

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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**NOTES AND NEWS.****Opening of the Eighth Assembly.**

The eighth session of the Assembly of the League of Nations opened at Geneva on 5th September, the newly-elected President being Senor Guani, of Uruguay. It contains among its delegates some twenty foreign ministers, including Sir Austin Chamberlain, as well as many former foreign ministers and prime ministers. It has also received some excellent notices in the Press. All this in spite of the fact that nothing very sensational is on its programme. Though recent international events have caused consternation among idealists, they may take courage in that the League is well established in the world of fact, and has to be taken account of by responsible statesmen whether they like it or not.

Man has existed, so the British Association tells us, for a million years, and the League for eight. Man still has something of the monkey in him—the wonder is that in its little life the League has done as well with him as it has. It has lived by faith for eight years, let us back it up with our own confidence for another eighty years, and we shall see what we shall see.

**Trades Union Congress.—Industrial Peace**

The meeting of the Trades Union Congress is still being held at the time of going to Press. Undoubtedly one of its most interesting features has been the declarations by Mr. Hicks and Mr. Citrine with regard to the need during the transitional period over which industry is now passing, for fuller use of the machinery of joint consultations and negotiations between employers and employed. Mr. Hicks pointed out that the limits of possible development in this direction had not been reached, and that a "direct exchange of practical views between representatives of the great organized bodies who have the responsibility for the conduct of industry, and know its problems at first hand" would bring both sides face to face with the hard facts of the industrial situation "and might yield useful results in showing how far and upon what terms co-operation is possible in a common endeavour to improve the efficiency of industry and to raise the workers' standard of life." Here, indeed, is that recognition that peace and productivity are essential for an improved standard of living and that the bigger cake is more important than a fight over the distribution of the present one, which are essential conditions both for the revival of British industry and for the welfare of the workers.

**and Unemployment Insurance.**

During the discussions on the report of the Blanesburgh Committee on Unemployment Insurance the usual attack was made upon Miss Bondfield for her action in having signed the

report. Miss Bondfield, well able as usual to defend herself, pointed out that those who blamed the report could not have appreciated that the real problem was one of insurance rather than of maintenance.

"You have no right," Miss Bondfield said, "to use the words that have been used. On that committee I gave 12 months' gratuitous service, and I believe I have done the best in the interests of the unemployed. If we are not to be allowed to consider such questions according to our own discretion we will not take dictation from those people who obviously by their speeches have never properly considered the whole ramifications of this question."

Miss Bondfield has explained both to ourselves and in public that although her action in having agreed to a recommendation cutting down the rates of benefits for young persons between 18 and 21 has been condemned, it has not been realized that this recommendation was combined with a further one demanding that those young people should, at the same time receive training in employment centres which would include not only education, but also a good meal.

**Age of Marriage.**

We have obtained interesting figures from official sources with regard to the number of marriages of girls under 16 during the last three years. There have been none under the age of 14, and only two and four respectively under 15 years old. At the age of 15 there were 19 in 1924, 24 in 1925, and 34 in 1926. The increase in these last figures is disturbing, though clearly the importance of raising the age of marriage in Great Britain is not so much an internal problem as one relating to our responsibilities with regard to other countries, and especially India—a responsibility brought home vividly to our readers and others in connection with Miss Mayo's *Mother India*. Apparently the only argument brought against the proposal that the age of marriage should be raised for both sexes to 16 in this country is that a child might be born of a girl mother, whom it is desired to legitimate. We can hardly credit that this view can be widely and seriously held. A man who has made a girl a mother before the age of 16 is guilty of a criminal offence and is the last man in the world who should become her husband. We expect that women's organizations will support our point of view in the deputation that the Home Secretary will be receiving in the autumn. We would like to take this opportunity of apologizing for a slip in our note on this subject two weeks back, when we referred to the minimum age of marriage for boys as 16 instead of 14.

**The New Italian Penal Code.**

The new Italian Penal Code is stern in regard to offences against morality on the part of men. Under it a man guilty of seduction may be sentenced to imprisonment for three years, or if the victim is under age for five years, and the *souteneur* is liable to six years in prison. The recent report of the League of Nations on the Traffic in Women and Children shows the importance of a strict enforcement against men, rather than only against women, of that part of this moral code with which national legislation is concerned.

**Indian Women in Mines.**

We read in the *Daily News* that:—"the Indian Mining Federation has taken strong objection to the recent regulations purposed by the Government of India prohibiting the employment of women underground in the Indian mines. The Federation says that the mineowners feel "amazed that the Central Government have so lightly dismissed the weighty objection to the proposal put forward by the Federation, namely a probable rise in the wages." The opposition to women working underground is, in the opinion of the Federation, supposedly humanitarian. "For thirty years past," the Federation asserts, "women have worked in Indian mines

without impairing in the least their capacity to bear healthy children." It is admitted that public protests were raised against the employment of women underground when the first Mines Bill was passed, but the Federation presumes that "if these arguments could be overruled thirty years ago without any injury to the health and safety of the miner women, there is no more reason to attach additional weight to them to-day." There are at the present time 70,000 women working underground in the Indian mines. The man miner gets Rs. 4.12 per week of 40 hours underground; women get for the same type of work Rs. 2.8 per week for 48 hours. We expect the members of the Open Door Council would like to see the ban on women working in mines removed in this country.

