

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

Vol. XXIII. No. 24. Twopence.

REGISTERED
A NEWSPAPER.

Friday, July 17, 1931.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
NATIONALITY AT GENEVA. By Margery I. Corbett Ashby	187
NOTES FROM WESTMINSTER. By Cross Bench	187
LABOUR IN INDIA. By Dame Adelaide Anderson	188
PIONEERING FOR PEACE. By M. B. B.	189
SOME POINTS IN CRIMINAL STATISTICS. By Clara D. Rackham, J.P.	190

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

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

NOTES AND NEWS.

The Situation in Germany.

As we go to Press the situation in Germany is so chaotic as to be unintelligible to the inexpert observer. One thing, however, is certain enough: there is sufficient political malevolence operating both inside and outside Germany to make a single-minded concerted effort of economic rescue exceedingly difficult. And inside Germany the twin forces of disorder—Communists and Nazis—are surveying with sensations of "schadenfreude" social conditions which threaten revolution or reaction. It is easy to say that Germany should make the gesture of political goodwill demanded by France, and suspend operations on her modicum of armaments. But what effect is such action likely to have upon the precarious fortunes of a government buffeted by the storms of exasperated nationalism? And if Dr. Brüning's Government goes, what remains? Alas! Some of these questions may be answered by the time this issue reaches our readers.

The Nationality of Married Women.

It occasionally happens that the stage gives unconscious propaganda to feminist causes, and the new play at the Ambassadors, based on Mrs. Leslie's novel, *Mrs. Fischer's War*, shows the plight of the British woman who has married a German during the late War. As we stated last week, a consultative committee of women's organizations was recently set up by the Council of the League of Nations to draw up a report for the Assembly of the League next September on the Nationality of Married Women, and in another column to-day we print an article by Mrs. Corbett Ashby, one of the British delegates, on the work of this Committee, and the proposals which it will submit to the forthcoming Assembly. We specially commend to our readers the careful study of this article on a very difficult and topical subject.

Miss Picton-Turbervill's Bill Becomes Law.

Miss Picton-Turbervill must be congratulated on the success that has crowned her Bill brought in under the ten minutes' rule which abolishes the sentence of death for expectant mothers. On Wednesday of last week it received the Royal Assent and became law. It is very rare for a measure to pass through all its stages so rapidly, and the good fortune of this Bill is due to Miss Picton-Turbervill's insistence and her success in persuading the Government to find time this session for the Bill, as well as the sympathetic attitude of both Houses towards this reform.

The Child Wives of India.

On Thursday of last week Earl Winterton formally took the opportunity of the motion on estimates for the India Office to raise the question of the administration of British India during the past year. In the course of his speech he made a reference to the Sarda Child Marriages Act, and the unsatisfactory replies that the Secretary of State had given to questions relating to its enforcement. Mr. Wedgwood Benn's reply was singularly ineffective on this point as Miss Rathbone took care to point out later in the debate. He reminded the Committee that the institution of marriage registers and "the various things" recommended by the Committee presided over by Sir Moropant Joshi, were matters that involved provincial action and a "certain measure of expense," and while he was "far from agreeing that economy should stand in the way of great reforms, at the present time the state of the Indian Treasury is not very prosperous." Miss Rathbone's retort that an Act which fixed the minimum age for marriage could scarcely be enforced if records both of births and marriages were unavailable and that the death of 126,000 mothers per annum was a matter serious enough to call for some expenditure received no reply and indeed admitted of none. It is becoming daily plainer that practically nothing is being done to make the Sarda Act a reality and that the Act is in grave danger of being destroyed altogether. The "safeguarding of minorities" of which we hear so much clearly does not extend to the most inarticulate and helpless of India's minorities—her child wives.

The Anomalies Bill.

