WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Equal Franchise.

By the time this is in the hands of our readers particulars as to the second reading of the Bill will be known. The general expectation at the time of writing appears to be that the Bill will be carried without a division. The only motion for the rejection of the Bill comes from a small section of Conservative Members whose records with regard to points in which women's organizations are interested are referred to in another paragraph. In order to disprove their contention that no mandate was given by the electorate, the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship is circularizing to the whole House the immense list of organizations which have supported Equal Franchise since 1918, together with the pledges of the three parties, all of which included equal political rights on their programme, given at the General Election, 1924. The only criticism of the Bill is likely to arise in connection with the question of plural voting. Although its present title is not sufficiently wide to admit of the moving of amendments on the subject of election expenses, this difficulty will probably be got over by a proposal on the part of certain Conservative Members to move that the Committee of the whole house shall have power to move amendments dealing with the maximum amount of election expenses. In order to combat the view that the extension of the franchise will add a large number of voters to the Labour party, the Conservative headquarters have issued a statement that of the three million women under 30 who will become qualified to vote, only half do work for wages at all: 800,000 though wage or salary earners are not industrial workers; and nearly 600,000 are industrially employed.

Seven Black Sheep.

Perhaps it is not surprising that we have little to record of the views of those Conservative Members who have proposed amendments to the Equal Franchise Bill, opposing it because there is no mandate for such a change. Sir George Cockerill again and again has declared his support of equality but not of "predominance of women": it would appear that he requires a special definition of "equality." We are glad to note that he is emphatically in favour of Women Police, but he opposed the Married Women (Employment) Bill, as did Col. Applin who, however, signed the Equal Franchise Memorial in December, 1926. Mr. Samuel has all along opposed equal franchise although in favour of equal pay and opportunity for men and women with equal qualifications. There is no indication that Major Kindersley, Lieut.-Col. Hall, Sir Charles Oman, or Mr. Harms-

worth have ever given serious consideration to questions which directly concern women—it is time, indeed, that they were compelled to listen by giving the women of their constituencies a voice.

Disarmament

Although the greater part of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission has been taken up with criticism of the Soviet Government's proposals and the result might, judged by actual work done in committee, be considered barren and negative, yet the dawn of better things can undoubtedly be expected as a result of the informal conversations between the representatives of many of the Powers, which form so valuable, though informal, a part of the League's activities. Our hope comes chiefly from France, who, we understand, is working out some practicable scheme for disarmament, and partly from Great Britain as a result of Lord Cushendun's offer on behalf of the British Government to reduce the size of battleships, extend their accepted life, and drastically limit the size of the largest naval guns. It appears, therefore, that there is a sound basis for future hope.

The "Black" Areas.

We print in another column a brief account of a visit by Mrs. Cadbury to the Rhondda Valley. The condition of the mining areas in South Wales, Durham, and Northumberland was the subject of a debate in the House of Commons on Monday night, which sheds at least a faint ray of light into the confusing mists which make this problem so difficult to solve. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in opening the debate, spoke with personal knowledge as a Member for a Welsh constituency. He urged the Government to speed up their policy of encouraging migration and asked that the burden of debts to the State, rolled up by local authorities, should be cancelled, and first of all that the care of children should be undertaken out of public funds on lines already initiated by the Board of Education, in the provision of boots for schoolchildren. In his reply Mr. Chamberlain paid tribute to the tone of moderation used by Mr. MacDonald. He stated that the Industrial Transference Board was engaged upon a survey of the "devastated areas" and of possible localities for transfers, and that the Ministry of Labour intended to open an adequate number of centres to give "every adolescent a chance." We propose to return to the debate next week. In the meantime, readers are reminded that last week we gave addresses to which gifts of clothing or money could be sent to meet the immediate distress.

Sir Austen Chamberlain Explains.

In reply to a question by Miss Wilkinson as to whether, in view of the changing practice of other countries, the British Diplomatic Service would be thrown open to women competitors, Sir Austen Chamberlain replied that "he did not think any change in our own rules desirable." Goaded by further pressure from Lady Astor, he added the illuminating information that in his opinion "it was a matter of expediency, and that our rules were the best in the present circumstances." So that's that. Now we know why this particular branch of the Civil Service is arbitrarily closed to women entrants. It is a reason that has been put forward in support of the exclusion of women from various fields of activity, from the exercise of political citizenship to the examination of railway tickets at a station barrier. History shows, however, that it is a reason which cannot indefinitely command support. If this interesting branch of the public service, one which makes heavy demands upon the linguistic aptitude and personal adaptability of its entrants, is to remain closed to women, Sir Austen Chamberlain or his successors will have to enumerate more explicit reasons for their exclusion. But perhaps there are none?

Equal Pay for Equal Work.

In a letter to *The Times* on Wednesday last, Sir Walter de Frece, M.P., deplores the continued refusal of the Government to inquire into the partial application of equal pay for equal work in the Civil Service, and contrasts this particular piece of obscurantism with the spirit of its Equal Franchise Bill. We heartily endorse his discontent, as also his prophecy that "when all women who are 21 have the vote, this is one of the matters into which they will undoubtedly ask investigation." We may add the reminder that discrimination against women in the Civil Service goes even beyond the matter of pay.

Child Marriage.

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On 26th March the Indian Legislative Assembly discussed a private Bill relating to child marriages. This Bill was introduced last year in a form which provided for the invalidation of *Hindu* child marriages. It was subsequently altered by a Select Committee in such a way as to make it applicable to all religious communities, the minimum age was fixed at 18 for boys and 14 for girls, and penalties for non-observance were imposed upon the performers of marriage ceremonies, the guardians who permit them, and men who marry girls below the statutory age. The Bill as altered, met with some angry orthodox Hindu opposition in the Assembly and was eventually ordered to be circulated for public criticism. *The Times* correspondent points out that such circulation may be compared to a referendum. It leaves us with the earnest hope that the Hindu community may display a new readiness to assist the process of reform from within.