#### Canada—the Place for Women.

"There is a grand opening for women in Canada," says Mrs. Cohen, a district organizer for the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, who has recently visited the provinces of Quebec and Ontario to investigate conditions for the Society for the Settlement of British Women Overseas. Before her visit Mrs. Cohen had been "strongly opposed" to emigration for women because she did not know the conditions. The visit has completely changed her views, and she is now a warm advocate of a woman seeking her livelihood in the Dominion. Referring to employment conditions, she said that the demand was mainly for domestic workers, who could obtain posts within twenty-four hours of their arrival. Waitresses, for example, start at 12.50 dollars a week. Mrs. Cohen also emphasized the need for settlers—men and women—who will stay on the land and not drift back to the town, and who will co-operate in developing the wonderful resources of the country.

#### Women and the British Association.

We wish the space at our disposal permitted us to give an account of the many extraordinarily interesting papers which have been read at the meeting of the British Association. We should like to draw the attention of our readers to some of the papers read by women. The Duchess of Atholl, as President of the Education Section, gave a stimulating and interesting address. Miss Sarah Burstall spoke on education in tropical Africa, and Miss Mary Mactagart on the psychological aspects of education. Mrs. Alcock (who is incidentally the mother of

#### VISCOUNT CECIL AND THE LEAGUE.

The resignation of Lord Cecil must be felt as a blow by us all. As long as he represented this country at Geneva we knew that whatever might be happening at home in the meetings of the League the cause of peace, so far as England could promote it, was entrusted to a man who was worthy of such a trust, who cared for it as it should be cared for, devotedly and with profound conviction, who could be relied upon to prefer this paramount interest to all the other interests opposed to it by prejudice, party groupings, or financial pressure. Now he has gone at a time when our hopes of disarmament have been roughly shaken, and he is apparently to be replaced by a worthy peer whose claim to become our champion in a matter so desperate and so vital seems to be that nobody in particular disapproves of him. This in itself is ill news enough, but it is made worse by the reasons given by Lord Cecil for his action. In his own words, which we shall do well to remember, "I look back on the refusal to accept the treaty of Mutual Assistance, the unconditional rejection of the Protocol, the Ministerial declaration against compulsory arbitration, the partial failure of the Preparatory Commission, and now the breakdown of the Three-Power Conference. An advance in the direction first of security, then of arbitration, lastly of disarmament itself has been tried, and in each case has made little or no progress. In each case the policy I advocated has been more or less completely overruled. As it has been in the past, so will it be in the future. The same causes will produce similar effects. For the truth is, however unwillingly I am to recognize it, that in these matters my colleagues do not agree with me." To this the Prime Minister replied, in effect, that shortly after the present Government came into office the Foreign Secretary made a speech at Geneva in which many admirable sentiments were expressed. . . . It is quite true that this Government has not the slightest wish to go to war. The English governments which held office before 1914 had no wish to go to war. It is quite true that they go further than this, that they are prepared, to a certain extent, to disarm, so long as they may do it in quite their own way, along exactly those lines which they

several children) dealt with plant pathology. Other botanists included Miss E. Saunders, of Newnham College, Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan, Miss A. Westbrook, and Miss M. Martin. Dr. Kathleen Carpenter spoke on ice age relics, Miss A. Garnett, of Sheffield, on Geography, and Miss Blackwin and many others.

#### The New Principal of Morley College.

We learn that Mrs. Hubback, the parliamentary and general secretary of the N.U.S.E.C., has accepted the appointment of Principal of Morley College for Working Men and Women, in succession to Mrs. Barbara Wootton. Our congratulations are due to Morley College, but our condolences to the N.U.S.E.C., and indeed to the whole women's movement, if it is to lose the benefit of Mrs. Hubback's quite exceptional talents for political work and long experience in the shepherding of Parliamentary bills. The scene of Mrs. Hubback's future labours is, however, but a short distance from Westminster, so that it may be hoped that the benefit of her experience and advice may still be available.

#### Woman Director of Leather Research.

Miss Dorothy Jordan Lloyd, D.Sc., late Fellow of Newnham College, has been appointed Director of Research to the British Leather Manufacturers' Research Association.

#### Woman Bank Director.

Miss Gordon Holmes, who began her career as a typist in London, has been appointed Director of the City Savings Bank in Budapest, and is the only woman bank director in Hungary.

#### Woman Registrar.

The Barnet Board of Guardians have appointed Mrs. Smith as Registrar of Births and Deaths for the Finchley district in the place of her late husband.

#### New Glasgow Society.

We learn that a new organization to stem the Equal Franchise movement has originated in Glasgow. It bears the name of the Fifty-Fifty League with the high-sounding object of "The re-adjustment of relations between men and women in all public spheres"; a vigorous campaign is to be initiated during the autumn months.

think will save them money without otherwise affecting their naval dispositions.

It is also true that while rejecting arbitration in principle they confess that they have often found it useful in practice. All this is true and no doubt better than a militarist policy, whether ardent or disguised. But it is not enough. Races are not to be changed in their habits, nations turned in their courses, and the scourge of war removed by mild and tepid benevolence such as this. They may have been respectable, but they have not been what the governments of the world must learn to be before war can be banished: bold, persistent, imaginative and far-sighted. We, the democracies, are not asking of our political leaders that they shall be harmless, making excellent speeches and waiting upon events, until the events are upon them in the form of war, but that until our end is achieved each one of them in turn shall present to us a record if not of definite achievement, then of unremitting effort, positive, disinterested and unmistakable. On the other hand, let us remember that it is due to no special wickedness in any particular Cabinet if we are not at the moment obtaining this. The old social and military elements are there, favourably placed as they have always been for putting pressure on Cabinets and inertia is there, and the rush of business, and various maladjustments in our political machinery. The dereliction lies not so much with them whom, after all, we elected because they promised us tranquillity, but with us. We do not drive them, we do not make it clear to them that this one issue is different from others, that it is acutely dangerous, that it will not settle itself, that it must be not accepted as a platitude, but made the first preoccupation of statesmen, and, finally, that it has nothing whatever to do with party politics, but that we demand of every government of whatever shade of opinion who pretend to represent us, that they shall make this their first plank in their programme and the first object of their activities. Lord Cecil says that the hope of the future lies in an informed and instructed public opinion, and to this object he proposes to devote his future efforts. It will be our fault, and not the Government's, if those efforts are vain.

