the military sanctions in the Covenant are not obligatory. To try to take away the power of the Council to make a recommendation for their exercise would be unwise, in view of the emphasis laid by some Powers upon them. What we all can do as individuals is to work in any crisis against the risk that the recommendation, if pronounced, shall result in anything so disastrous as either a breakdown into general war or a League war; and meanwhile it is incumbent upon us to lessen these dangers by working to advance disarmament by every means in our power.

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

THURSDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER, 1928: PENSIONS RIGHTS (MIGRANTS).

Mr. Bellamy asked the Minister of Health whether any approach has been made to any or all of the Dominions overseas for reciprocal legislation in respect of widows' and old age pensions and if it is anticipated that at an early date migrants may carry their pension rights from one part of the Empire to another.

Mr. Amery: I have been asked to reply. Following the report of the Oversea Settlement Special Sub-Committee of the Imperial Conference, 1926, communications on this subject were addressed to the Dominion Governments, but the replies so far received do not suggest that any early adoption of a general scheme of reciprocal arrangements between this country and the oversea Dominions can be anticipated.

Mr. Bellamy: Will the right Hon. Gentleman press the Dominions on the matter?

Mr. Amery: We desire to see such arrangements brought about. I will see whether they can be reminded.

MONDAY, 3RD DECEMBER, 1928: DISTRESSED AREAS (RELIEF).

Mr. Lansbury asked the Prime Minister whether in view of the privation and want prevailing throughout the industrial districts of the country, and the breakdown of the Poor Law and other relief agencies as a means for relieving destitution, he will appoint a non-party Committee of this House to consider and immediately report as to the best and most effective methods Parliament can adopt to bring prompt and generous assistance in these cases.

Sir Harry Brittain asked the Prime Minister whether his attention has been drawn to the distress in the mining areas and to the appeal of the Miner's Federation for assistance; and whether it is proposed to vote a sum towards relief in those districts.

The Prime Minister said that the Government is fully alive to the conditions prevalent in certain mining areas, and for some time past the situation has been under examination with a view to ensuring that there is no breakdown in the existing legal machinery for dealing with effects of unemployment. Arrangements are being made by the Lord Mayors of London, Newcastle-on-Tyne and Cardiff in conjunction with other Lord Mayors, to develop the existing Lord Mayor's fund. This fund, with a large number of smaller funds, supplements the legal provision for the mitigation of distress which is being made on a large scale through the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and by the Poor Law and other local authorities. At the same time, every effort is being made to accelerate the policy of transference from these areas. It is not proposed to ask Parliament to vote a sum for relief, and he did not think that the expedient suggested by the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley would be likely to be helpful.

In answer to further questions the Prime Minister said that of course the Government were watching the situation with some anxiety and with every sympathy, but they are not satisfied at present that the situation is beyond what can be done through the ordinary channels, supplemented in such a manner as he had indicated.

5TH DECEMBER, 1928: JUVENILE TRAINING CENTRES.

Sir Robert Newman asked the Minister of Labour how many juvenile training centres have been established for boys and girls respectively in the mining areas; how many is it estimated will have to be established to accommodate all the boys and girls out of work in those districts; and whether the Government has arrived at any decision as to how many it is intended to establish.

Sir A. Steel-Maitland replied that at present in the distressed mining areas there are 26 juvenile unemployment centres for boys, accommodating over 3,000 boys at a time. Except in a few districts where the numbers available to attend do not warrant the establishment of a centre, or where a short waiting period is necessary pending the extension of accommodation, all boys at present registered as unemployed in these areas are already provided for, and it is hoped to maintain this position. Fares are paid where necessary to enable boys from outlying districts to attend. Unemployed girls of 16 years of age and over are provided for in the homecraft training centres of the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment. There are 21 of these centres open at present in the distressed mining areas, accommodating over 300 girls at a time. The question of establishing juvenile unemployment centres for younger girls is being actively explored.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Office at Headquarters will be closed for the holidays from the evening of Friday, the 21st, and will be reopening on the morning of Friday, the 28th December.