The Optimism of the Gloomy Dean.

Dean Inge has brains. He is no sentimentalist, and he would be shocked to hear himself described as a feminist. His article in the Evening Standard of the 21st anent Canon Raven's new book is, for these reasons, of special value. He gives strong support to Canon Raven's contention that women should be admitted, if duly qualified and desirous, to full holy orders. Some of the Dean's observations are open to question, as, for example, that "aggressive feminists are not the kind of women who would wish to be ministers of religion." We would recommend him to read the "Declaration of Sentiments," drawn up by the feminists of Seneca Falls in 1848. They would surprise even him, advanced as he is among deans. But that Dr. Inge understands some, at least, of the fundamentals of the question is shown by the following words of his: "The institution of deaconnesses does not meet the need, for these are in a very subordinate position, under the authority even of the youngest curate. This is not the proper status of an able and experienced woman evangelist." (The italies are ours.) And, again: "The full and proper use of the ministry of women is only one of the ways in which [this] recognition of palpable facts would bring a great liberation." This phrase a great liberation—the Dean gives it a particular application, but it is of the widest significance. Dr. Inge shows a prophetic insight, the lack of which in Bishop Canute Partington Hensley Henson is to be deplored. But a Bishop and a Dean in one week The ice is beginning to crack.

Action and Reaction.

Oxford University swings like a pendulum between politeness and rebuff to its women members. First inclusion, then statutory limitation. Then, as reported last week, a courteous gesture from the Senior Proctor (Mr. E. L. Woodward, of All Souls) in Congregation. About the admission of women to the University there is, he said, "much idle talk based on little observation—of waste of time, of diversion of interest, and of the weakening of our common life. Let me say at once—and I hope this need not be said again—that those of an older generation in Oxford who have given much unselfish labour to the interest of the education of Englishwomen should have no fear for the value of their work." Gracefully said—and we, too, "hope that this need not be said again."

Hindrance.

We offer our sincere sympathy to Lady Bailey upon the hindrance which is being offered to her enterprising lone flight from England to Capetown by the Governor-General of the Sudan. It is all the more irritating as her De Havilland Moth plane has accommodation for the pilot only, and the escort upon which the Governor insists entails the use of a second plane. Well—women who attempt to evade the beaten track,

whether on the earth or in the air, are apt to be faced with these vexatious extraneous and discriminatory interferences. We look forward to a time when such things will no longer be, but we are daily made aware that such a time is not yet!

A Theatrical Anachronism.

It may be a matter of surprise for those who are accustomed to regard the stage as a sphere of equal opportunity and achievement as between men and women, to learn that the Actors' Benevolent fund has not hitherto permitted women (except for the limited period of the war) to serve on its executive committee. This state of affairs was challenged and hotly debated at a meeting of its members recently held in London. In the course of it, Sir Gerald du Maurier characterized the position as "simply too absurd," and Miss Eva Moore pointed out that "though we did splendid work on the Committee in war-time, it was always made pretty plain to us that the door was better for our exits than our entrances." At Lady Wyndham's suggestion a resolution was drawn up for the next meeting, inviting the resignation of those members of the committee who seldom attended, and suggesting the election of women members to fill their vacant places.

Girl's Bravery.

We read in the *Daily News* of a fine act of bravery on the part of Miss Monk Mason, the fourteen-year-old daughter of the British Consul at Constanza, who was on board the Italian oil tanker *Antaries* when the latter came into collision with the British cruiser *Caledon*, in the Ægean Sea on 20th January. There was a panic on board the tanker, which was abandoned by her crew. The captain, who succeeded in boarding the *Ceres* refused to return. Meanwhile the chief officer, who was fatally injured, lay dying in his cabin. Miss Mason, who was the only other person left on board, regardless of her safety, rushed down to the cabin to his assistance and remained there until he died.

A Westminster Club for Women.

A sister club to the Langbourn City Club has fecently been opened in Westminster under the Presidency of Mrs. Hoster. It is intended to meet the needs of professional and business women working in Westminster. Of the need for such an inexpensive club open every day including Sundays there can be no doubt, and we are convinced it will be successful from its very start. There is an almost infinite demand for such club facilities in London for women of all classes and they do much to lesson the strain and stress of life in a great city.

Mrs. Leonard Woolf.

We offer hearty congratulations to Virginia Woolf on her triumph in winning the international Femina Prize for 1927. Her novel To the Lighthouse, submitted by the English Committee, together with Stella Benson's Good-bye, Stranger and Storm Jameson's The Lovely Ship, has already been recognized in England as a work of notably original and constructive technique. Indeed, we are inclined to congratulate not only Mrs. Woolf upon her success, but her judges upon their readiness to leave the beaten track in their appreciation of new literary forms.

The Women Doctors and the Edinburgh Corporation Bill.

We print in another column a letter sent by the Medical Women's Federation to all Members of Parliament and members of the Edinburgh Corporation. Though the danger of legislative powers for compulsory treatment of venereal disease has, we believe, been arrested for the present, this letter, expressing the opinion of women who know what they are talking about, is of the utmost value. We know that similar proposals have been made in other places, possibly less well guarded by the vigilance of women's organizations. Nothing could be more hopeful than the reinforcement of the work of those and other organizations by the considered judgment of the Medical Women's Federation.

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.

THE TRAINING OF WOMEN DOCTORS.

