

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

Vol. XXI.

No. 19.

Twopence.

REGISTERED AS
A NEWSPAPER.

Friday, June 14, 1929.

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Annual Subscription for Postal Subscribers: British Isles and
Abroad, 10/10.

Common Cause Publishing Co., 4 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

NOTES AND NEWS.

Foreign Affairs.

Mr. MacDonald has taken the earliest opportunity of publishing to the world his aims concerning the development of British Foreign Policy. In an interview with the representative of the *Petit Parisien* last week he pledged himself to "push ahead vigorously at once, and at last realize a practical policy of disarmament and peace." So far so good—but Mr. Baldwin might, with equal sincerity, have said the same thing. In fact he often did. It is in the further elaborations of this policy that we get some indication of the peculiar divergences and stresses of Mr. MacDonald's programme. The Kellogg Pact, he said, "fixes a date and creates an entirely new situation." "It is not a question of Ententes or alliances. All that is a state of mind quite out of date." The prospect is displeasing to certain sections of the French Press (by no means all of it) and the *Liberté* complains that the Entente Cordiale is "now in the waste-paper basket," and leaps angrily to the conclusion that Mr. MacDonald intends to "promote general disarmament on the German model." For our own part we sincerely hope he does, for that is precisely what we are honourably bound, by the Covenant of the League, to do. So for that matter is France. Mr. MacDonald's indication that he would accept Mr. Hoover's invitation when made to discuss naval disarmament in America is another welcome sign. Meanwhile the signature in Paris of the new Reparations Agreement, a supremely ticklish piece of work carried through under a distracting cascade of political back-chat, will smooth the way for that long overdue act, a withdrawal of allied troops from the Rhine; and that in its turn will remove the most sinister and provocative of war memorials from Europe. Mr. MacDonald and his colleague, Mr. Henderson, have a great opportunity. There can be no Labour critic so immersed in political partisanship as not to hope that they will grasp it and use it worthily. The greater glory of the Labour Party may be a by-product of the enterprise, but the preservation of all that is gracious and enduring in civilization stands or falls by its outcome.

Greeting to the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has made history and set a great precedent by his inclusion of a woman in the new Cabinet, yet the chorus of approval with which his action has been acclaimed shows that in taking this step he has not trodden far

in the van of public opinion. But it is not merely *qua* woman that the new Minister for Labour is welcomed by us and by the united voices of women of all parties. She is welcome in herself as Margaret Bondfield, a Labour leader of proved experience and single-minded wisdom, whose personality has elicited in multitudinous human contacts a peculiar measure of affection and respect. Exactly how the Ministry of Labour will function in relation to the development schemes to be supervised and co-ordinated by Mr. J. H. Thomas it is impossible to prophecy. But in two directions at any rate the constructive ability of Miss Bondfield will find undoubted scope. Of recent years the brake has been on the development of the Trades Boards. It may be surmised that Miss Bondfield, whose familiarity with their machinery and ambition for their development are well known, will release the brake and tread heavily on the accelerator. The sweated woman worker will be championed in high places. And at Geneva, in the operations of the International Labour Organization, British policy will be in the hands of one who believes intensely in the significance of constructive international action for the progressive achievement of a standard of life. There are now brighter prospects for the universal eight-hour day. We venture to hope that international standardization will go forward on the lines set by this equitable and practicable reform, and not be side-tracked into differential legislation which may leave women handicapped and men unregulated in the competitive struggle for daily bread. Meanwhile, having already had occasion to congratulate Miss Bondfield on being the first woman Chairman of the Trade Union Congress, later on being the first woman to hold a ministerial appointment, we now offer her a crescendo of congratulation on her accession to Cabinet rank and membership of the Privy Council. May she prosper in all her works and reflect upon all women, irrespective of party, the dignity and confidence which she has focussed upon her own public work.

—and to the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health.

Miss Susan Lawrence's appointment as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health is also widely welcomed on all sides. Some, like ourselves and the *Manchester Guardian*, would have liked to have seen her too made a Cabinet Minister. Her distinguished work in the last Parliament as critic of the Local Government Act, her long years of experience as a member and at one time Deputy Chairman of the London County Council and as a member of the Poplar Borough Council, have given her that intimate knowledge of the working of Local Government which is so desirable in one with her new responsibilities. Her passionate desire to improve the conditions of those whose fate it is to apply for poor relief or relief under the municipal health services, and her deep concern for Maternity and Child Welfare, will ensure a really forward policy. We are delighted to welcome Mr. Pethick Lawrence, our old friend, as Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

The Berlin Congress of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance.

On Wednesday of this week the meetings of the Alliance Board prior to the Congress will open and during the week delegates will arrive in Berlin in readiness for the public opening next Monday. Mrs. Corbett Ashby goes to her responsible task of Presidency almost straight from a highly strenuous and gallant election contest, and we send with her our warmest wishes. We assure her and the women of Germany, whose royal welcome is expressed by Frau von Velsens in the Congress number of the *International News*, that many British women unable to come to Germany will follow the proceedings with lively interest and warm sympathy.

Municipal Enterprise.

The reports of the Fourth International Congress of Local Authorities show that municipal enterprise has developed greatly in Germany, Holland, and Eastern Switzerland. In these countries the local authorities not only carry on their own administration, but they are able to exercise their activities in any direction which is not specifically prohibited by law. For many years the communes in these countries have been responsible for the drainage, cleansing of the streets and sewage disposal. Markets and slaughter-houses are almost always the property of the local authority, and the majority of municipalities also establish hospitals, baths, and disinfection-centres. Before 1914, cemeteries and burials were recognized local government services. Transport is now invariably in the hands of the local authority. Municipal tramways date from 1902 in Vienna, where there are also municipal omnibuses. In addition to the cities, county and provincial authorities in Germany own tramways and motor omnibuses. In the latter country and in Holland, savings banks are mainly in the hands of the local authorities. Municipal enterprise in Hungary has followed similar lines to that in Germany, and large profits have generally accrued from the communal undertakings. It is interesting to note that in Estonia the majority of the chemist shops have been municipalised.