#### CONFERENCE ON WORLD POPULATION.

##### FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.

The Conference held last week at Geneva on World Population was an outstanding success, in that it was well attended by experts on different aspects of the problem, though what might be called the scientific and biological side was certainly given prior place over the social and economic side, which is of most interest to the readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER. Like most conferences, more especially international conferences, where difficulties of language and hearing made the reading of many papers even more wearisome than usual, the most interesting moments were spent outside the Conference Chamber, when the clash of ideas produced individual discussions. Perhaps the most interesting papers were those read by Professor Fairchild, of New York University, on the Optimum Population, in which, after describing the true meaning of over and under population respectively, he summed up his conclusions by pointing out that "an improvement in the arts . . . may all go to population or may all go to standard of living, or it may be divided between the two, but by no possibility can the maximum go to both at the same time. It is for an intelligent society to decide which it shall be."

Professor Carr-Saunders spoke on the differential birth-rate in this country, and pointed out the fact, well known to most of us, as to the increase of the birth-rate in ratio to the wealth of the respective classes of the population, and gave interesting figures showing that although the mentally deficient, etc., do not add more than their quota to the population, the intelligent classes (as measured by intelligence tests, etc.), certainly give less. He summed up by stating: "It follows that if we wish to lessen the gaps between the classes we must attempt to bring into play or inhibit as the case may be those more remote factors which either induce or prevent the employment of family limitation. Among those more remote factors one of the most important is access to knowledge of effective contraceptive methods." The same conclusions were come to by speakers on the same subject in other countries, and the French Professor Lucien March strongly advocated family allowances as a means of promoting the increase in the birth-rate much desired in his country.

Although propaganda of any kind was not only deliberately excluded but would obviously have been out of place in a scientific conference, it was clear that the great majority of speakers realized that the facts of the world to-day demand deliberate limitation of population. An interesting historical paper as to the birth-rate in mediaeval France showed that disease rendered the same function in families of from ten to twenty children which birth control renders to-day.

A different aspect of the problem was raised in an interesting speech by M. Albert Thomas on Migration, in which he urged the formation of some super-national body to determine what movements of the people should be encouraged or discouraged.

With regard to the part played by women in the conference, it is certainly true, as your note stated last week, that judging from the names of the advisory council, women played strangely little part, in view of the fact that the problems dealt with directly concerned maternity. This was not so marked, however, as might at first be thought. The whole conference was in the first place conceived by and largely organized by Mrs. Margaret Sanger, to whose initiative and powers of persuasiveness the presence of many of the finest speakers was due. With her should be associated Mrs. How Martyn, who had done so much to make the Conference a success from the British side. On the Advisory Council appeared Dr. Van Verherder, the distinguished Dutch economist, while speeches were made by Miss Gladys Potts, of the Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women, Dr. Buer, author of *Health, Wealth, and Population*, and others. Many women also were present as interested listeners.

#### THE ASSEMBLY AGENDA.

##### BY HEBE SPAULL.

Twenty-five items appear on the agenda of the Eighth Assembly of the League of Nations, which opened at Geneva on Monday. No applications for membership of the League have been received this year. The Assembly will, of course, lack the spectacular interest of last year's session, which saw the admission of Germany. None the less, the resignations of Viscount Cecil and M. Henri de Jouvenel are bound to have repercussions on the Assembly debates, and a spirit of expectancy is abroad as regards the outcome of this year's deliberations, particularly as they will affect the all-important question of disarmament.

The British delegates this year are Sir Austen Chamberlain,

(Continued at foot of next column.)

#### FRANCES TROLLOPE.<sup>1</sup>

Those who know and understand life in the United States will probably share the feeling of the writer that the attraction of the book published by Frances Trollope about her travels in America, just one hundred years ago, lies as much in the light it throws on its remarkable author as in her somewhat crude impressions. Michael Sadleir tells us, in his introduction, the circumstances in which the *Domestic Manners of the Americans* came to be written. But his introduction does more than this. It gives us in miniature the astonishing adventures of the life of the mother of Anthony Trollope. Her visit to the United States, a tremendous venture in 1827, was undertaken for the maddest of reasons. Her husband conceived the preposterous notion that his wife might retrieve the family fortunes by the establishment of a "store" or bazaar in Cincinnati for the sale of "fancy work" and other articles likely to be appreciated by the ladies of that city. Needless to say, the scheme failed utterly, and the building built for this enterprise was for many years pointed out as the Trollope Folly. In such circumstances it is hardly to be wondered at that the poor lady, sailing from home with three young and delicate children, and living in abject poverty after their small stock of money was spent, saw America with prejudiced eyes. She did not pretend to be a careful and accurate observer. She merely wrote her recollections, pleased with her newly discovered facility in writing, because she needed money; she succeeded not only in making money beyond her expectations—some six hundred pounds, no small sum for a woman writer in the early thirties—but she created an immediate sensation. As her editor says: "The pro-American Radicals cried out against the hide-bound prejudices of snobbery, whilst Jingo-Conservatives cheered her to the echo, fêted and flattered her, made of her Yankee slang a nine days' chic. In America every journalist and politician howled execration at the latest and most ashamed example of the patronizing Briton on the oversea rampage." But Mrs. Trollope cared little for the abuse or the flattery. She had relieved the financial strain temporarily; moreover, she had discovered that she could write, and this book was the first of a long series.