A month ago feminists were to be found who asked one another what, once the vote was won, would remain as the objective for a fighting woman's movement. A fortnight ago some part of the answer was given by three London hospitals-King's, Westminster, and Charing Cross, which refused, simultaneously, to continue training women medical students. Last week London University, deeply committed towards certain of its undergraduates who have begun their medical course, and acting, moreover, in accordance with its honourable tradition of treating both sexes equally, decided to set up a committee to explore the problem. It seems a good committee, under the chairmanship f Sir William Beveridge, and two of its members are women-Miss Strudwick, the High Mistress of St. Paul's Girls' School and Miss Tuke, the Principal of Bedford College for Women. Anything that can be done in a conciliatory spirit we are sure it will do, and it may also serve a useful purpose in making clear exactly what facilities there are for women medical students. and what is the demand for them. But beyond this it cannot go. London University has no power over the hospitals, and is hardly in a position as we pointed, out in a note last week, to refuse a grant merely because a hospital is training only men students only women. Some concession for women already at the University the committee will probably secure. More it would be optimistic to hope for. In the meantime, the hospitals, at any rate Westminster, which initiated the retrogression, have sent a protagonist into the columns of The Times. He is their Senior hysician, Sir James Purves-Stewart, and he does not seem to be in a conciliatory mood. He begins by stating what we are surprised to learn that anyone is in a position to state, namely, that within a few years of graduating 50 per cent or thereabouts of women doctors, "usually the ablest and best qualified," leave the profession for marriage. We ourselves have been unable to ascertain from any source how many women are practising as doctors, either in private practice or as public servants, or how many of this unknown number are married. Just as difficult must it be then to find out how many doctors are not practising and married. If Sir James's statement is based on figures we should be glad to have them. If it is merely his impression of what is going on, it does not coincide with the impressions formed by other observers as well placed for forming an accurate opinion. On this foundation, however, he bases the main contention of his letter, that women are wasting the valuable facilities offered by the hospitals and training schools. Now this,

in other connections, is a familiar argument, and it has been answered often enough, but as it is making its first appearance in this particular controversy, we will answer it again. In the first place, apart from the demands of India and other Mahometan countries, there is a great and growing demand for women doctors here at home. Patients who want to be attended by women have the right to do so, and as the whole of Sir James's argument is that facilities for training are limited, it follows that women should have a fair share of them. In "a fair share" we include the opportunity, if they want it, of obtaining clinical experience in a hospital which receives men patients. Even if all women doctors married and retired this would still hold true. But all women doctors do not marry, and not all who marry leave their profession, and many of those who do leave it retire, not of their own free will, but because they are forced to do so by the reactionary policy of the public bodies who employ them. If waste there be in this process the blame for it lies not in Nature, nor the perversity of woman, but in county and borough councillors and the curious interactions of their minds. But perhaps it is not altogether a waste that a number of women, trained for medicine, should not be actually absorbed in practise. The fight against disease and ignorance is not carried on entirely in the sickroom or public offices. Such women, especially if they are among the more able of their sex, can find work enough to do It is one of the dangers of our society that as the technique of the sciences grows more formidable the ordinary citizen even when he sits on public bodies or the innumerable committees which direct our private charities and other efforts towards reform, becomes less and less able to keep in touch with the developments of knowledge. Practising doctors are among the busiest of men. They should be glad to think that the community at large contains members qualified and willing to support them in their unending struggle with indifference and prejudice. So far the cause of the women doctors has had what is called a good Press. If the hospitals do not welcome them it is clear that the public values their work. In fact, this apparent set-back will probably turn out a blessing in that it will bring public opinion to bear not only on the question of training, but also on that of compulsory retirement on marriage. Other things being equal, a woman doctor is more valuable to society not less, when she is married, and a mother, and we hope that we may now count on Sir James Purves-Stewart's support in our endeavour to obtain for her the right of continuing after marriage to serve her fellowcreatures in the position she is best qualified to fill.

THE HOUSING PROBLEM.

By G. W. CURRIE.

Another Westminster Site Available.

The City Council of Westminster—modestly averse though it be to all forms of "transient popularity"-continues to meet with marked success in its quest for land. In a recent issue we congratulated Admiral Bruce on discovering quite an extensive site at Ebury Bridge, and now again we congratulate him: this time on a site sufficient, according to The Times at all events, for five hundred families. And the cost to the ratepayers? This seems undetermined; but The Times states that "ultimately there should be no loss on the ratepayers." Ultimately, on a proper weighing of pros and cons, we should say there will be a very large gain—and no loss at all—to the ratepayers. We take leave to question whether the two acres and a half to be obtained from the Duke are worth £40,000 an acre; nor does this so much matter. The proposed resumption by the Duke of certain ground now representing actual streets or wayleaves, is a matter on which we should like to hear a little more. A deficit yearly in the immediate future is inevitable; it will not be large, and ratepayers need not grumble. As the procedure proposed is a private Act of Parliament, all interests concerned will be fully heard, including the Ministry of Health, whose views as to the proposed density of settlement to the acre will require

If this scheme goes through and the Ebury Bridge scheme also, the new mayor of Westminster will have done something substantial towards rolling away the reproach of his city.

But for the insistence of the Westminster Survey Group in publishing its survey and for the action following thereon of the *Spectator* and the Bishop of London, there appears to be no reason to believe that the City Council would have reversed its old and evil policy of inactivity. Exposure is the one cure, and we admit that it must have made demands upon the courage

of some of the councillors to retrace their steps in this way. We would appeal to them to show a like increased vigour in dealing with the state of repair into which much property in Westminster has fallen. It cannot for a single moment be contended that the City Council has not ample power to insist upon the adequate and reasonable repair of each and every defective and insanitary house in the City. That greater activity is in evidence than used to be we admit at once. but the amount of defective property remaining to be dealt with is very much larger than it should be. That fairly numerous temporary cases calling for current repairs should arise—as they must in a large city—is true. Reasonable dispatch in dealing with such is all we can ask for. But our complaint is that property exists in such a state as renders it impossible to escape the conclusion that more drastic inspection would lead at once to more drastic demands upon landlords. There can be no doubt that a systematic drive" against really bad landlordism such as the statutes plainly prescribe would rapidly diminish the injustices which many tenants have long endured. A drive of this kind might not be directly aimed at the processes of indirect tyranny and bullying—much of it of a most contemptible type—which render the lives of many poor mothers of families a regular nightmare but it would go far to mitigate them by the simple process of rendering them less profitable. A few salutary examples—even one salutary example-would work a world of good. Some considerable time ago a particularly bad offender in the North of England was fined £250 and further condemned in costs. (Vide the Bishop of London's 1925 Report.) In our view each and every one of the individual cases against which the Parochial Church Council of S. Saviour's, Westminster, took action, might

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MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

By D. J. MOXLEY.