The Miners' Scholar.

By act after act the organized miners seem to be demonstrating their freedom from threadbare prejudice and narrow self-absorption. They have once more sent Miss Jenny Lee to Westminster, and in the same week they decided to send Miss Mary Garbett to St. Hugh's College, Oxford, in order that she may spend four years over a classical degree. Miss Garbett, the daughter of a trade union official in the Atherton district, is the recipient of a Miners' Welfare Fund Scholarship amounting in the four years of its duration to round about £1,000. We are convinced that incalculable mutual gain will result from this event. The academic life of Oxford and the working class life of Atherton are lived out in two different worlds and the contacts between them are few and tortuous. The individual who stands like a Colossus, with a foot in either world is a genuinely privileged member of society with great opportunities for vision and understanding. We congratulate Miss Garbett on the first steps of a fine achievement and we sincerely hope that in addition to securing a brilliant degree she will succeed in conducting some of the ageless beauty of Oxford to Atherton, some of the twentieth century human reality of Atherton to Oxford.

Emancipation.

Mrs. Kettle, Chairman of the Rathmines Urban District Council, knows how history is made. This is how she puts the matter to her colleagues:—"The Council were asked to send a Catholic representative (to the Catholic Emancipation celebrations), and they did me the honour to ask me to represent them. I was horrified to find from the official programme of the celebrations that we women are not to be allowed to take part in the procession in our representative capacity. If a woman Senator or member of the Dail attends she must fall back to the rear and walk with any other women that are attending. . . . I feel I would be false to my principles and to the principles of many who put me in the position I occupy to-day if I did not enter a protest. Our Irish Constitution gives us equality, and we must insist that we get it. Our Church and the Christian Church gives us equality. . . . If I do not get the proper position from this Council I must absolutely decline to take part. . . . I therefore send back the invitation that was tendered to me and I decline to accept it." And the Rathmines Council, well worthy of its Chairman, sends Mrs. Tulloch, Miss Maloney and Mrs. Mulvey "to wait on the Executive Committee of the Centenary Celebrations and tender the protest of the Council." Truly the Irish ecclesiastical authorities will think the matter over carefully before they next decide to celebrate any kind of emancipation.

Sex Disqualification and Belfast.

The Education Committee of the Belfast Corporation recommended to the meeting of 3rd June that in future women teachers in the Corporation's employment should be ordered to resign on marriage. Happily the matter was referred back for consultation on "such a drastic resolution" between the

local education authorities and the Ministry of Education. Ceaseless vigilance is the price of freedom for the married woman. The well-worn arguments cannot be too often repeated. The *Irish News*, commenting on these facts, puts forward the following proposal: "We suggest that the Committee should seek a way out of the problem by drawing up a regulation based upon the income tax returns of the married couples, where it exceeds a certain amount the wife to be asked to resign her school." Whether the editor is indulging in a merry jest we do not know, but we do know that if a woman member of a profession is to be so treated, why not apply this principle to all, men and women alike, who derive income from more than one source, and whose income is above the minimum wage for allied occupations as to be laid down by the Trade Board.

Swiss Women and the Vote.

On Thursday of last week a petition was forwarded to the President of the Swiss Senate and Second Chamber by a number of women's societies, asking for the introduction of a measure of women's suffrage. It bore the names of 250,000 Swiss citizens, of whom two-thirds were women. It is sad that so primitive a stage of the Suffrage movement should be enacting itself in an otherwise highly civilized country, and we sincerely hope that in response to the petition events will move expeditiously to their inevitable end.

Speed and Endurance.

On Friday of last week Mrs. Bruce accomplished a feat comparable only with the achievement of Puck who "put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes." She drove a car single-handed for 24 hours at a stretch, covering a distance of some 2,200 miles, at an average speed of round about 90 miles an hour. As a combined exhibition of skill and endurance it leaves us a little breathless. Moreover, the world must overhaul its motoring standards, for Mrs. Bruce has broken its record of a single-handed non-stop run, formerly held by Mr. Thomas Gillette. Therefore we offer her our warm congratulations, and hope for her sake that she will never be called upon by the exigencies of yet more strenuous standards to improve upon her present score. There is no accounting for taste. There is no accounting for ambition. There is no accounting for what women can do if they try!

Differential Rates of Progress.

Sweeping across the middle pages of Saturday's *Manchester Guardian* our eye was caught by three headlines following one another in rapid succession. The first announced the appointment of the *First Woman Cabinet Minister*. The second told of how *Mrs. Bruce Breaks World Records*. The third asked the question *Shall Women Play Bowls with Men?* Apparently the committee of an Edmonton bowling club has precipitated this vital question by refusing to play their annual match against the Edmonton Urban District Council if the latter include women in their team, since on a previous occasion several members of the club were "subjected to some chaff" for playing against women. But the Council, whose Chairman happens to be both a woman and a bowler, is so far standing firm and has asked the club to withdraw its letter. Indeed, it is reported that "some irritation has been caused" among the women members of the Council—not unnaturally. We suggest that marked copies of Saturday's *Manchester Guardian* may be forwarded to the club in question, whose members will then be able to see at a single glance how ill-timed and peculiar are their scruples. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's dignity appears to survive the co-operation of Miss Bondfield, Mr. Gillette's the successful rivalry of Mrs. Bruce. Let them therefore arise in their masculine might and beat (or not beat) the women bowlers of Edmonton! All the same, we fear that they are in for "some chaff" whatever action they may take in the future because of the inexpressible silliness of their action in the past.