The contemporary criticisms are, however, valuable for the light they cast on the literary and social standards of the period; the charges of excessive coarseness, vulgarity, and unscrupulousness sound strange to modern ears. It is impossible to read the book without being impressed by the courageous, buoyant, kindly personality of the writer, and there are passages in which she shows shrewd insight not wanting in sympathetic understanding. Perhaps the most convincing are those which describe the religious excesses of the period. It is impossible not to compare the descriptions of the scenes she describes with those described nearly a hundred years later in *Elmer Gantry*, Sinclair Lewis' recent novel. Mrs. Trollope's robust good sense revolted against the wild frenzy of revival scenes and the orgies of the camp meeting. A horrible incident she quotes of the behaviour of a travelling evangelist, fortunately turned out of the place neck and crop by an irate father, might also have served as the foundation of the story of *Elmer Gantry*. Michael Sadleir has done us a service in introducing us to the comparatively little remembered mother of a distinguished son, and the story of her ill-fated adventure across the Atlantic possesses its own value as an eventful incident in the life of a big-hearted, plucky woman; readers are well advised who put *Domestic Manners of the Americans* on their library list. E. N.

(Continued from previous column.)

the Earl of Onslow, and Sir Cecil Hurst. The substitute delegates are Sir Edward Hilton Young, Major Walter Elliot, and Dame Edith Lytton. As was the case last year, six other countries besides Great Britain have sent women as substitute delegates.

Most of the items on the agenda take the form of Reports on different aspects of the League's work. Amongst the items which do not fall under this head is the "Question of Alcoholism." This is being brought forward by the Finnish, Polish, and Swedish delegations.

Many of the most interesting debates during the Assembly arise out of the Secretary-General's Report. Amongst the facts recorded in this year's Report is the statement that more than three hundred new Treaties have been registered with the League during the past twelve months. This brings the total up to 1,471.

<sup>1</sup> *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. Frances Trollope, with an Introduction by Michael Sadleir. (George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 12s. 6d. net.)

## THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The Report on the Public Libraries in England and Wales (H.M.S.O., 6s.) is a document of great value to all who take an interest in civics, adult education, and the like. Labouring under great difficulties for many years, the Public Library has been gradually extending its functions and widening its outlook. Yet up to the present time there has been no real co-operation between the numerous units making up what we call the Public Library System. To explore the field and if possible suggest means for bringing about a better state of affairs was the intention of the terms of reference of the Departmental Committee which was appointed in 1924. The Committee consisted of representatives of the Carnegie Trustees, Board of Education, Local Education and Public Library Authorities. Evidence was collected from associations—library and educational, business societies, and in fact all who were interested in the library movement.

The Report shows that 96.3 per cent. of the population are now within library areas. Since the Public Libraries Acts are adoptive and not compulsory, on the face of it there appears to be evidence of a real desire on the part of authorities to make library provision. But those who have travelled up and down the country know that there is a world of difference between efficient library service and mere library provision. Large gaps remain to be filled. The County Library, which is only in its infancy, is doing great work in enabling the rural dweller to get into contact with the books he needs for his studies. The town dweller has been more fortunate, but even in towns of 10,000-20,000 population the economic factors have proved almost too strong, and do not permit of an efficient service. The report on this point states, "We regard it as essential that the library authorities concerned should enter into arrangements for co-operation with larger units, which may be borough or county libraries, but owing to geographical and other considerations will generally be county libraries."

The Report does not recommend the transference of the Public Library to the Education Authority. More good is likely to result from co-operation with, rather than subordination to, the Education Authority, which after all is primarily engaged with formal education whereas the field of the Public Library is much wider. But to secure good feeling and friendly spirit between these two Committees it is advisable to have some members in common, as well as co-opted members who contribute specialist knowledge.

On the financial side the Report discloses that 22 per cent. of expenditure is allocated to books and binding, 5 per cent. newspapers and periodicals, 46 per cent. salaries and wages, and 27 per cent. other items. Serious variations from these figures, it is suggested quite rightly, should be investigated. Every attempt has been made to arrive at a fair average, and any abnormalities in expenditure due to local causes are indicated, so that the figures given can be taken as reasonably accurate and used as a basis for judging systems.

For many years professional associations have been endeavouring to raise the status of librarians by technical training and insistence on a good basic education. It is therefore encouraging to learn that particular stress is laid upon the need for a liberal education and technical training for librarians. Just as the education service aims at staffing schools by a larger proportion of university graduates, so it is considered to be of benefit to the service and the community to strive for a larger proportion of undergraduates in the higher grades of librarianship. To this end the existing School of Librarianship at University College should be maintained and scholarships made tenable at the school should be offered by local authorities.

The value of the special library is emphasized, and while it is recognized that no local authority can hope, or would be wise in attempting to cope with all the needs of students and research workers, a movement towards a solution can be made by throwing open the resources of government departments, university libraries, and special libraries of all kinds, and by making the Central Library for Students a bureau of exchange. A Government grant of £5,000 to the Central Library for Students is suggested and I have learned recently that the Government intends to do this next year.

Hitherto the Central Library has been a purely private institution largely dependent upon the financial interest of the Carnegie Trustees. Nevertheless it has rendered inestimable service to students; but now, with the assistance of a Govern-

(Continued at foot of next column.)