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING, 1929.

The official summons to the Annual Council Meeting for 1929, has now been sent to all our Societies. It will be held on Wednesday afternoon, 6th March, Thursday and Friday, 7th and 8th March (whole day sessions), and Saturday morning, 9th March, at King George's Hall, Caroline Street, Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this will be an exceptionally important Council Meeting, being the first since the granting of Equal Franchise, and coming just before a General Election.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MRS. PANKHURST'S MEMORIAL.

MADAM,—It is generally felt that the time has now come to perpetuate the memory of Mrs. Pankhurst, whose leadership and self-sacrificing courage gained for women their political enfranchisement.

A Memorial Fund of £2,500 is being raised, and the Memorial will consist of:—

1. A headstone for the grave in Brompton Cemetery.
2. A portrait of Mrs. Pankhurst by Miss G. Brackenbury to be presented to the National Portrait Gallery.
3. A statue of Mrs. Pankhurst to be erected in Westminster. The statue, which will be 7 ft. in height, will be in bronze on a Portland stone base, will be the work of Mr. A. G. Walker, A.R.A., who designed and executed the statue of Florence Nightingale at the foot of Waterloo Place, and the busts of H.R.H. the Duchess of York and the late Dr. Louisa Aldrich-Blake.

A statue is the recognized form of tribute paid to historic personalities, the highest and most lasting honour that humanity has ever been able to pay to those who have rendered great services to civilization. As in olden days, so now, men commemorate their heroes and liberators by erecting statues; shall not women claim equal honour for her who led them to victory?

Donations should be sent to Lady Rhondda (hon. treasurer), Mrs. Pankhurst Memorial Fund, at the address given below. (Mrs.) A. E. W. MARSHALL.

THE L. G. BILL AND UNEMPLOYED WOMEN.

MADAM,—In one of your notes in this week's WOMAN'S LEADER you draw attention to a very important point raised by Mr. Pethick Lawrence, viz. that in weighting the population the degree of unemployed men was taken into consideration, but the unemployed women were ignored, and you go on to say "this point had escaped the notice of women's Societies." This was not quite correct, for in a leaflet giving a summary of the Government proposals for reform in Local Government, published last September by The National Council of Women (a copy of which I enclose), the following sentence is to be found, "Under the formula (Sec. C) the number of unemployed 'insured men' only is used as the percentage for 'weighting' the population. Does the term 'men' include 'unemployed' women and girls? If not, why not?"

I shall be so much obliged if you will give space in your next issue for this correction.

BERTHA MASON, National Council of Women, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

[Since our note was written we found that we were mistaken in thinking the point had been overlooked and we are glad to publish Miss Mason's letter.—ED.]

"THE DISTRESSED AREAS."

MADAM,—In your paragraph on the distressed areas you say, after quoting a passage from *The Times*, that you are "not certain that the Press all over the country is giving the matter the same prominence"—and this may very well be true—but so far as I know no paper nor speaker has yet really faced the situation or put it clearly to the country. And yet it appears to be largely a question of very simple arithmetic. There are said to be from 250,000 unemployed miners in the distressed areas. If we calculate the amount of relief necessary at £1 per head per week, counting the single men in with the married men with families, then we shall require, if we take the smaller number, £200,000—and this is a very moderate estimate. Five million pounds will therefore be wanted for six months, and over ten million for one year. What has Mr. Neville Chamberlain proposed to do in these circumstances? He has said that the ultimate solution is migration "which at the best cannot be a rapid process" and that the interval must "somehow" be bridged by voluntary effort, supplemented to a small extent by unemployment benefit and poor relief. What does this mean? The men are out of benefit already, or soon will be, and the rates from which poor relief is drawn must certainly by now be exhausted.