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

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

We are now in a position to sum up the immediate results, so far as we are specially concerned, of the first "Equal Franchise" General Election. A Parliament composed of a larger proportion of men and women of all parties who stand for the reforms on our programme has been returned, though we have to lament some serious losses. The number of women Members has been raised from eleven to fourteen, and the new Members include Miss Eleanor Rathbone, who by virtue of her long association with this paper and the causes for which we stand may be regarded as our own representative, as well as Miss Pictou Turbervill, also for many years closely identified with our fortunes. The seals of office have been handed over to a new Government whose list of Ministers, from the new Prime Minister down, includes the names of many of our own loyal supporters, and tried friends. Last, but not least, the new Cabinet contains one woman member, Margaret Bondfield, while Miss Susan Lawrence has been appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health. This is indeed history in the making.

But before we turn the page to begin a new chapter, with its still empty surface, we must give one backward glance over the long and memorable chapter which has just come to an end. Criticism of whatever government is in power is inevitable from a non-party political journal existing for specific principles, but those who have followed our comments during the last four years will know that we have not failed in gratitude to the late Government. In defeat, as in victory, Mr. Baldwin has won our admiration, confidence, and respect. He will go down to history as the Prime Minister who carried into execution the final reform of democratic government—an equal franchise between the sexes; and the late Home Secretary will be honourably bracketed with him in this connection. It would be superfluous here to recite the other measures of reform which the late Conservative Government has enabled us to strike off our programme. Most of our readers could repeat them in their sleep, and we can only reiterate the thanks that were so fully and so justly tendered on the occasion of the eve of election deputation of women's organizations to Mr. Baldwin. Apart from legislation we have not forgotten, and we shall not forget, when we welcome the first woman Cabinet Minister, that a woman, the Duchess of Atholl, held high office in the late Government, and held it with distinction, and further,

WOMEN, PEACE, AND HUMANITY.¹

By MARGERY CORBETT ASHBY.

Historians of the future, in dealing with the opening quarter of the twentieth century, will record the rise and success of the woman's movement as one of profound social and political importance. They will rank it with the rise of democracy, of nationalism and internationalism, those spiritual counterparts of the marvellous material inventions which mould modern civilization.

The Alliance which has called this Conference represents the political side of that movement, but the political is so integral a part of the whole that you will forgive me if I speak of it as one and indivisible. Persecution, caricature and ridicule have failed to crush us, though we have suffered as deeply from the apathy of women as from the hostility of men. Outwardly, we celebrate to-day the twenty-fifth jubilee of the founding of the Alliance in 1904, then a group of eight countries, now a powerful organized international body of women from forty countries in all continents. In our hearts we celebrate a greater triumph, the gain of spiritual freedom for half the human race, which hitherto has hampered its own advance with almost inconceivable stupidity.

In earlier times, even when men won freedom, they grudged it to women and where men have been politically and socially

that for three consecutive years another woman, Dame Edith Lyttelton, was appointed as one of our national representatives at the Assembly of the League of Nations. These and other deeds on behalf of our cause we hold in grateful remembrance, knowing from the character of the statesmen who were responsible that the same convinced support of our cause will be given outside as well as when in office.

But political life does not admit of prolonged pauses for reflection, and after a moment of grateful retrospect we must pass on. At the beginning of a new Parliament we, of course, look forward anxiously to the King's Speech as the index of future events. The matters of primary urgency which in our opinion call for inclusion are both national and international. We hope for proposals in the direction of an active policy of disarmament, the signing of the optional clause, and the evacuation of the Rhineland. We look with expectancy for the promise of a coherent scheme of constructive treatment of unemployment for both sexes, especially in the distressed areas. We believe we may anticipate a great extension of housing on big lines, which will meet the requirements of the families who suffer most under present conditions. Turning to our own more immediate programme we ask for equal opportunities and equal pay in the Civil Service, and under local authorities, including complete liberty on the part of married women to undertake remunerative employment. We ask for a Factories Bill which will give protection without sex discrimination; we confidently expect the extension of the maternity benefit under the National Health Insurance Acts, and we urge the making compulsory instead of optional the provisions of the Maternity and Child Welfare Act (1918). Legislation providing adequate testamentary provision for spouses and children, the compulsory appointment of women police, and an adoption of children bill for Scotland, approved by all the party leaders, should surely be included.

There is little danger of the old hands forgetting that the General Election is a beginning, not an end, but the keen new voter may profit by the reminder that to cast a vote on polling day is not the culmination of her duties. She must be on the look out for the King's Speech, and when it appears write to her Member (whether the Member of her choice or not) asking him (or her) to put down an amendment on behalf of any reform upon which she feels strongly which has been left out.

oppressed they have maintained their self-esteem by contemplating the deeper degradation of women. Sex prejudice is so strong that it is almost impossible for any man or woman to look coolly and dispassionately at the woman's movement. We here can certainly not pretend to impartiality since we are intensely proud to be in the service of the woman's movement and to act as its standard bearers throughout the world. Our watchword is Freedom to Serve. We have always been allowed to serve, but have not been accorded the right to give of our best. How ridiculous to compare in value the unwilling toil of serf or slave and the proud self-dedication of the volunteer and the free man! How hypocritical to condemn the powder on a woman's face and laud the gunpowder that mows down her sons! Yet how timidly have men and women become convinced that women, too, can only give of their best when they are spiritually and economically free. In how many countries to-day do State and Church and our new master, the Press, pompously interfere with women's skirts and sleeves, while sweated women toil for a pittance in factories and the babies of half-starved, immature mothers die in hot slums like flies?

Let us, women, set a truer standard for ourselves and dedicate ourselves to peace in the world, happiness and dignity in labour, and full participation in the home.