I first heard of Morley College a little over five years ago. At that time I was reading Bergson and was anxious to study psychology. After some inquiry I learnt that a course that would probably suit me was being organized at Morley. In life, however, as Havelock Ellis has emphasized, the mark we aim at is rarely the mark we hit. Saul, the son of Kish, went forth to find his father's asses and found a kingdom. I studied psychology at Morley College for three years. The class was a university tutorial class, organized under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association. About thirty of us began the course, and fifteen of us, perhaps, saw it through to the end. If the essence of the ancient mysteries lay in the gaining of new impressions and emotions, culminating in the sudden knowledge of new relationships, then these days were, for me, days of initiation. Much of the detailed and technical knowledge of modern psychological theory that I acquired I have since forgotten. The real meaning of those three years lies for me in the new conception they gave me of the purpose and function of education

At this point it becomes rather difficult for me to express what I have to say. Certain truths can only be learnt through vivid and intimate personal experience, and tend therefore to appear merely paradoxical and fantastic in a verbal statement. I am tempted simply to enumerate the various kinds of knowledge that may be gained here at Morley by those who choose, and so leave the matter at that; to point out, for instance, that we have classes in biology and economics, in anthropology and in literature and in various languages. All these things, however, can be studied elsewhere; there are multitudinous evening institutes at which one may learn languages and there are several polytechnics in London where one may study different branches of science, including the biological sciences. Something of the special significance of Morley might be revealed by pointing out that our classes are, more properly speaking, discussion circles under the chairmanship of experts; or by the statement that Morley is not simply a collection of classes or discussion circles, but is a centre of democratic group life, comprising various clubs and societies and largely controlled by the elected representatives of the students themselves.

But Morley is famous for its devotion to dancing, and for the exquisite dancing displays organized by its women members year after year; its choir and orchestra have a reputation in the musical world, and at least one Minister in the recent Labour government first exercised his gift for public speaking as a member of the College Debating Society.

The driving force of life at Morley lies in the faith that harmonizes all these varied activities. It has been said that if Erasmus were again to visit England in search of that eager spirit of devotion to Truth and Beauty that inspired men in the days of the Renascence, he would find it among the working class adherents of adult education. Here at Morley we believe that. We believe that we are living in the midst of a new Renascence out of which a new world is destined to grow. We seek life and its enjoyment—both for ourselves and others—and knowledge for us is a means to that end.

The essential problem of life to-day is one of economic and industrial organization. Every constructive contemporary political theory is, in effect, an attempt to reintroduce the vital spirit of co-operative democracy, that animated the Greek city-state or the medieval commune into the decaying framework of modern national industrialism. But the most elaborately conceived and carefully balanced machinery of self-government in industry will depend in the last resort for its success upon the calibre of the men and women who operate it. Machinery of this sort, moreover, is at best only a means to an end. The end itself is life.

The Kingdom of Heaven is within us, we are told. If democracy is ever to become a reality men and women must translate their belief in the spiritual dignity of mankind into faith in themselves, and into determination to win the knowledge necessary to control their own destinies. The modern movement for adult education has grown out of a realization of this. Education is power. Man is essentially an artist; life is the material on which he works, and knowledge is the instrument that he

(Continued at foot of next column.)

JERUSALEM, MARCH, 1928. By DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT, G.B.E.

In the midst of all the interests and pleasures of our visit here our thoughts often turn back to our friends in England who are still pulling the "labouring oar" for what we all hope are the last phases of our great struggle for equal franchise. After a pleasant and uneventful journey from Tilbury to Port Said, and thence by rail to Jerusalem, we were greeted by friends who are doing a splendid though somewhat different work for women's freedom

I think I told our friends at home of the progress that was being made last year among the Moslem inhabitants of Palestine in the direction of providing education for their women. One of our very valuable helpers here is a lady whose professional work takes her all over Palestine every few months, and brings her into contact with Moslem leaders with whom she discusses freely the differences between the Christian and Moslem ideals of womanhood. On the occasion of one of these discussions, she wound up her argument bysaying: "Well, you must remember this: a nation can never rise above the level of its women. Where the women are there will the whole of the nation be." The phrase evidently made a deep impression. The elderly Moslem men with whom she was conversing looked very solemn and thoughtful, and on her next visit to the same town, she met the same men again, and she found that they were still thinking and talking of what she had said. The next news of them was that they had, of their own accord, started two girls' schools.

I inquired anxiously about these schools, on my arrival in Palestine this year, and it was very satisfactory to learn that they had made good, and were likely to have a very considerable influence in Moslem thought and action.

After all it is not much more than a hundred years since we emerged from a very similar position to that which Moslems now occupy regarding women. In an interesting article on the occasion of the Dickens Centenary on 7th February, the following passage occurred: "He (Charles Dickens) belonged to an age when women were looked upon as sacred beings incapable of doing any wrong, and equally incapable of doing anything serviceable to anybody. It was a period when for a lady to have walked out unattended would have meant the loss of caste, and even to have adopted a profession would have been considered unladylike if not worse."

If we compare this with the position women have already gained in England and English speaking lands now, we have no need to be ashamed when we meet with our enemy in the gate. At every great crisis in our history, at any rate since the days of Florence Nightingale and Josephine Butler, they have risen to the occasion and have been not only good wives and daughters but good citizens in the widest interpretation of the words. They have shown all along not only great capacities but a noble power of self-sacrifice which has hallowed their services almost to an act of worship. To give only two examples, one taken from the period of the war, and one within the present year during the great and unexpected floods in London.