The second reading debate on the Unemployment Insurance (No. 3) Bill, by which it passed its second reading on 8th of this month, was of particular interest to our readers in view of the discussion on the proposal in the Bill which authorizes the Minister to make regulations applying only to married women, or to certain sections of married women who have made less than a specified number of contributions since marriage. All were agreed that certain abuses exist, and all are agreed that an insurance benefit must not be confused with a subsidy for income. But whereas the speakers for the Government, such as Miss Bondfield and Dr. Marion Phillips, considered that no injustice was contemplated by the Bill, Miss Rathbone pointed out, as we did in these columns last week, that the clause proposed would be to a considerable extent ineffective, and that special differentiation against married women was unjustifiable and objectionable. She asked whether it was impossible to tighten up the interpretation of the word "available". She showed that at present there is no doubt that umpires often allow a married woman to continue to draw benefit who is not available for occupation in any but the most fantastic meaning of the word. Miss Rathbone's amendments to delete the special section referring to married women, and to provide for the appointment of two members of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Association on the Advisory Committee which is to be consulted by the Minister before drawing up regulations, will have been discussed by the time this is in the hands of our readers.

Sterilization of Defectives—The Case for the Bill.

A Bill to legalize the voluntary sterilization of mental defectives will be brought before the House by Major A. G. Church, M.P. for Wandsworth, on Tuesday, 21st July. The advisability of such a measure has for some time been urged by many women's organizations, including the Women's Co-operative Guild and the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. The object of the Bill is to make the sterilization of mental defectives a lawful act upon their own application or that of their parents or guardians. At present there is much doubt as to whether sterilization of such persons is legal according to English law. The promoters of the Bill do not aim that it

should apply to lunatics whose mental disorder may be the result of an accident and not transmittable. Its purpose is the sterilization of the large group of mental defectives who, unlike the lunatics, are mostly not segregated in institutions. The great growth of mental deficiency in this country is clearly shown in a recent joint report by a Committee of the Board of Education and the Board of Control. At present there are estimated to be over 300,000 defectives in England, nearly double the number of twenty years ago. Only one-twelfth of these are in institutions, while a further 50,000 are under guardianship. This leaves an appallingly large number in the public midst, absolutely unrestrained as far as generating is concerned. Owing to lack of self-control and to a sense of responsibility, members of this group are often extremely prolific. The promoters of the Bill do not claim that sterilization can be looked upon as an alternative to segregation. The two systems must work side by side.

The Bill Itself.

The voluntary nature of the Bill is illustrated by the following safeguards. Before an operation for sterilization may be performed upon a mental defective, first his or her own consent must be given, if the subject be capable of expressing willingness or otherwise to undergo the operation; secondly, the spouse, or in the case of an unmarried defective, his or her parents or guardians have to agree. In addition, the consent of the Board of Control, the statutory authority appointed under the 1913 Mental Deficiency Act, must be obtained. The operation has finally to be approved by a judicial authority, such as a bench of magistrates, who will have to define whether the person to whom the application relates is a defective, whether the operation will adversely affect the applicant, and whether the various persons described in the Bill have given their consent. These questions answered, the judicial authority has the power to authorize that the operation be carried out.

Rural Housing.

The House of Commons has this week been discussing the Housing Rural Authorities Bill, which proposes to give an additional subsidy in those rural areas which, even with the help of the present Housing Acts, cannot afford to put up houses at a rent low enough to be paid by agricultural workers. It is impossible not to welcome such a measure, but it must be borne in mind by all local authorities that it will still be necessary for local authorities to make use of their powers to establish children or family rent rebates in order to enable those with large families of dependent children to pay the rent of any house big enough to prevent overcrowding. We are glad to note that an amendment has been put down to provide for the appointment of at least one woman on the Advisory Committee which is to determine how the subsidy is to be allocated.

Women and University Staffs.

The past weeks being diversified by the occurrence, up and down the country, of many university degree ceremonies, tempts us to meditate at large upon the future of the young women graduates who are being turned out so well and fairly equipped, to make their way in the professional labour market. For the present moment, however, we will confine such meditations to a single line of thought. Among the most brilliant of these young women will be many who will seek an outlet on university staffs. They will apply for posts as lecturers, assistant lecturers, and demonstrators. In many cases, allowing for a slight bias against their sex, they will be successful. For the first few years they will, perhaps, be hardly conscious of the tide which is running against them. Yet in many cases they will find themselves missing the stimulating contact of discussion with senior members of their departments, because much of that discussion goes on in smoking rooms and social clubs to which women are not admitted. It is in such contacts, too, that the possibilities of filling higher posts are canvassed, and promising personalities are able to make themselves felt. Of other forces, too, they will become conscious as time goes on. They will learn of particular heads of departments who dislike women, and make no secret of their determination to keep them out. They will be told that where there are already women it is undesirable that there should be more, for fear of overweighting. They will find that posts not filled by open advertisement are in fact filled by professors who inquire informally among their men colleagues and heads of men's colleges, for likely men candidates. As time goes on they may become somewhat desperate concerning their own future in the academic world, and choose to look elsewhere. We have in mind at the moment two able women who in the face of such conditions have recently migrated respectively into