Man's control of the forces of nature threaten his own destruction. The problems of life are infinitely complicated by our

¹ Presidential Address to the Eleventh Congress of The International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, Berlin, June, 1929.

conquest of space and time. The organization of daily human needs is necessarily world-wide, as witness the supply of food for our cities and raw materials for our industry. This world-need is proving too strong for sex prejudice and we see that we must have every ounce of ability developed in each man or woman if countries are to survive in the world competition. Life's organization to-day demands exceptional personal qualities of leadership, initiative and judgment. Can we dare any longer to waste capacity and leadership by depriving any man or woman of the self-reliance and self-discipline bred by freedom and responsibility?

Watch this Congress, test us by results. We do not ask for compliments or indulgences. We are willing to be judged by the result of our efforts. We stand for a lower death-rate of young and old, better education, improved conditions of labour, the protection of the family, the real standard of morals raised and a double standard no longer openly tolerated. Men claim that they work by logic, women by instinct. We challenge both statements. For women to trust to instinct rather than training in the world of to-day, even in the field of motherhood, is to court disaster. We are the logical sex since we apply the simple formula from each according to his ability. Economic equality is necessary both for independent work and wise choice in marriage. Moral equality is the only protection from social ills. Look at the illogical character of the opposition. In one country women are not even allowed to study philosophy, yet in others they act as judges and everywhere as educators. They may study foreign languages, but not the wisdom to exchange in those languages. In the interests of morality and the home married women may not work late at night and young boys leaving school take their place. In one group married women may freely choose their work but not vote, elsewhere they may vote but are excluded on marriage even from acting as doctors to infant welfare clinics. Everywhere women may heal and comfort the stricken in mind and body, yet in half the world they are powerless to vote for social measures which would lessen the need for this help. Pick up any book labelled "Great Women". It will sing the mistresses of kings, not the women who fought and fight slavery, immorality and disease; not the women administrators and judges, women concerned in prison reform, women in scientific research, women at the head of colleges and hospitals or business firms.

Good work is dull to those who watch; so exciting to those absorbed in it. Let us replace "Wine, Woman and Song" by "Woman, Peace and Humanity."

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS. (Continued from next column.)

tions for persons who ought to be under care is deficient to the extent of something like 20,000 cases! Further, that not a single local authority (i.e. county and county borough councils) has itself provided sufficient institutional accommodation for the care of its mental defectives, and what is more serious, barely 18 per cent of these authorities, it is estimated, have provided any institutional accommodation at all.

In fact the lack of adequate institutional accommodation is so serious that unless steps are speedily taken to overcome this serious lack it will become difficult, indeed almost impossible, to administer efficiently the most important sections of the Act.

These facts which call for serious consideration on the part of those local authorities on whom the Act places the responsibility of providing the institutional accommodation required, become still more disquieting when viewed in the light of the conclusions arrived at by the Mental Deficiency Committee, viz., that there is a real increase of mental deficiency in the country.

The Report of this Committee recently published will form, we hope, the subject of our next article.

(To be continued.)

THE POLICEWOMEN'S REVIEW.

A MONTHLY PAPER.

Devoted to the Interests of Women Police at Home & Abroad.
Single copies 3d. each. Annual subscription 3/6 post free.

Published by WOMEN'S AUXILIARY SERVICE,
51 TOTHILL STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS.

By BERTHA MASON.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE MENTAL DEFICIENCY PROBLEM.

The General Election is over. The new Parliament is elected. We are in a position therefore once again to ask the attention of our readers to local government problems, articles on which have been suspended during the turmoil of the Election.

One of the most urgent problems of the time, and one which demands the immediate attention of local government authorities, is the care of the mentally unfit.

Twenty or thirty years ago a vigorous campaign was carried on by persons who were much concerned at the large number of mentally defective children for whom little or no provision was made and who were seriously in need of protection. One result of the campaign was the passing into law of the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913. The Act of 1913 set up:—

A. *The Board of Control.* This central body consists of not more than 15 Commissioners, i.e. (a) not more than 12 paid Commissioners, and (b) unpaid Commissioners appointed by the Minister of Health, of whom one at least must be a woman.

The duties of the Board include:—

- (1) The supervision of the administration by local authorities of their powers and duties under the Act.
- (2) The certification and approval of premises.
- (3) The provisions and maintenance of State Institutions.
- (4) The administration of grants made out of moneys provided by Parliament under the Act.

B. *County and County Borough Councils as The Local Authorities* for the purposes of the Act. These local Authorities are required by Section 30 of the Act of 1913, as amended by Section 7 of the Act of 1927:—

(a) To ascertain what persons within its area are defectives subject to be dealt with under the Act.

(b) To provide suitable supervision for defectives, or if such supervision affords inadequate protection, to secure that they shall be dealt with by being sent to Institutions or placed under guardianship.

(c) To provide suitable and sufficient accommodation for such persons when sent to Institutions.

(d) To provide suitable training and occupation for defectives under guardianship or in Institutions.

Such, briefly, are the main provisions of the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913.

It must, however, be borne in mind that these local authorities are under no obligation to deal with any defectives who are already being dealt with under the Education and Lunacy Acts and under the Poor Law as it exists at present. Further, "the Local Authorities have no power or duty to ascertain or provide for any defective unless he or she has been found neglected or cruelly treated or without visible means of support or has come in contact with the law, or has got into serious trouble, except in the case of persons brought to the Authority's notice by their parents, and of children notified by the Local Education Authority." From this it is clear that "the exercise of their functions by the Local Mental Deficiency Authorities largely depends on the extent to which Local Education Authorities fulfil their duties in regard to the ascertainment and notification of cases" (see Report of the Mental Deficiency Committee, page 33).

The Act was welcomed, indicating as it did the opening of a new era for a greatly afflicted class of the community. Those who had been responsible for the task of safeguarding these cases were prepared to avail themselves of the facilities provided.

Unfortunately the hopes inspired in 1913 have not been realized.

The machinery is in operation, but the Act is rendered seriously ineffective owing to the lack of *Institutional Accommodation*.