During the great war a troopship bringing soldiers and nurses from Australia to England was torpedoed in the Mediterranean. The word went forth according to the noble tradition of British seamen, "Save the women first." But the nurses stepped back and said "No! Fighting men first, they are the country's greatest need." This is something to think about when people are tempted to think ignobly of women.

The other instance must be fresh in every one's mind. It was during the recent floods in London when a young woman, Miss Frankeis, in imminent danger of being drowned, drew back from those who came to her rescue and refused all aid until it had also been extended to the other inhabitants of the house she was in. Her heroic conduct has been publicly and most properly recognized, and it does one's heart good to remember that she is a type of the young women who are about to become citizens on the same terms as men.

(Continued from previous column.)

From being the prerogative of the few, the instrument of knowledge is slowly passing into the hands of the many, and by its means thousands of working men and women are reaching upwards to that faith in themselves which will ultimately re-mould the world. The significance of the new Renascence lies in the slow spreading of that faith, and the significance of Morley College in the fact that it is a centre of eager co-operative endeavour of which that faith is the informing spirit.

A LESSON FOR PARENTS. By MARGARET CLARE.

MARCH 30, 1928.

The other day I was taken to that painfully moving play, "Young Woodley," and I came away oppressed with questionings, as I think every parent who sees it must be. The fine acting made the evening an artistic pleasure, but I have not thought of it since as a pleasure, but as a lesson.

I find it impossible to make up my mind whether "Young Woodley" is good drama or not, and I do not know enough about boys' schools to judge whether it is a faithful picture of anything that happens, or has happened. But I do think it brings home to one's imagination the troubles and dangers of adolescence, and those are matters which deeply concern every parent.

In one way, I think it is a good play, and that is that it has a universal significance. Young Woodley is an innocent romanticminded boy of 17, at, what is, one cannot help concluding, a rather second-rate public school. He is troubled by some unpleasant incidents in the school, by the lewd conversation of one of his school-fellows, and by his own awakening instincts. His mother is dead, his father shut away from him by conventional reserve, his house master a stupid, tyrannical, egotistic pedant. He has no one to help him, and falls an easy prey to the selfishness of his house master's wife, who is herself suffering from repressed youth, craving for sympathy, and the lack of anything to occupy her mind. Though matters do not go beyond a kiss, dreadful trouble results. Young Woodley's career is ruined and one is left to doubt whether the affection of his father and his school friend save him, or whether some irreparable harm has been done to his innermost life. This is the story of the play, but watching it, one sees not young Woodley in the Prefects Room at Mallowhurst, but troubled youth everywhere, struggling with facts and emotions it cannot understand. And one asks oneself, what can older people generally, and parents especially, do to make these things bearable for the young

First, I suppose, one must take care that they learn the elementary physical facts about sex at the right time and in the right way. One does not want one's children to be like the poor little fag in the play, who went about trying to find out how he was born, till he was enlightened (?) on that and other matters, by a nasty minded older boy. Most modern parents do not shirk the elementary duty of explaining about birth and mating to their boys and girls. There is nothing really difficult or unpleasant about it to those who have escaped Victorian obsessions, and little books are constantly being written which show how natural history and the keeping of pet animals can be used to help.1 It is far more difficult when it comes to telling children what human beings have made of sex relations. Prostitution, white slave traffic, venereal disease are facts about which one may well shrink from speaking to one's daughters and sons. But they are facts; the children will meet them when they go out into the world, better perhaps that they should hear about them from their mother's lips than realize them suddenly from the streets or the newspapers. The Centenary of Josephine Butler seems to me to offer a good opportunity for teaching to those who have children of the right age. For in telling them of the horrors, we can also tell them her story, and so show them that, to use her own words: "There is no evil in the world so great that God cannot raise up to meet it, a corresponding beauty and glory which will blaze it out of countenance.

If one has taught one's children in the right way, and, so to speak, turned their minds in the right direction, about these matters one need not fear the evil talk of contemporaries nor the stupidity of pedagogues. It cannot always be entirely avoided even in the best schools (though there the inspiration given by good and clever people generally far outbalances it); but one can avoid placing one's child in the power of a stupid person. I felt when I was watching the play that I would never have let a son of mine go to Mr. Simmon's House.

One can do a little, then, to protect one's children! But I have felt very strongly since I saw the play that there is something more indefinite, but even more important that one *ought* to be able to do if one were only good enough. The universal trouble of adolescence—which affects even those who have been most carefully taught and placed in the best surroundings,—is the sudden onslaught of intense emotions on minds which have as

(Continued at foot of next column.)

¹ I have one before me at this moment called *Peter and Veronica*, by Margaret Beech. (Published Herbert Jenkins, 2s. 6d. net.) It is in the form of a story, and quite clearly and pleasantly written.

A SOUTH WALES MINING VALLEY. By LUCY B. CADBURY.

I have been asked to amplify a little my letter in last week's Woman's Leader.

I travelled from London through sunshine, but when I alighted at the bleak station in the valley, the rain was falling in torrents and it was easy to believe, what is a fact, that the rainfall here is three times the average for Great Britain.

I visited several homes, and briefly must describe a few. Of one woman a good neighbour brought word, "She is very ill—too weak to get out of bed—but I know what's the matter with her—it is just want of food."

Mrs. A. was downstairs. "I got so sore, and there is not much on my bones, so Mrs. J. said come down just for a bit of a change Mrs. A., her transparent white face framed in white hair, told me then of the husband doing part-time work, "but my son there, he's been out two years." Two girls of 12 and 13 at school, "I'm ashamed to send them—they're really in rags." A fine looking young fellow sits by the fire, nothing to do but help his mother with the house-chores. No work, no income, no prospect of marriage. Can we entirely blame some who marry without waiting for work. It must be a temptation. I shall not easily forget one such home I visited. The man here is nursing the baby-about 9 months old-not so many months hence there will be a fourth in that family. They would be in great distress were it not for the wife's mother. But her father's work may cease at any time, and then what comfort will there be for the younger family. The young mother stands by the fire and silently weeps, and I have no words with which to comfort her. Well, she shall have some clothes for the baby anyway. One pathetic side of all the trouble is that the thrifty have through force of circumstances, been brought to the level of these thriftless ones.