social work and into the Civil Service. So much the better for them and for the services which have acquired them. But it is not so much the better for the universities, and we feel that here is a matter to which the Federation of University Women might well turn its attention with a view to finding out what actually happens, calling public attention to what it finds, and setting itself to devise a remedy.

The Albert Hall Demonstration.

The great meeting in the Albert Hall last Saturday, with its remarkable overflow crowds in Kensington Gardens and its still more remarkable broadcast extension to innumerable homes in Great Britain and America was a success beyond our highest hopes. The leaders of the three political parties representing so strikingly different types of British personality as well as different schools of political philosophies were united in the need for definite acts not words in favour of disarmament. There was some very frank speaking, no attempt to disguise the difficulties in the way of disarmament.

The Scottish Census.

The population figures for England and Wales were followed last week by the figures for Scotland, which shows a fall in population due to migration, probably largely migration across the border rather than across the seas. The largest decreases are found in county areas and small boroughs. Lanarkshire, including Glasgow, shows nearly a third of the total population, and Glasgow second to London in Great Britain claims one-fifth of the whole population of Scotland. The number of Gaelic speakers has decreased since 1921 from 6.32 per cent to 2.84 per cent. The comparative returns for Scotland are to some extent vitiated by the fact that the 1921 census took place when large numbers were on holiday. The ratio of women to men is slightly higher, 108.2 to 100 as compared to 108 to 100 ten years ago.

Mrs. Louise McKinney.

The women's temperance movement and the suffrage movement have always been closely allied for obvious reasons, and Mrs. Louise McKinney, whose death is reported from Calgary, was both a prominent figure in temperance societies in Canada, and a pioneer in advocating their political rights. She was one of five women in Alberta who through an appeal to the Privy Council won the right of women to occupy seats in the Canadian Senate, and she herself was the first woman to be elected to any legislative body in the British Empire, as she won a seat in the Alberta legislature in 1917.

"The Wrongs that Torment Others."

The "Housing" evening, organized last week by the Junior Council of the London and National Society, gave a large audience an interesting survey of what is being done to combat the twin evils of overcrowding and slums in London. Lord Balfour of Burleigh described the work of the public utility societies. He joined with the Town Clerk of Westminster in urging that women house property managers should be appointed wherever possible. Speaking from personal experience of the work of the Chesterfield women house property managers, the Town Clerk paid them glowing tribute, and referred to the fact that the Westminster City Council has recently appointed a woman, the first, to look after the splendid new housing estate which is slowly but surely transforming Westminster's "Black Spots". Sir Lawrence Chubb stressed the need for preserving adequate open space in all housing development schemes. The children must have somewhere to play if they are to be saved from the terrible toll of the road, which daily and hourly claims its innocent victims. An interesting discussion followed the "Under 40 Club" film of slum life. The Junior Council is to be congratulated upon a valuable effort to arouse interest and a sense of responsibility in the housing question among the younger generation of citizens. Thousands of our fellow citizens live, breed and die in overcrowded misery and squalidness. One in every ten families in England lives under overcrowded conditions. In Scotland and many large towns the figure is higher, yet how calmly, with what inexhaustible patience we bear "these wrongs that torment others".

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.

NATIONALITY AT GENEVA.

By M. I. CORBETT ASHBY.

The Consultative Committee of the eight international organizations of women, created by the Council of the League during its session of January, 1931, sat in Geneva from 2nd to 6th July, and signed the report which will be annexed by the Secretary-General to his official report to Governments.