Proof of this shortage is supplied by the last Report of the Board of Control, which shows that accommodation in institu-

(Continued in previous column.)

THE PROFESSIONAL WOMAN'S HAIRDRESSER

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PERSONAL ATTENTION. MODERATE CHARGES.

A UNIVERSITY CONSTITUENCY.

To anyone accustomed to ordinary election campaigns the contest for a University constituency must seem very dull indeed. The negative custom of holding no meetings appears to prevail, but in the recent election for the combined English Universities both the Liberal candidate and Miss Eleanor Rathbone defied custom (not for the first time we understand in this constituency), and meetings were held at most of the different University towns, Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Reading, Sheffield, which united form the Combined English University Parliamentary Constituency. But what a contrast these meetings made to the usual type of election meeting! They were for the most part small—for the graduates of Universities do not necessarily live under the shadow of their alma mater. They were quiet and restrained. There were as a rule rather more women present than men, though the proportion of men to women students is two to one. Indeed, University Constituencies are among the few left in which men considerably outnumber women. An interesting feature was a larger sprinkling of young men and women than at most election meetings. To the outward eye, accustomed to the modern hustings, the atmosphere was almost too calm, but the questions asked showed deep interest and the speeches of supporters were prompted by thoughtful appreciation in the most literal sense of the term rather than by the excited plaudits of partisans.

Miss Rathbone did not let her future constituents off easily. She never does. Her speeches at previous election campaigns, whether at East Toxteth or at her municipal contests, were, we understand, so meaty as to be almost too solid for average mental digestions. But both her speaking and her written communications were exactly right for the cool dispassionate type of University elector; her success in what many even of her friends regarded as a hopeless adventure from first to last proved that this was so.

But an audience of University graduates is not wholly unlike a less highbrow crowd. There was the same fervour for international questions which characterized the best meetings elsewhere. Unemployment, and naturally education, occupied the same important place at question time. No one seemed to bother much about the sex of the candidate. What was surprising, however, was the approval shown towards an attitude of political independency. A speaker at one of her largest meetings voiced the feelings of many of Miss Rathbone's supporters when he said that they were not malcontents disgruntled with their respective parties. They could give their party their residential vote but they felt that the Universities were not the proper place for the exercise of the party spirit but rather for the characteristic University spirit of devotion to truth irrespective of its source and of critical appraisal of values. There was a very general feeling that Miss Rathbone's mixture of intellectual adventuresomeness with practical experience in many directions fitted her peculiarly for this particular constituency. She was academic enough to suit the fastidious taste but not too academic to be effective.

The results show that this feeling must have been shared by a much larger circle of graduates than have ever come into personal contact with the candidate. Her success was greater than the published results show as on the first count showing the first preferences she secured a considerable majority over any of the other candidates. It is only fair to add that the Conservative vote was deliberately divided between the Conservative candidates; the same is of course true of the "progressive" vote, though not of course by pre-arrangement, Miss Rathbone's views, though she had the support of members of all parties, being more nearly allied to that of her Liberal opponent than to those of Mr. Baldwin's two supporters.

The University elector possesses two advantages over other voters. He can vote by post and if abroad or overseas an absentee man and equally a woman can appoint a proxy. On the other hand they lose the privilege of the secret ballot. This deprivation has at least had the one gratifying result that it has revealed the fact that Miss Rathbone secured the lion's share of the women's vote. Whether this was because women vote for their own sex, or because women are temperamentally less inclined to party allegiance than men, we cannot profess to say.

Altogether a notable election and the Combined Universities are proud of the fact that they have returned the first woman University representative, and that that woman is Eleanor Rathbone.

A GRADUATE VOTER.

ELECTION EXPERIENCES.

SUTTON DIVISION OF PLYMOUTH.

The election campaign in the Sutton Division was unlike any other in the county; but then the M.P. for the Sutton Division is unique, which accounts for it. To an outsider coming into the midst of it all, it seemed that every voter in the place knew her personally. Some of them didn't agree with her, of course, but they all knew her, and knew what she had done both locally and nationally, and their tone in speaking of her was one of affectionate interest. As the campaign grew hotter there arose a number of malicious and patently untrue stories: it was said that Lady Astor had knocked off the hat of the Labour candidate; that she was making heaps of money out of the houses she had built and given to the town; that she had insulted the wounded soldiers in the hospitals, and so on. But all this, though it created a surface commotion, didn't disturb the real voters. They knew their Member, and they liked her. Of course, there was this political grievance and that one; there was the new assessment of rates, for which they felt somehow the Government must be to blame; there was the rise in the price of bacon—and always that dreadful business of unemployment. Perhaps they wouldn't vote for her—but still they knew her and loved her pluck. And as she went about talking to people, gathering little crowds at street corners, dashing in and out of houses, and making her ready jokes, she was followed by friendly laughter and cheers. At the meetings there were usually gangs of rowdy people ready with nasty questions and eager to make such a noise that the speeches might not be heard. But the candidate herself always got a hearing—and always gave a ready answer. And they liked her for it. But modern elections are confused and confusing. Party feeling conflicts with innumerable personal cross currents, and sometimes democracy seems to work in a very odd way. This time, however, in the Sutton Division it came out all right, and the innumerable women all over the world who were hoping still to have Lady Astor to fight for them were not disappointed.

A NON-PARTY WORKER.

NORTHWICH DIVISION.