I saw little Nancy D., too weak to go to school. She lies on a sofa with a cup partly filled with milk on the sill beside her, and father and mother watching anxiously her listless white face. She is no whit bigger than my girl of 7, and the thin little arms tell their own tale. What else can be expected with father out of work month in month out. Mr. D. is gifted with an optimistic spirit, but Mrs. D., like many other women I met, seems crushed by the ceaseless burden of "nothing better to look forward to." A few men are leaving the valley, too few out of the thousands who will never find work in the mines. It is not easy to find work elsewhere.

Already, however, Government training centres, industrial and agricultural, are dealing with a certain number of the younger men.

So men's clothing is *especially* needed for men leaving the valley.

The children's clothing, boot repairing (work done voluntarily by out-of-work miners), distribution of any new boots received, etc., is now well organized and distributed through a committee on which are represented all the schools. There are 36,000 children in elementary schools, and 2,000 in secondary schools in the Rhondda—and 12 per cent of these need new boots.

It is hoped that organization of relief for miners' families throughout the country will shortly be put on a sound basis.

More necessary than all else is the right tackling of the whole subject of transfer of labour and the question of unemployment.

WOMEN IN THE CONSULATE.

Miss Olga de la Barra, who has acted as Chilean Consul in Glasgow during her father's absence in Chile, has now been officially appointed Chilean Vice-Consul for Glasgow.

(Continued from previous column.)

yet no experience. The first adult feelings of love and hate and jealousy and loveliness are overwhelming to a sensitive boy or girl. Their contemporaries are very little use to them in dealing with these feelings for they themselves are in the same throes. Indeed, young friends who love each other sometimes make each other more unhappy, because each bears the weight of the other's pains, and neither has any experience to resist them with. Nothing breaks one down so much when one is very young as the heart griefs of one's friend. But parents who understand because they have suffered the same griefs and have learned how not to break down under them, ought surely to be able to help? This was the chief point on which "Young Woodley" set me thinking—though not for the first time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS. By BERTHA MASON.

ELECTIONS FOR PARISH, URBAN AND RURAL COUNCILS AND BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

The triennial elections for County Councils are behind us. The constitution of these authorities shows little change, due mainly to the number of unopposed returns.

Before us as we write lie long lists of returns of members of Parish Councils, the elections for which have followed close on the elections for County Councils. Also, lists of nominations for Urban and Rural District Councils, and for Boards of Guardians, the elections for which will take place on or about the 2nd of April.

What do we learn from the returns which have reached us from all parts of the country? That it is difficult, as in the case of the County Council elections, to arouse even a moderate degree of interest, let alone enthusiasm in the selection and election of bodies which are responsible amongst other things for the health, housing, education, infant and maternal welfare, recreation, all of which vitally affect the well-being and comfort of the community.

Parish Meetings have now taken place at which Parish Councils have been elected. Our returns show that meetings have been sparsely attended, little interest in the elections evoked, in many cases seats left unfilled for lack of candidates. Few women candidates. There were of course notable exceptions, and growing indications of dissatisfaction with the method of voting by show of hands, but on the whole little interest was shown. And yet Parish Councils, if alert and inclined, can do much to improve the health and brighten the life of village communities, and for this work women are needed, as well as men.

What we say about Parish Councils applies with equal if not greater force to Urban and Rural District Councils, which have important and far-reaching powers and duties in regard to Public Health, Housing, and many other matters which concern the well-being of the localities which they govern. It will be admitted by most people that decent and sanitary dwellings are as necessary in the country as in the towns, that a pure water supply is as necessary for the cottage as for the mansion; that dust and refuse in the country should be collected in as orderly a manner as in the town, and not dumped down on the roadside and waste ground, and there left, a menace to health and a blot on the landscape; that facilities for education, recreation, and wholesome reading are as much needed in the country as in the city. These are matters for which District Councils are responsible. Here again is need for the co-operation of women. And yet 372 of the 646 Rural District Councils have still no women members. A search for the names of women candidates in the nomination lists before us is like the proverbial search for a needle in a haystack.

Two notable exceptions, however, are to be noted. For 14 seats on the Tottenham District Council, 20 candidates are nominated, 7 being women.

For the Warminster Rural District Council two women were returned unopposed, one being Miss Annie Compton, aged nearly 90, who has been a member ever since there was a Rural District Council at Warminster.

Reports regarding nominations for Boards of Guardians tell a more cheerful story. For these local authorities there is no lack of candidates, of men as well as women.

Edmonton. For the 40 seats on the Edmonton Board, we note 72 candidates, 39 being women. For the 8 Tottenham seats on this board, there are 18 candidates, 14 of whom are women.

Edmonton reports 8 candidates for the District Council, of whom 6 are women, for 4 seats. Enfield has nominated 14 candidates, 9 being women, for 6 seats. Southgate is running 4 candidates, 2 being women, for 4 seats.

Birmingham Board, 96 nominations, 11 members returned unopposed, amongst them 4 women. Of the 85 candidates for 41 opposed seats, 33 are women.

Birkenhead and Wallesey Board.—Of the 29 persons nominated in Birkenhead, 16 are women, only one unopposed return. At Wallasey, 8 women are among the 21 candidates.

Wandsworth Board, 88 candidates nominated, of whom 38

are women. Contests general. Nottingham Board, 87 candidates for 48 seats, of whom 21

These are but a few taken from many returns received. One report only records extraordinary apathy, viz. Worcester. In five districts no nominations were made. In yet another, where a seat was vacant, notices posted three times during the year failed to secure a nomination.

We await with interest the result of the polls next week.