STUFF AND NONSENSE.<sup>1</sup>

The "stuff" in this book is "such stuff as dreams are made on." There is not therefore much distinction between it and the nonsense, which is very good.

The best nonsense always has in it a suggestion of weird and incomprehensible beauty. In it as in the greatest poetry, the human spirit breaks loose from the barriers that usually pen it in. It flies into strange worlds where words and objects have different values from those we are accustomed to in everyday life. If it is not certain that all great poetry has in it an element of nonsense—a thesis which might, however, be argued—it is undoubtedly true that no satisfactory nonsense can be written except by a really good poet. *Stuff and Nonsense* is therefore as true a test of Mr. De La Mare's quality, as his more serious seeming books. It is a test from which he emerges triumphant. "Ann's Aunt and the Bear" is a delightful poem, if rather a sad one; "Ahkh and Monotombo" are full of strange mysterious suggestions; and for sheer horror what could beat the verses beginning:—

"The moment I glanced at the mirk-windowed mansion  
That lifts from the woodlands of Dankacre, Lincs,  
To myself I said softly: 'Confide in me, pilgrim, why is it  
The heart in your bosom thus sinks?'"

I should like to quote the whole of it. I should like to quote pages and pages of this nonsense book; but space in THE WOMAN'S LEADER does not permit. And it is quite useless and even outrageous to try and write sense about nonsense. What is such a book as this there for, except to make one forget one's sense, if one ever had any, and fly into regions where one is better without it? All readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER who like to do that had better hasten to acquire *Stuff and Nonsense*; those who prefer to be sensible all the time must be sure to avoid it.

I. B. O'M.

(Continued from previous column.)

ment grant, it should be able to approach more closely the ideal of "Any book to any student, anywhere."

One of the signatories to the Report, Mr. F. Pacy, Librarian of Westminster, deploras the existence of twenty-eight London borough library systems. Entirely separate concerns fenced in by borough boundaries, they present an extraordinarily good argument of the necessity for co-operation and co-ordination. Much money is wasted on duplication of stock which could be avoided if this watertight system of boroughs could be destroyed. The reorganization of London government is long overdue.

In conclusion, the Report states that the remedy for existing defects will not be found in compulsion. Force of example and public opinion are more likely to achieve progress in the backward areas. Development both in the stronger and weaker will be found in a national system of free co-operation. The principal elements of such a national scheme are:—

1. Co-operation, on financial terms varying according to the circumstances, between neighbouring libraries, whether they be borough, urban, district, or county libraries.
2. The grouping of public libraries round regional, which will generally be the great urban libraries.
3. A federation of special libraries pooling their resources in the service of research.
4. Acting as a centre of the whole system, a Central Library.

Whether one agrees with the conclusions of the Report or not, it is certain that it will act as a stimulus to all who are interested in community service. Far too many remain inarticulate, never making known their requirements or endeavouring to discover what service the public library can give them. No librarian can be expected to be a specialist in every subject. He, or it may be she, will always be found willing to receive the advice and co-operation of the specialist in improving the stock of books available for circulation. Circulation, not accumulation, is the aim of every librarian, and the readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER should never hesitate to avail themselves of the services of the library nor remain content to belong to the inarticulate section of the community.

H. CROSS.

<sup>1</sup> *Stuff and Nonsense*, by Walter de la Mare. (Constable, 7s. 6d. net.)

THE UGLY DUCHESS.<sup>1</sup>

It is often pleasant, when away from home, to come across unexpectedly someone one knows, however slight the tie of acquaintance may be. *Die hässliche Herzogin*, the latest novel by the author of the much admired *Jew Süss*, deals with the fourteenth century and with dynastic, political, economic matters in the Tyrol and in Bavaria. It was a real pleasure to the writer to find there, amongst many interesting but unknown persons, one figure known to the schoolgirl—the blind King of Bohemia, led into battle on his charger, and one supposes (though it is not expressly mentioned) that his squires bore the device "Ich dien."

But all is not well. King John of Bohemia was not altogether the brave, pathetic hero ill-treated by the fates. He was a trouble to his friends in the battle, and generally vain, scheming, inconstant, extravagant in all things. "Er hatte für nichts gelebt, war gestorben für nichts!"

As the story opens he is deluding the aging Tyrolese widower King Heinrich with prospects of alluring marriages that come to nothing. And after nearly two years' waiting, when neither John's beautiful sister, nor later his niece cousin Beatrice of Brabant, will play a part in the deferred marriage feast, the place is taken by the ailing consumptive, Beatrice of Savoy, who, as King John foresaw, could not give her husband, the amorous Heinrich, that son he wanted.

Now Margarete, the Ugly Duchess, was King Heinrich's elder daughter by his first wife, and John, who afterwards became blind by his own fault, had married Herzogin Margarete, the twelve-year-old heiress to the Tyrol, to his own younger son, John.

Poor Margarete was decidedly ugly. She had a terrible mouth like an ape's, we are told, with enormous jaws and a protruding underlip. So the people called her Margarete Maultasche.

It is one of the advantages of the present day that one may be quite plain, "homely," and yet not at all lacking in the charm that Barrie's Maggie Wylie says is a kind of bloom on a woman so that those who have it need nothing else. It seems to be a kind of combination of vitality, imagination and—well, a resemblance rather to the Japanese than to the incurved chrysanthemum. One fancies it can be achieved with some ability and a great deal of good will.

But Margarete Maultasche, if she had not beauty or charm, and was no saint (what about that little phial with the Saft, odourless, colourless, tasteless?) had some things to recommend her.