The most tantalizing defeat of a woman candidate, was that of Mrs. Barbara Gould, who stood for Labour in the Northwich Division of Cheshire and succeeded in converting a solid Conservative majority of 2,915 into a hair-breadth majority of 4. In a curiously assorted urban and rural, industrial and residential area, Mrs. Gould made strong headway among the town dwellers, and especially among the working class women. In the mean streets there was thunderous enthusiasm for "Barbara this time," and it was clear enough that the extraordinary physical and mental vigour which the candidate put into her campaign had made a deep personal impression. The spirit which before the war led Mrs. Gould to Holloway Prison on behalf of votes for women seemed by all outward appearances to be leading her to certain victory in this curious constituency of social and industrial cross currents. But out on the high-roads "the County" had mobilized its shining motors in defence of her two male opponents, and a meticulous recount brought defeat to Mrs. Gould by the precarious majority of four. A glorious effort on Mrs. Gould's part, sympathetic onlookers may say! Yes, indeed; but one which leaves every one of her supporters with the words "If only . . ." imprinted on his or her mind. "If only I hadn't knocked off for tea on polling day," was the haunting thought of one helper as she set out after the event to visit another—to be met with the greeting "If only I hadn't bothered about tea on Thursday." Well—we commend this constituency to the attention of any of our readers who are anxious to strike an effective blow for more women in Parliament. One more hour with one more motor would have done the trick, and next time Mrs. Gould stands for Northwich it must be forthcoming.

THE DIARY OF TOLSTOY'S WIFE.¹

"Le comte m'a fait la proposition" I answered quickly. Mother came in then. . . she said, "Go and give him your answer." I flew upstairs, as light as a feather and, rushing past the dining-room and drawing-room, I flew into my mother's bedroom. Lev Nikolaevich stood in the corner against the wall, waiting for me. I went up to him, and he took me by both hands. "Well?" he asked.

"Of course—yes," I replied.

Thus lightheartedly it was done. Thus was troth plighted between this lively girl and him whom Mr. George Moore has called the "man of harsh, bleak mind" with the "lean gesticulations of a Jeremiah," one of whose teachings it has been said that it was "designed to 'increase love' by a process of cutting limbs away in order to lessen the demand upon the heart and economize its power," of whom his wife could write "The whole of my husband's past is so dreadful that I don't think I will (sic) ever be able to accept it." But a man of whom his wife cries, again and again: "I love him—may God bless him," and "I love him terribly and simply couldn't deteriorate with a man like him," or, with that knowledge of psychology so often revealed by the Countess "I used to love him boldly, with self-assertion, but now I thank him, and God, for every kind word he utters, every caress, every lenient, gentle look."

He too, seemed to have affection for her, at least in the earlier years, when he remembered and when he could sink the school-master in the loving husband. But loving husbands should not draw from their wives a criticism such as this: "I don't even see my duty towards the baby in the same light to-day; as, just as he would like to wash me off the face of the earth because I am suffering and am not taking proper care of the child, so I don't want to see him because he goes on writing and doesn't suffer." He did feel something, so scribbled at the end of the diary for that day, "Sonya, my darling, I was unkind and revolting and . . . but there is a good man within me who sometimes falls asleep. Love him, Sonya, and don't blame him." Alas, as the diary laconically adds, "soon afterwards, he lost his temper and crossed it all out. It was at the time when I had those terrible pains in my breast and was unable to nurse Serezhka. Surely, it wasn't that I *didn't want to*."

And all the time, Tolstoy lived in his thoughts, and his works and his systems, and toiled for the realization of his revolution:—"that each, realizing the burden imposed on the basic masses, and the pitiable dehumanizing of the upper classes, who are more cramped by convention the nearer they approach to the summit (of the social pyramid) shall voluntarily descend to common earth and brotherhood."

In the meanwhile may one shed another little tear for the Countess? "Lyova has his 'dark' people with him—Butkevich, Rakhmanov, and an undergraduate, Kievsky—a disagreeable lot of strangers, very depressing and unbearable in our family circle. And there are so many of them! It's a heavy price to pay for Lyova's fame and new ideas."

"In the evening he reads Gogol's 'Dead Souls' to us. I have neuralgia," and again: "[Butkevich] stayed on for two days, and I took a great dislike to him. He is very solemn, with a stony expression, very dark hair, blue spectacles and a squint. He has now become a *Tolstoyist*.² What disagreeable characters all these disciples of Lev Nikolaevich are! Not a sane person among them! Most of the women are hysterical . . ."

But the great Tolstoy, like the elemental force he was, recked of none of these things, nor did he consider whether his "simple life" was only practicable because he had a wife who thus catalogues the duties which fell to her share: "The very thought of all these things, which take up every moment of my life is overwhelming—children's lessons and illnesses, my husband's physical and, above all, his mental state, the older children, with all their affairs, and debts and posts and children, the sale of the Samara estate, the plans and documents I have to obtain and copy for the purchases, the new edition, the thirteenth volume, which contains the banned Kreutzer Sonata, the proceedings against the Ovsiannikovo priest, the proof of volume thirteen, nightshirts for Misha, sheets and shoes for Andryusha, household expenses, insurance, land taxes, servants' passports, accounts to be kept and copied, etc. etc." . . . adding "I copy his diaries with the zest of a drunkard . . . when he goes for his walks on the high-road, he will show a drunken man the way, help to harness a horse, or pull a cart out of the ditch—it is still a case of looking for good deeds." Comment fails. Yet the remarkable

(Continued at foot of next column).

¹ *Diary of Tolstoy's Wife*. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 12s. 6d.)

WOMEN AND THE FUTURE.

A CONFERENCE ORGANISED BY THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE, 5th & 6th JUNE.

Those of us who like to boast of the glorious British flag, and blow ourselves out with pride when the British Empire is mentioned, would have done well to attend the annual conference of the British Commonwealth League, which was held last week. Not that we have any fault to find with pride of Empire; there can be no doubt that the British Empire has been a power for good in nearly every part of the globe. But it is true also that under the authority of the British flag, practices are still carried out which are hideous in the eyes of enlightened men and women, and if criticism is the privilege of friendship, so is it for those who love their empire not to rest until these blots have been wiped out.