THE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

The Gloucestershire County Council has elected two women aldermen, Mrs. Allen and Miss Ratcliffe. Mrs. Allen has been a member of the Council for the past three years, but owing to a flaw in her nomination paper was unfortunately prevented from standing at the recent elections. Miss Ratcliffe is the Secretary of the County Nursing Association and has been connected with the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee. The Lincolnshire (Lindsey) Council has elected the only woman member, Mrs. Croft Baker, as an alderman, and Lady Mabel Howard by the Cumberland Council.

GREATER BRIGHTON.

The elections for "Greater Brighton" have resulted in the return of two excellent women candidates who have long been identified with the woman's movement and the social work of the Borough. Miss Hardy, M.B.E., J.P., stood as an Independent with the support of the Public Service Committee of the local National Council of Women, and Miss Pickworth, who has been a guardian for many years, was a nominee of the Labour party. In both instances the women candidates headed

GUARDIAN ELECTIONS.

A record number of candidates have been nominated as Guardians in Birmingham. Eleven candidates have been returned without a contest in 6 wards, but 80 are contesting 41 seats in 24 wards. In Bromley the feature of the Guardian Elections is the preponderance of women candidates. For the town of Bromley alone 9 of the 12 candidates for the 5 seats being women.

OBITUARY.

In the death of Mrs. M. E. Hunter, F.J.I., Scotland has lost a pioneer woman journalist. As early as 1890 she became a member of the staff of the *Evening News*, and has been associated with that paper ever since. She served on the executive committee of the Institute of Journalists, and was a prominent figure among Scottish journalists up till the time of her death. Though not actually identified with the woman's movement, Mrs. Hunter did it constant service by publicity in the columns at her disposal, and no greater form of help could have been given. Her loss is deeply regretted and much sympathy will be felt for her son, Captain Eric Hunter, at present with his regiment in India.

OUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

DIPLOMATIC SERVICE (WOMEN).

Miss Wilkinson asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that in the French diplomatic service women have recently begun to be appointed to responsible posts, other than posts of a clerical nature, in the diplomatic service, and that women have been appointed to posts of ministerial or other rank in the Russian Soviet and the Bulgarian diplomatic service; and whether he is prepared to adopt this practice in the British diplomatic

Sir A. Chamberlain: As regards the first part of the question, I understand that the recent decision of the French Government, to which the hon. Member presumably refers, while admitting women to certain posts in Paris, provides that no woman so admitted can be employed abroad. I am aware that women have held posts in the Russian Soviet, and I think once in the Bulgarian diplomatic service. I do not think any change in our own rules desirable.

Miss Wilkinson: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that British women are behind foreigners in regard to possessing the necessary diplomatic qualifications?

Sir A. Chamberlain: No, Sir, quite the contrary

Viscountess Astor: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think that this prejudice ought to be abolished, and that if there is a woman fit for a position her sex should not stand against it? Sir A. Chamberlain: No, Sir.

THE HOUSING PROBLEM. (Continued from page 63.)

and should have been dealt with direct by the Westminster City Council. The Council is clearly moving towards a house building policy. Why does it not give clearer evidence of its determination to deal with remiss landlordism? There is something utterly unsympathetic and inhuman in the acquiescence hitherto in so much avoidable suffering. We always believed that the enfranchisement of women would speedily tell upon social legislation: our actual experience of Westminster amply

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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Parliamentary Secretary: Miss Honcock.

General Secretary: Miss Hancock.

Offices: 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1. Telephone: Victoria 6188.

EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The office will be closed from midday on Thursday, 5th April, until Wednesday, 11th April, at 9.30 a.m.

WEST LOTHIAN BY-ELECTION.

The Scottish Federation of Societies for Equal Citizenship has approached each of the candidates for the West Lothian By-election and asked them to reply to our parliamentary questionnaire. Miss Kidd has answered most of the questions In the affirmative; she qualifies that on the Employment of Married Women by saying "if the unemployment market for unmarried women is not overloaded in consequence", and that on the Taxation of the Incomes of Married Persons with the remark, "if the Exchequer does not in consequence suffer unduly." She refrains from making any statement on the abolition of recognized brothels in the Crown Colonies and on Information on Methods of Birth Control without giving these questions further consideration. With regard to Women Police Miss Kidd says, "This depends on the nature of the locality and on the Nationality of Married Women, "This is a question of domicil and depends upon the conflict of international law. would favour protection if possible as to whose domicil, foreign or British". Her answer to the question on Family Allowances is in the negative. Mr. Shinwell (Lab.) says that, while it is his practice not to reply to questions submitted by organizations outside the constituency, he is and has been entirely in favour of our programme for years past. He believes in social, economic, and political equality between the sexes. Mr. Young (L.) has put in his election leaflet that he stands for adult suffrage. and he has expressed his willingness to receive a deputation of constituents. Polling day is 4th April. Should Miss Kidd be successful there would be the interesting position of a voteless Member of Parliament.

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

At the first meeting of the Executive Committee after the Council Mrs. Corbett Ashly was elected Chairman and Miss Courtney and Mrs. Stocks Vice-Chairmen. Committees were elected and plans for the work of the coming months were discussed and will be circulated to societies. A resolution of appreciation and congratulation on the splendid work of ss Helen Ward, Chairman of the Demonstration Committee, and of Miss Dorothy Auld, organizer in connection with the Queen's Hall meeting, was carried unanimously. Other cordial resolutions of thanks were passed to Mr. Martin Shaw for his valuable help with the singing, which was such a successful feature of the meeting; to the Guild House Committee for the use of the hall and other help; and not least to the staff of the National Union Headquarters for their heavy and most successful work in connection with all the events of the Council Meetings.

EQUAL FRANCHISE.

An imposing list of all those national organizations which have, since 1918, supported Equal Franchise, has been drawn up by the N.U.S.E.C. This should prove very useful in the work in support of the Franchise Bill, and we should be glad to supply copies (free) on request to those of our readers who could make

A LETTER FROM DAME MILLICENT.