Even supposing what is very unlikely, that the migration schemes are successful and that the necessity for help will end in six months' or even a year's time, is it credible that the enormous gap can be bridged by private charity or voluntary effort? The thing is patently absurd. The remedy for this dreadful condition does not lie in stirring up the charitable. This is a national disaster, and cannot be dealt with by ladies giving their children one present at Christmas instead of four, or by the good village women sending in packets of groceries. The country must be roused to put pressure on the Government. The Government shows no sign of

facing the problem at all; how can it be forced upon them? The winter is on us. Where are our leaders? The Labour party has proved incapable; the Press is inefficient or party-ridden; the Church—? Oh for a Florence Nightingale!

ELINOR RENDEL.

7 Courtfield Road, S. Kensington.

"A FEMINIST RIDDLE."

MADAM,—THE WOMAN'S LEADER of 26th October, under the caption "A Feminist Riddle" comments on the position of the National Woman's Party in the recent Presidential campaign. There seems to be a misunderstanding not only of our reason for entering the campaign on the side of Mr. Hoover and Senator Curtis, but also of the proposed Equal Rights amendment to the national constitution.

The National Woman's Party is the only organization in the United States concentrated on the one object of securing an equal status for men and women in the law and equal opportunities for women in every pursuit of life. It is working for Equal Rights both by national and state method. It has drafted over 500 Equal Rights Bills for introduction in state legislatures and has secured the passage of more than sixty state laws. The vote was gained by women in the United States after seventy years of agitation. It would take another seventy years to secure Equal Rights by state method. There is no security in state legislation. What one legislature passes a subsequent legislature may repeal. Women must be constantly watchful to safeguard the gains they have made and to prevent new sex discriminations from being written into the law. The Woman's Party goal is the passage of the Equal Rights amendment to the national constitution, which reads: "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." It is no more "a blanket amendment" than any other amendment to the national constitution. A principle is stated in language which anyone can understand. It is general because the national constitution deals with general principles upon which our Government is founded and not with specific details.

You state that "The proposed amendment represents in fact a sweeping application of legislative equality by the process of 'levelling down.'" This is a mistake. An amendment to the constitution must be ratified by three-fourths of the states. The amendment is a mandate to the states to equalize their laws but each state could still decide which way it prefers to equalize them. For instance, with the winning of the suffrage amendment, California equalized its law by abolishing the poll tax for men, while Mississippi equalized its law by extending the poll tax to women. Each state would have the right to do as it pleased, except that it would have to conform to the equal rights principle.

The Woman's Party is a non-partisan organization. It is working educationally and politically for the advancement of the Equal Rights movement. In 1916 it entered the Presidential campaign in active opposition to the Democratic Party, which had been in power and had blocked the passage of the suffrage amendment. In 1920 it picketed the National Republican Convention as a protest against the blocking by certain Republican state legislatures of ratification of the suffrage amendment. In 1926 it supported five women candidates for Congress, all of whom were pledged to support the Equal Rights amendment, and none of whom was running on the Republican ticket. Its election policy in this campaign is therefore not a new one. Senator Charles C. Curtis, of Kansas, the Vice-Presidential candidate on the Republican ticket, did more to help secure the passage of the national suffrage amendment than any other man in Congress. The Woman's Party has always been grateful to him, not only for the valiant fight he made for woman suffrage, but for his introduction in the Senate of the Equal Rights amendment and his efforts in its behalf. Senator Curtis stands unqualifiedly for complete equal rights between men and women. He has been leader in the Senate for many years and will now be its Presiding Officer.

While Mr. Hoover, unfortunately, did not go as far as his colleague with regard to the Equal Rights amendment, he agreed to support the principle of equality between men and women and said he was willing to go to any extent to remove restrictions of opportunity from any group. The question of an amendment to the constitution he considered a serious one, not to be lightly agreed to without more knowledge of the subject than he possessed at that time. He agreed, however, to have an investigation made and stated that if he found upon such investigation that the amendment would be the best method of securing equality, he would be for it. Mr. Smith, the Democratic candidate, during his long record as Governor of New York, had been an ardent advocate of special restrictive laws for women in industry, and had declared himself to be "unalterably opposed" to industrial equality for women and to the Equal Rights amendment. The Woman's Party, therefore, resolved to support the Republican candidates for President and Vice-President, for the reason that of all the candidates before the country these were the only candidates whose election offered any hope to the movement for equal rights between men and women.