The head of the legal department of the League, M. Buero, welcomed members of the Committee and opened the first session in the room at the secretariat overlooking the lake, which had been placed at their disposal by the League. Maître Maria Vérone, of the Paris Bar, the senior woman lawyer, responded, and welcomed the action of the League in creating an official committee to represent women's views, likening it to the committees of experts set up by the League. The Committee then elected unanimously Maître Maria Vérone as its chairman, and Miss I. Elisabeth Evans as hon. secretary.

A draft report based on those prepared by the drafting committee, Mme Bakker-Nort (Holland), M.P., Miss Chrystal Macmillan (Great Britain), Miss Alice Paul (U.S.A.), and Mme Vérone (France), at their two meetings in London and Paris, was taken as the basis of discussion. The following statement was unanimously adopted:—

Realizing the far-reaching consequences for women—for greater freedom or greater subjection—involvement in the project of the League of Nations for the codification of international law, which may lead to the establishing of a World Code of Law, this Committee presents the following statement concerning the Nationality Convention drawn up by the Hague Codification Conference in 1930, and which was designed to form the opening section of the proposed Code:—

(1) This Committee declares that it is opposed to the Hague

Nationality Convention inasmuch as it differentiates between men and women as regards nationality.

(2) This Committee wishes to express its support of the proposal put before the Hague Codification Conference by the delegation from Chile for a world agreement on nationality, reading:— "The Contracting States agree that from the going into effect of this Convention there shall be no distinction based on sex in their law and practice relating to nationality."

(3) This Committee urges the Assembly of the League of Nations to take immediate steps—

(a) to bring about the reconsideration of the Hague Nationality Convention, and

(b) to submit to the Governments for ratification a new convention founded on the principle of equality between men and women with regard to nationality.

The report continued with a reference to the articles of the Hague Convention, and pointed out that these articles which are directed mainly to preventing statelessness and dual nationality, would, if ratified, give recognition in an international convention to the old idea of the subordinate position of women in the matter of nationality, and to the old custom by which a woman's nationality is dependent on that of her husband.

The report detailed the serious disadvantages that may arise. Such a system may deprive her of the vote, may deprive her at home and abroad of the protection of her own government, may deprive her of the benefits of state insurance and other state assistance, may make it impossible for her to hold public office, to exercise her profession, to obtain paid employment, to own and inherit property and may among other disabilities, subject

(Continued on page 188.)

NOTES FROM WESTMINSTER.

The various Government Bills are beginning to seek "port after stormy seas". But it does not look at present as though the Government were likely to accomplish the safe harbouring of all the measures enumerated in the Prime Minister's statement of last Thursday as to be finished with before the adjournment on 31st July. Certainly it will not be so if obstruction is as effectively exercised as over the Agricultural Marketing Bill. When I left the House at half-past midnight on Monday, a Third Reading Debate expected to end by 11 o'clock at latest was still in interminable progression. A Conservative back-bencher who excels in these arts was engaged in reading, with an air of disarming innocence, lengthy extracts from the opinions of various bodies of farmers hostile to the Bill, while his opponents cheered him on with ironical cries of "Read it again", "Read us another". It would be interesting to know whether the Parliamentary proceedings of other countries are as dominated as our own by the traditions of the football-field. The supporters of one team do not resent the efforts of the other to prevent their rivals from shooting a goal. Of course not. That's the game and the struggle must be prolonged to the utmost even when the result is predetermined. Still, the good humour with which men who have to seek their beds many miles from the House watched the hours ticking away and their hopes of catching the last tram or train passing the vanishing point is surprising to those who have not been long enough in the House to have seen the same devices practised by the other side. It is an astonishing way of carrying on the business of legislation, but there seems little prospect of any change in it.