The following letter was received by Miss Rathbone from Dame Millicent Fawcett:-

DEAR MISS RATHBONE AND THE WHOLE N.U., —I am most thankful for your great news and most grateful to you for letting me hear it so promptly. Your second telegram was handed to me this morning, giving the splendid news that the Government had introduced a "perfect Bill." The Conservatives really have played up splendidly. What a good birthday present it must have made for dear old Lady Strachey, who was 88 on the 13th March.

We quite hope (though at present it is not an absolute certainty) that we shall be coming home in the Otranto, due to leave Port Said on 1st April. This should bring us home about 10th April. Again thanking you very warmly,

Yours affectionately.

(Signed) M. G. FAWCETT. 'At the American Colony, Jerusalem, ' 14th March, 1928.'

JUNIOR COUNCIL DINNER TO MISS ELIZABETH SCOTT.

The Junior Council of the London and National Society for Women's Service gave a dinner recently in honour of Miss Elizabeth Scott, one of its members. In proposing the health of Miss Scott, the chairman, Miss Ethel Watts, hoped that in future Miss Scott would be known as a "gifted architect," not as a "gifted woman architect." Miss Philippa Strachey proposed The Pious Memory of William Shakespeare," and in seconding, Miss Clemence Dane pointed out what women owed to Shakespeare. In all his works he knew no barrier of sex. Miss Scott told the gathering something of her plans for the new theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, where she hoped they would be able to secure the spaciousness so conspicuously lacking in London theatres.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL.

The following letter was sent by the Medical Women's Federation to all Members of Parliament and all members of the Edinburgh Corporation:

Dear Sir or Madam,—The Medical Women's Federation views with deep apprehension the attempt of the municipality of Edinburgh to obtain Parliamentary powers for the compulsory treatment of Venereal Disease, as it is convinced that the use of such powers would not lead to the more effective treatment of Venereal Disease, and would tend to discourage early cases, who are usually most curable and most infectious, from applying for treatment. It bases this conviction on the invariable result of such compulsory powers where they have been applied.

Yours faithfully,

CHRISTINE M. MURRELL, President. CHARSINE M. MURRELL, President.
ELLEN B. ORR, Vice-President.
CLARA STEWART, Vice-President.
FRANCES IVENS, Past President.
JANE H. WALKER, Hon. Treasurer.
F. MAY DICKINSON BERRY, Hon. Secretary.

Medical Women's Federation, 9 Clifford Street, Bond Street, London, W. 1.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP AND THE PARISH COUNCIL.

Madam,—Three years ago, mainly through the exertions and influence of members of our Women's Institute, of which she is now the President, the first woman from our division was elected to the Rural District Council, and, ex officio, became a member of the Parish Committee. She has proved a most valuable representative, and we hope to send her back next week.

A MEMBER OF THE W.I., WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE.

BOARD OF GUARDIANS ELECTION.

MADAM,-Mrs. Wilson, C.B.E., a former member of our Committee, and Miss Milton, a present member, are standing for election to the Board of Guardians in South Kensington (Redcliffe Ward) and Paddington (West-

Guardians in South Kensington (Redcliffe Ward) and Paddington (Westbourne Ward) respectively.

Mrs. Wilson has been a Guardian since 1925 and has done excellent work, especially with women and children.

Miss Milton has had a wide experience in social work, and would be a power for good on any public body.

Both these candidates will be very grateful for any help that can be given to them in connection with their election.

The election takes place on 2nd April, and if you have any time to give to canvassing before that date, please communicate with: Mrs. S. B. Wilson, 156 Earl's Court Road, S.W. 5; or Miss Milton, 25 Westbourne Terrace, W. 2.

Hon. Secretary, Kensington and Paddington S.E.C. 9 Moreton Gardens, S.W. 5.

P.S.—It may interest you to know although we are a non-party Society that Mrs. Wilson is a Conservative and Miss Milton belongs to the Labour

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BED-SITTINGROOM to let, furnished, front, second floor; gas-fire and ring, landing cupboard, bath (geyser); rent 11s.; quiet house close station and buses.—B., 22 St. Paul's Avenue, Willesden Green, N.W. 2.

CHILTERN HILLS.—Attractive, sunny Cottage to let, July, August; 2 sitting, 3 bedrooms, bathroom (h. & c.), electric light, loggia garden; 4 guineas inclusive.—Miss Cobb, Chinnor, Oxon.

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S.W.1.—Unfurnished and furnished rooms to be let in this district. Terms, including light, attendance, baths, daily breakfast and dinner, from £2 2s. per week, unfurnished; furnished, from £2 7s. 6d.,per week; µo extras, except additional meals.—Box 1467, The Woman's Leader, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1. (Tel.: Victoria 7336.)

TO LET, unfurnished (ladies only), second floor St. George's Square, S.W. 1. Two front rooms, £78 per annum; one room £48 per annum. Rents include electric light. Bathrooms every floor. Telephone. Restaurant in house, very moderate tariff. Service charges 4s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per week.—Box 1467, The Woman's Leader, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1. (Tel.: Victoria 7336.)

S.W.1.—To be let, unfurnished (to ladies or married couple), second floor, St. George's Square, consisting three rooms and bathroom. Restaurant in house, very moderate tariff. Telephone. Rent, including electric light, f124 per annum, Service charge, 10s. 6d. per week.—Box 1467, The Woman's Leader, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1. (Tel. Victoria 7336.)

WOULD anyone going abroad let small, sunny FLAT (furnished) to very careful married couple for 3 or 6 months; central; not more than £3 monthly.—Reply, B., 189 Preston New Road, Blackburn, Lancs.

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L ONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Members' Library, Books on Suffrage, Sociology and Economics, Hansard, latest Government Publications, Periodicals, Newscuttings. ro-8 (except Saturdays).

EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1 (new address), requires and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Registration: Employers, 2s. 6d.; workers, 1s. Suiting fee: Employers, 7s. 6d.; workers, 2s. (Victoria 5940.)

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Woman's Leader

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