She loved her Tirol. She defended with courage, energy, and foresight Schloss Tirol, and she, she alone, saved Tirol they said—our Maultasche! The country was her own flesh and blood. Its rivers, valleys, towns, castles, were part of her. Those towns which had begun as tiny absurd settlements, she had done her part to make them big and prosperous.

She was mistress of her nerves. One remembers the great lighted candle set on the table in Schloss Tirol, and the written scroll and that awful wrapped-up thing, with hair, by it. Margarete was very cold, much shaken and a prisoner, but still Duchess of the land. *How did she dare blow out that candle!* She dared.

She had a voice, low-set, warm, full, clear. Agnes von Taufers, with all her composure, slimness and attractive grace, was a little shrill, hard, peacocky. One does not like a hard voice. Neither did Shakespeare.

Margarete did her best—almost her best—but human stupidity and the passions of men and women are very strong. So she failed. And Rudolf of Austria received her Tyrol.

She rose, turned her cosmetic-covered hands outward with a strangely lifeless gesture, let them sink, sink and fall. There fell from her Tyrol, the towns, her work, the work of her forbears, of Albert, of Meinhard the strong and powerful, of Heinrich, of herself. Now she was poor and bare of all—our Maultasche!

Feuchtwanger writes of picturesque, shortsighted careless days of intriguing, greedy nobles, of marriage feasts and rough soldiery, of sudden death and barbarous revenge, of wild love and quick reckonings. He tells of black plague, of locusts, of fire and inundations, of Jew hunting and old superstitions, and of the Kaiser "der wird immer, ehrlich und überzeugt Gerechtig-

(Continued in next column.)

<sup>1</sup> *Die hässliche Herzogin*. Lion Feuchtwanger. (Kiepenheuer, 7s.)

MEMORIES OF HALIDE EDIB.<sup>1</sup>

Woman novelist, politician, patriot, feminist, and educational reformer, we expect that Halidé Edib, who was all of these things, should give us an interesting autobiography, and we are not disappointed. The account of her childhood is delightful, and from the purely literary point of view easily the most fascinating part of the book. A sensitive and beauty-loving little girl, the chief influence of her childhood was her wonderful "Granny." The delicately sketched portrait of "Granny" in the wisteria-covered house, whose strongest language, when intensely annoyed, was "What mint-honey art thou eating?", and who got so badly into debt through giving away her money in presents for her slaves and their children, is perhaps the most charming thing in the book. Throughout this first section the descriptions of Turkish customs and the sidelights on Turkish family life are beautifully done. The child grew up, married a professor, became a famous novelist, and went through the thick of the "Young Turk" movement. The breathless hopes and bitter disappointments of that time helped to turn her mind towards education, which evidently became about now her chief enthusiasm.

She wrote for *Tanine*, that brave little paper which advocated the emancipation of women, and had to face the bitterest opposition and live in constant danger from the fanaticism of her opponents.

The educational point with her took an intensely nationalistic form. She was proud of her title "the Mother of the Turk", given her by a literary and cultural Turkish club in 1910, and representing for the intelligentsia of the nationalist and panturani movement their sense of her unique importance. We see in her an intense and burning patriotism—a patriotism put to the best uses. In her account of the Balkan war (which saw Turkish women nursing men for the first time) she says: "I realized then the extent of my affection for my people and my land. I cannot make out which I loved best, but I felt my love was personal and incurable, and had nothing to do with ideas, thoughts, or politics, that in fact it was physical and elemental."

Such a woman must suffer deeply, and the great war was to her one continual agony, only alleviated by the efforts of the educational work into which she flung herself. She went to Syria, and did intensely valuable work organizing the normal school and college at Beirut, neglecting the educational advice of a sister at the convent school, "weekly baths lead to vanity; freedom breeds saucy girls; friendship between two girls is wrong." And with her return from Syria in 1918, her story ends. The future of Turkey surely cannot be dark while she has such women as Halidé Edib to give themselves freely for her good.

M. B. B.

(Continued from previous column.)

keit, Moral, Gotteswillen gleichsetzen mit seinen Nutzen." There are other children of the world like that.

Feuchtwanger writes in short, sharp sentences. His pictures are clear cut and filled with colour. Possibly too many adjectives are used (Robert Louis Stevenson would say so), but he draws good effect from repetitions. One fancies he cares for animals, and there returns to the mind the old, grey, unlovely cat in *Jew Süss*, when one comes across the marmot, Prince Meinhard's pet, that was overlain and crushed to death by Frauenberg, who sang the obscene Song of the Seven Pleasures.

*Die hässliche Herzogin* will translate just as well as *Jew Süss*, which has been beautifully translated. In the meanwhile, between ourselves, the German is quite easy reading, no tiresome involved sentences, no long philosophical digressions. Even if the reading were difficult, the tale is worth it. . . . Difficult reading though, by the way, gives mental discipline—like Greek, one supposes, and mathematics so one is told, and like entertaining dull persons unawares, as every woman knows.

T. OUPIE.

<sup>1</sup> Published by Murray. Price 21s. net.

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS.

By BERTHA MASON.

## THE OPEN-AIR NURSERY SCHOOL.

The record of Civil List Pensions granted during the year ended 31st March, 1927, was published as a Parliamentary White Paper in July last.

One of the most interesting names in the list is that of Miss Margaret McMillan, whose devoted efforts on behalf of the physical well-being of poor children are well-known.