The British Commonwealth League exists "to secure equalities of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women in the British Commonwealth of nations." At the conference, there were delegates from all the Dominions and Crown Colonies, and it was very interesting to note the wide range of subjects which came within the scope of the constitution. A point that was rightly emphasized was the fact that in some parts of the British Empire State Regulation of vice still flourishes, and we know well the kind of opposition we may expect from certain quarters in any attack on the system. We heard of the political and legal inequalities which still exist between men and women in parts of the Empire, even in Canada, the Province of Quebec still withholding from women any kind of franchise, and as part of our feminist creed we believe that progress is retarded until in every part of our Empire full use is made of all citizens, both men and women. We heard, too, of the special difficulties to be met in connection with native races in various parts of the Empire, and a resolution was passed expressing the view "that the problems relating to the care, education, and general condition of aboriginal and half-caste women and children in Australia are of such an urgent character as to require immediate attention."

Perhaps the session which held the attention of the conference most completely riveted was when Mrs. Haslewood was speaking of the Mui Tsai—the child slaves of Hong Kong. At the outset she emphasized the fact that Great Britain was absolutely responsible for Hong Kong, and that it was futile to talk of "Chinese cruelty." In fact, Mrs. Haslewood stated that in China itself slavery had now been forbidden by law, and that the new law had been rigidly enforced to the tune of several thousand executions. Mrs. Haslewood was the wife of a naval officer stationed in Hong Kong when the terrible fate of the little Chinese girls who are sold into domestic service as slaves at the age of seven or eight years, first came to her notice. Mrs. Haslewood gives the impression of one of those gentle women who are utterly fearless and resolute in the face of evil. Commander Haslewood, too, must be of the type that makes one feel better towards humanity in general, for he did not hesitate a moment to throw up his appointment when faced with the choice between that and trying to prevent his wife exposing this evil. It is a very fine thing for Commander and Mrs. Haslewood to have tackled this problem in the way they have. When one goes out to the East as a missionary one expects to deal with difficult social problems, but for Service people, the personal sacrifice must have been great. Meanwhile, this terrible evil goes on. The action of the British Government has merely been to state that there is no such thing as slavery in Hong Kong, and to issue a proclamation in 1923, and the same again in 1929 (proving that things were no better than six years before), stating that the slaves were free to leave their employment whenever they wished. Naturally the wretched children are quite unaware that such a proclamation exists, and are too ignorant and miserable for such a method to be of any help to them. They continue as household drudges, often cruelly ill-used, until at the age of about fifteen they are re-sold, either into marriage, or as concubines, or into brothels, for what has been once sold can be sold again. The conference called upon the Government to take definite action, and as a first step to enforce registration of all slaves.

(Continued from preceding column.)

Countess, so far more discerning than her critics, has energy left to comment, and to comment once again with true insight: "But what more can I want? Is it not happiness to have such an inexhaustible mind, so much talent, virtue, and thought, in one's husband? And yet I am bored. It's my youth . . ."

A. H. W.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY. Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. ALFRED HUGHES.
Hon. Secretary: Mrs. RYLAND.
General and Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HORTON.
Offices: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.
Telephone: Victoria 6188.

LUNCHEON TO WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

The National Union proposes to hold a Public Luncheon in honour of the women Members of the Government and Parliament as soon as possible after the opening of Parliament. Vice-Presidents of the National Union who have been returned to the House will also be invited as guests. Full particulars will be published next week.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.—BERLIN CONGRESS, 17th-22nd June.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby, as President of the International Alliance, has already been in Berlin for over a week in preparation for the Conference which opens there officially on the 17th June. The various committees of the Alliance have also begun their work there. Through the withdrawal of one or two of our delegates at the last moment, certain alterations have been made in the delegation, the eight full delegates of the National Union now being the following: Miss Rathbone, M.P. (who is leader of the delegation), Miss Courtney, Mrs. Stocks, Mrs. Franklin, Miss Margesson, Miss Macadam, Miss Goddard, and Miss Neilans. Meetings in the programme of outstanding interest include that on "Women Leaders and their Work in Parliament and Local Government," to be held in the Reichstag on 18th June; a meeting on "Women Police" the following evening; and the Peace Meeting on 21st June, at which Miss Ruth Morgan will preside and it is hoped Herr Stresemann will speak. The delegates are to be entertained on Midsummer Night by the Youth Movement, a spontaneous action indicative of their appreciation of the work of the Pioneers.

TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD CONFERENCE, 28th June-1st July.

We are glad to be able to announce that, thanks to the generous kindness of Mrs. Adrian Corbett, this Conference will be held in the gardens of Pembroke Lodge, Pembroke Gardens, W. 8. The programme of the Conference is as follows:—

Townswomen's Guild Programme.—Friday evening, Purpose of School, etc., Mrs. Corbett Ashby and Miss Rathbone. Saturday, 10-1, Activities of Guilds, Political and Civic, Mrs. Hubback and Miss Macadam. Saturday, 2.30-4.30, Activities of Guilds, Educational and Recreational. Saturday, 4.30-6, Model Guild Meeting. Sunday, 2.30-4.30, Method of forming Guilds, etc., Mrs. Clowes and Mrs. Ryland. Sunday, 5-7, Future Developments-Discussion, Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

A LOST BANNER.

We apologise for having stated in last week's issue that the banner belonging to the Bolton W.C.A. was missing. The banner that has not been found since the Queen's Hall meeting of 1928 is that belonging to the Barnsley S.E.C. We should be most grateful if secretaries of societies would search through their own banners, and should the Barnsley S.E.C. banner be found, let us know at Headquarters as soon as possible.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

We regret that it has not been possible to publish more than short notes of the large number of meetings held by our Societies in connection with the General Election, but we feel that these will be of interest to our readers. In addition to those reported in earlier issues, the following reports have reached us:—

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE W.C.A.