While individual members of the Woman's Party were interested in the wet and dry and other issues, and undoubtedly some members voted on these issues, the organization campaigned for Mr. Hoover and Senator Curtis on the one issue of Equal Rights. We believe that in casting their votes our membership held, to a large extent, the interests of women before the interests of any political party and before any other issue in the campaign. Each State Branch did its share in the campaign. The national organization actively campaigned in two pivotal states, New York and New Jersey. Both states went into the Hoover column, the Woman's Party having done its share to get them there.

The farmers, labour, business, peace groups and wets and drys attempted to make their particular interest the paramount issue in the campaign. Feminists felt justified in making Equal Rights an issue. Their conviction was that such a demand was not a selfish one, in that the final achievement of Equal Rights for men and women would benefit not only women but the entire race.

103 East 75th Street, New York, N.Y.

JANE NORMAN SMITH, Chairman, National Council, National Woman's Party.

[We are exceedingly grateful for our correspondent's elucidation of the action of the Woman's Party in actively supporting Mr. Hoover. All the same our bewilderment is renewed when we set against this explanation the statement which Mr. Hoover is reported to have made to the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Woman's Trade Union League: "I am absolutely with you in your efforts to get adequate labour legislation for women. Such legislation establishes standards for industry, which although they already exist by voluntary agreement between many employers and the organized workers, must be written into law to bring up the laggards of industry. On this subject I have not altered my opinion as expressed in 1920. If women in industrial occupations are to be protected equally with men, they must have safeguards additional to those provided for men. I favour especially the laws limiting hours of labour, with progressively higher standards in accordance with the purposes of organized working women. I should greatly deplore any weakening of the existing regulations, or any interference with their extension."—ED.]

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

A very successful mass demonstration, organized by the Committee of the Civil Service for Equal Pay for Equal Work, was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Thursday evening, 29th November. The meeting was presided over by Mr. George Middleton, Chairman of the Committee, and was addressed first by Miss Bondfield, M.P., who summed up her short but characteristically energetic speech by passing on the slogan so long used by her own organizations—"Agitate, organize, educate." She was followed by Mr. Briant, M.P., who stressed the fundamental bearing the principle of equal pay has on the whole status of women, and urged that the exact figures of the cost of its application in the Civil Service be demanded. Lady Rhondda impressed on all the importance of remembering the value of the vote, pointing out that if we forgot that we possessed it, so also would the Government. A resolution asking for a select committee to be set up with a view to the application of the principle of equal pay in the Civil Service was passed. The meeting closed with an expression of cordial thanks to the chairman and speakers.

WOMEN IN 1928.

"The Woman's Leader" New Year Number

THE WOMAN'S YEAR in

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## GUILDHOUSE W.C.A.

DEC. 17. 3-30. Tea and Music at 9 Elmbank Gardens, by invitation of Mrs. Percy Dearmer.

## LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE.

DEC. 14 and 15. 10-4. 25-27 Marsham Street, S.W.1. Christmas Sale.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Ealing W.C.A. DEC. 14. 3 p.m. Y.W.C.A., Blue Triangle Hall, 51 Uxbridge Road. Miss Nina Boyle, "A Fair Field—What will we Sow?" Chair: Mrs. Eates.

## WOMEN'S UNIONIST ASSOCIATION.

DEC. 19. 11 a.m. Palace Chambers, Bridge Street, S.W.1. Mrs. Skelton, "Industrial History and Legislation." Chair: Countess of Middleton.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 100 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.)

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