Miss Margaret McMillan and her sister Rachel were pioneers in the movement to deal with the fundamental needs of the educational life of poor districts in this country and the founders of the system of Health Centres and School Clinics. It was in 1908 that the sisters opened the first London School Clinic in an upper room of a County Council Elementary School at Bow, which two years later was moved from Bow to Deptford. Although the clinic was intended primarily for children of school age, those under five years of age were from the first received by the sisters at the Deptford Health Centre, and in 1911 a small Nursery School and Baby Camp were opened in the garden of Evelyn House, which with the house was given rent-free for the experiment by Mr. and Mrs. John Evelyn.

The need for School Clinics, a need now fully recognized by all interested in the well-being of children and "how thousands have been saved from early and chronic ill-health through their help," has been graphically described by Miss Margaret McMillan in a little book entitled *The Camp School*.

The work, once started, grew rapidly. In 1913 the London County Council was approached by the sisters in regard to a vacant site in its possession, and permission was given to the Misses McMillan to erect thereon an open-air school on the understanding that the site must be relinquished if required at any time by the L.C.C. for its original purpose. The Baby Camp was opened in March, 1914, with six children below school age. By the close of the summer, twenty-nine children were living and sleeping in the Camp. "There was," records the Senior Medical Officer of the Deptford School Clinic, "hardly any illness, even during the hot months the children put on weight regularly. There seems to have been marked mental as well as physical improvement up to 10th August."

Then came the war, and women were wanted for munition work. (Up to this time the Clinic and Camp had been entirely supported by voluntary effort and subscriptions.) The sisters now appealed to the Minister of Munitions and received a grant of 7d. per day for each child of a munition worker, but in spite of this help the clinic was carried on under great financial difficulties, skilled help was hard to get, and the physical strain imposed on the sisters was very great. Early in 1917 permission was obtained for a further extension, half the cost to be borne by the Board of Education. The new premises were opened in August of that year, but before the day came, Rachel McMillan, worn out by her heroic efforts, had passed on, and the new school which bears her name was opened as a Memorial School. Since that time its affairs have been directed by the surviving sister, Margaret.

In 1920 the school was full to overflowing, with an average attendance of 135 children, and a long waiting list. Again Miss Margaret McMillan sought and received permission for another extension, which was opened in 1921 by H.M. The Queen. To-day there are 335 children in attendance, and a waiting list of over 200. An appeal for £10,000 to meet present needs, including a Training Hostel for teachers, is now before the country.

Such in brief is the story of a wonderful experiment which has been successful beyond all expectations. The Rachel McMillan Open Air Nursery School, which is a boon both to children and working mothers, has not only been officially recognized since 1919 by the Board of Education, but is the model for similar experiments in many industrial towns and cities. There are now in the country twenty-seven Open Air Nursery Schools, all recognized by the Board of Education, for the care and training of children between the ages of two and five years of age, twelve of which are provided by local education authorities and fifteen by voluntary committees, with accommodation for 1,367 children.

Women members of Education Authorities who wish to know more of this experiment should read and study the little book, *The Open Air Nursery School*, by E. Stevinson, a book "which," says Sir Michael Sadler, in a fore-word, "makes the reader see things he ought to see and know things he ought to know." "The book is full of experience, insight and observation. For us living to-day, it has a plain message of citizenship. For those who come after us it will have the value of history."

## OBITUARY.

MISS McARTHUR.

Ellen Annette McArthur died at Cambridge on 4th September. Her loss will be deplored by all suffragists and by a wide circle of those who care for the things of the mind. Born in 1862, the daughter of a rector, she was educated partly at home and partly at the Diakonissen Austalt at Hilden and partly at St. Leonards School (then St. Andrews) at St. Andrews. As a pupil under Dame Louise Lumsden for two and a half years, she then became a junior mistress and in 1882 won a scholarship and entered Girton, passing out in 1885 with a Class I of the Historical Tripos. In 1886 she became a history coach at Girton, and was soon appointed to the non-resident staff. From 1886 to 1907 she continued her connection with Girton in various posts. In 1905 she was awarded the degree of Litt.D., Dublin, in 1906 she was made a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and shortly became a recognized teacher in the University of London. Among other positions she held was that of chairman of the Cambridge Training College for Teachers, and vice-president of the Historical Association. She was also the first woman Lecturer and examiner to the Cambridge Local Lectures Syndicate, and the first woman examiner for the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board. She greatly valued a request that men should be admitted to a course of lectures on Economic History that she started for Girton and Newham students when Dr. Cunningham ceased his lectures. She collaborated with Dr. Cunningham in *The Outline of English Industrial History* and also contributed to the dictionary of Political Economy, and to various learned reviews.

During the height of the suffrage movement, Miss McArthur worked for it on the Committee of the N.U.W.S.S., and of the Cambridge W.S.S., and carried the banner at the head of the University Women in their march to the Albert Hall. During the latter years of her life she was an invalid, but never ceased in her enthusiasm for freedom and for truth.

MRS. RAMSEY.

Cambridge has lost a prominent worker in the Women's Cause through the death of Mrs. Ramsey, wife of the late Tutor of Magdalene College, as the result of a motor accident. Mrs. Ramsey was one of those who in the face of great opposition laboured long and earnestly for the enfranchisement of women. A leading member of the Cambridge Women's Suffrage Society, she organised the Cambridge Section of the Great Suffrage Pilgrimage. For fourteen years she was a member of the Cambridge Board of Guardians, to which she was elected in April, 1913, on the nomination of the Women's Local Government Committee. Her warmest sympathies were also given to the women and children, and she took a keen interest in the Children's Home. She was member of the Cambridge Borough Education Committee and was a keen member of the Labour Party.

At a meeting of the Cambridge and District Women Citizens' Association the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"The Committee of the Cambridge and District Women Citizens' Association records its profound sorrow at the death of Mrs. Ramsey.