Under the auspices of this Association, meetings were held at which all three candidates answered the questionnaire and spoke fully on the various points raised.

BIRKENHEAD AND DISTRICT W.C.A.

This Association was early in the field, and held meetings during April, at which each of the candidates addressed their members. In addition an interview was arranged with Captain Nuttall, the Conservative candidate.

EDINBURGH W.C.A.

During the weeks prior to the Election "Common Platform Meetings" were organized by the Edinburgh W.C.A. in the five Edinburgh divisions, every candidate consenting to appear. At these meetings questions on points on the Association's programme were put to the candidates at question time.

NEWPORT AND DISTRICT W.C.A.

Another all-party meeting was organized by the Newport W.C.A. (Mon.), and proved a great success. All the candidates, in addition, gave full replies to the questionnaire.

ROTHERHAM W.C.A.

This Association held a meeting on 10th May, at which the three candidates addressed a lively audience on points on the N.U.S.E.C. questionnaire.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"SUICIDE."

MADAM,—In view of your leading article in last week's issue of *THE WOMAN'S LEADER* on "Suicide," might I draw your attention and that of your readers to two articles of mine: "A Contribution towards a Psychological Conception of Insanity and its Relation to Crime" (in the *Sociological Review* for October, 1928) and "Normal and Abnormal Psychology in Relation to Social Welfare" (in the *Sociological Review* for April, 1929)? In these articles I have tried to arrive at the psychological motives both of murder and suicide, which I believe must be elucidated before we can effectively help either the potential murderer or *felo de se*.
ALICE RAVEN.

17 Elsham Road, W. 14.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED FOR PLAY CENTRES.

MADAM,—May I trespass on your valuable space to ask for volunteers to help in our play centres during August. We are very anxious to keep these open through the holidays for the sake of the children who get no chance of going to the country. We send over 800 by the Children's Country Holiday Fund, but thousands remain behind in this terribly overcrowded borough with no occupation. We have excellent premises and a garden and equipment, but our regular helpers will be away for the most part. We can open for just as long as we can get people to help. We should be grateful for volunteers (for even half a day weekly, or for two days in any one week) who could play games, tell stories, take gym., skipping, singing, handwork, etc.

If any of your readers would be interested to see a play centre at work, I should be glad to show them some afternoon if they would write to me about it.

ELEANOR T. KELLY.

St. Margaret's House,
Bethnal Green, London, E. 2.

THE ART OF BIOGRAPHY.

MADAM,—In your issue of 26th April a correspondent asks the intriguing question, what more is required of a biographer than a sense of chronology and of his own place? The answer attributed to M. Maurois, "the painting of an individual," indicates such other essentials as only a real artist can catch and reflect.

All who came under the sway of Emily Hobhouse's driving force may miss, even from so accurate and impartial a presentation as Miss Ruth Fry's, just the play of expression in a live personality—the Victorian grace, the artistic radiance and the glow of genius. While following your reviewer in the distinction she draws between the compiler and the Maurois biographer, Emily Hobhouse's friends may have more difficulty in recognizing "the reverse side" of the heroine's character. They may account for her raid on Brussels and Berlin in 1916 less by "queer perversity" than as springing from the core of her being—a single-minded impulse to stop another war. They may rather accept her brother's estimate of this "magnificent failure" and echo his query: "Who but Emily could have carried it through?"

M. W.

THE BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST.

MADAM,—I cannot allow the reference to the appearance of my name in the Birthday Honours List in your issue of to-day's date to pass without a word of explanation.

First, it was my own decision not to stand again for Parliament; this decision was made some time ago, and the Conservative Party knew that it would be useless to offer me a seat.

Secondly, as you refer to the G.B.E. in a paragraph following one dealing with unequal awards to men and women, it is interesting to note that no scientific man of my standing and subject has received a knighthood in recent years. A few have been given to much senior men, none to those around 50. The explanation may probably be sought in the Royal Commission and Departmental Committees on which I have been so fortunate as to have served.

H. GWYNNE-VAUGHAN.

93 Bedford Court Mansions, W.C. 1.

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COMING EVENTS.

ASSOCIATION OF HEADMISTRESSES.

14th-15th June. Leeds Girls' High School. 55th Annual Conference. President: Miss Lowe, M.A.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

12th-24th June. International Congress, Berlin. Chair: Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Excursions, sight-seeing, tours etc., arranged. Particulars from The Secretary, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Croydon W.C.N. (North Ward).—28th June, 3 p.m. Miss Caton: "Age of Marriage in India."

OPEN DOOR COUNCIL.

15th-16th June. International Conference, Berlin.

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TO Let.—Pleasantly situated Flat, 168 High Street, Notting Hill Gate; s.c. 3 rooms, small hall, 3rd floor; bath, geyser, gas fires, electric light, telephone; long let; furnished, £120 per annum; unfurnished, £90 per annum.—Apply, Grace Mayman.

MISCELLANEOUS.

WANTED.—Someone to share year's subscription for WOMAN'S LEADER from June.—Address, Mrs. Long, Sherwood Cottage, St. Joseph's Road, Weston-super-Mare.

PROFESSIONAL.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED. Consult Miss H. M. Baker, 275 High Holborn, W.C. 1. Income Tax Returns, Super Tax Returns, Repayment Claims of all descriptions. Telephone: Holborn 0377.

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LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Information Bureau. Interviews 10 to 1, except Saturdays. Members' Centre open daily. Bedrooms available. Single room (with breakfast) 6s. 6d.; double room (with breakfast) 10s. Restaurant on premises. Apply by letter to the Secretary.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 16th June, 6.30, Maude Royden: "Can we love our neighbours as our selves"?

EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1, requires and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Holiday engagements. Registration: Employers, 2/6; workers, 1/-. Suiting fee: Employers, 10/6; workers, 2/-. (Victoria 5940.)

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