"Mrs. Ramsey's vigorous and unselfish life was inspired by the highest ideals. Her public service on behalf of the enfranchisement of women, the education of the people, and the care of the poor had their counterpart in private life in many deeds of warm-hearted kindness; and the sudden end of all her work brings with it a sense of no ordinary loss.

"The committee asks Mr. Ramsey and the family to accept this expression of sympathy."

MRS. JANET ROSS.

Mrs. Janet Ross, whose death at Florence at the age of 86 was announced last week, provides us with yet another instance of the triumph of personality and character over old age. The *Observer* gave a charming reproduction of Watts' portrait of her as a beautiful child with starry eyes, and her beauty withstood the years. In her own book, *Three Generations of Englishwomen*, we can read something of her own life and the distinguished women of her family who preceded her, and shortly before the war she published her recollections in a volume entitled *The Fourth Generation*. But her best scholarly and literary work was given to her adopted country, Italy, and even at the end of her life she was at work on an English translation of the travels of a celebrated Italian Renaissance traveller, Carletti. Among her friends she numbered many eminent men and women, and Rose Jocelyn in Meredith's *Evan Harrington* is believed to be a picture of her as a young girl. The memory of Janet Ross will live long in her own beloved Tuscany, and in the hearts of all those who had the privilege of knowing her.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: MISS ELEANOR RATHBONE, C.C., J.P. Hon. Treasurer: MISS MACADAM.

Parliamentary and General Secretary: MRS. HUBBACK.

Office: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.

Telephone: Victoria 6188.

## EQUAL FRANCHISE CAMPAIGN.

We wish once again to appeal for helpers and cars for the Autumn Equal Franchise Campaign. Any of our members or readers who can give only a short time to the work would be making a real contribution. The campaign will be concentrated on constituencies, chiefly in rural areas, where Unionist Members of Parliament have not yet declared themselves in favour of Equal Franchise.

## SCOTTISH AUTUMN SCHOOL.

The time is drawing close to the Autumn Week-end School arranged by the Glasgow S.E.C. and W.C.A. to be held at the Glenburn Hydropathic, Rothesay, from Friday, 30th September, to Monday, 3rd October. Inclusive fee: Week-end, £2 7s. 6d.; single day, 17s. 6d. Among the principal speakers will be Miss A. Helen Ward, who will speak on Legislation as it Affects Women, the Employment of Married Women, Equal Franchise, and Women in the Church. Applications should be made to the Glasgow Society for Equal Citizenship and Glasgow Women Citizens' Association, 172 Bath Street, Glasgow.

## LONDON AGAIN! AGAIN!

Holidays are for the most part over at Headquarters, and committees start again next week. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on 27th September.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## "HONOURS UNEQUAL."

MADAM,—I observe that in your issue of THE WOMAN'S LEADER of 2nd September you have a paragraph commenting on the discussion in the *Manchester Guardian* on the proportion of "Firsts" won by women at Oxford this year. How the statement got about that only six Firsts out of 78 were won by women I do not know: the real number was eleven out of 78—a very different proportion and much more closely approximating to the respective numbers of men and women.

ALICE M. BRUCE,  
Vice-Principal, Sommerville College, Oxford.

## INTERLINGUA AND ESPERANTO.

MADAM,—Interlingua may conceivably be as good as Esperanto; it may possibly be better, but those of us who believe that an international language is essential for world peace are not content to wait the twenty-five years or more which would be necessary before Interlingua could be spoken and understood all over the world.

Esperanto has been proved again and again to be equal to all the demands of modern civilization and to be simple enough to be taught in elementary schools (see League of Nations' Report, price 3d., B.E.A., 142 High Holborn, W.C. 1).

Added to this there is already a sufficient number of Esperantists in every civilized country to teach Esperanto, which of itself heavily weighs the scales in its favour.

I do not know if this is the type of "angry letter" the Editor refers to, but if it is I am not in the least repentant!

Wallasey.

CICELY LEADLEY-BROWN.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

The PRESIDENT and EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE propose to give a

## RECEPTION

TO DAME EDITH LYTTTELTON, D.B.E.

(British Substitute Delegate to the League of Nations).

AND MRS. MOSS

(Substitute Delegate for Australia).

AT THE CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER,

ON MONDAY, 10th OCTOBER, 1927, at 4.30 p.m.

The Reception will be preceded at 2.30 p.m. by a Conference of Representatives of Organisations interested in the questions raised at the Assembly of the League.

TICKETS (price 2/6) to be obtained from the SECRETARY, 15 Dean's Yard, S.W. 1.

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(Jus Suffragii)

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## COMING EVENTS.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

SEPTEMBER 30 to OCTOBER 3. Scottish Summer School at Glenburn Hydropathic, Rothsay.

OCTOBER 10. Caxton Hall. Reception to Dame Edith Lytton, British Substitute Delegate to the League of Nations.

Sheffield S.E.C. SEPTEMBER 15. 3 p.m. American Garden Tea at Oaklands, Collegiate Crescent.

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

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11. 7 p.m. Jack Staw's Castle, Hampstead Heath. Equal Franchise Meeting. Speakers: Miss Ledden and others.

## WOMEN'S ENGINEERING SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 15 to 17. Fifth Annual Conference at Shipping, Engineering and Machinery Exhibition, Olympia.

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## POSTS VACANT.

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WANTED, middle of September by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, temporary additional travelling organizer for Equal Franchise. Organizing experience essential, speaking desirable; salary according to qualifications.—Apply in writing to Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster. Letter marked outside "travelling organizer."

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