The Agricultural debate was notable for several of Mr. Norman Birkett's rare interventions in the discussions of the House. Usually he reclines on the conveniently empty Liberal benches with the air of a crack player who comes home after an international match to watch from an easy chair the play of his little boys on the lawn. But when his lanky figure raises itself and he pours out mellifluous and exquisitely lucid observations on some point, generally with legal bearings, that has secured his interest, one gets the impression that if the Liberal Party under its own name or merged in another ever again comes to office, he might make as great a success on the Front Bench as the new Solicitor-General. The special cause of his intervention was a clause in the Marketing Bill which allows Star Chamber powers of rack and thumb-screw—or so they seemed in his exposition—to the Committees to be set up in their dealings with recalcitrant witnesses who would not produce the evidence desired of them. But the Minister remained unmoved and the House showed no such interest as was aroused by some of the

minor events of the debate, such as the beautiful mixed metaphor of one back-bencher who assured it that "the burden that was placed on the back of the ass would break it and it would not bear fruit."

The debate on Rural Housing produced one of Miss Megan Lloyd George's rare speeches. She has a delightful voice and her Parliamentary manner is as perfect as—though utterly different from—her father's. If she was less incurably modest and wider in her range of subjects, she might be a great Parliamentary success. As it is, the House crowds in to hear her in the expectancy of a violin solo, very refreshing after a series of fox-trots and even after a big symphony.

The Indian debate took place as usual in a thin House. It would be a pity if this gave the impression in India that this was an index simply of lack of Parliamentary interest in the subject. Doubtless the number who really care about India is small. But all debates which do not end in a division are relatively poorly attended; for example, even that on Disarmament the previous week, when nearly all the big guns boomed forth.

The disappointing part about the Indian debate was rather the failure of Mr. Wedgwood Benn to supply any sort of evidence that the Government is approaching the fresh stages of the Round Table Conference with any more defined and constructive ideas as to the exact form of solution of the various constitutional problems presented, including the problem of safeguards, than it had when the Conference first began its sittings. In his desperate anxiety not to say the wrong thing, he contrived to say next to nothing, except his usual assurances of good intentions and sympathy. As to the non-enforcement of the Sarda Act, neither Earl Winterton nor Miss Rathbone drew anything from him except his stock observation on that topic, that it is necessary to carry Indian opinion with us, and that Indian opinion is more advanced on that subject than on the question of suttee at the period when suttee was drastically prohibited. This seems a strange reason for taking weaker action in the case of child marriage than in the case of suttee. But, of course, there is another factor which the Secretary of State cannot be expected to recognize, namely, that the British Raj had a strong man at the helm in those bygone days and a weak one at the helm to-day.

The Second Reading of the Unemployment Insurance Anomalies Bill produced an excellent and business-like speech from Miss Bondfield. But I shall be better able to review the fortunes of this Bill next week, since it is essentially a Bill of detail, and the Committee stage will be its real battleground.

CROSS BENCH.

NATIONALITY AT GENEVA—(Continued from page 187.)

her even in her own native land to the restrictions placed on aliens.

The demand for reopening the question of the Hague Convention is opportune since it is obvious governments are not in favour, only two or three have ratified, though it has been fifteen months in existence. The report emphasizes that it is of the greatest importance for the success of the proposed codification that the result should command the support of women which it cannot have if it admits discrimination against them. It is further essential that the codification of nationality laws should command the support of those countries—countries which already comprise so great a part of the world—in which there is a large measure of equality between men and women in their own nationality laws.

The report deals with the usual arguments advanced against equality in nationality. In answer to the argument that conflicts of laws would be increased it can be said that the old rule, once almost universal, of a wife's subordination, has disappeared in many countries, and cannot be reimposed, and that conflicts can now best be avoided by rendering universal the new rule, more in accord with modern thought of a woman's independent right to her own nationality without reference to her husband's.

Other conflicts of law already exist, and are solved by international agreements.

It is argued that unity of the family depends on unity of nationality, but the report answers by stressing that "unity" is here used in two senses, one harmony within the family, second "juridical unity"; only the latter can be imposed by law, and does not even now exist in many cases since in some countries civil rights can be exercised by non-nationals permitting for example a man to make a will to disinherit his family in cases where the law of the country of which he is a national forbids this. Children who acquire nationality under the *jus soli* have now a nationality different from that of their parents. In short, since conflicts cannot be avoided, let us not use them as an excuse against the independent nationality of a woman.

As regards the derivation of a child's nationality, the committee considered that the mother should have the same right as a father to transmit nationality. Summarizing their views, the committee ended the report as follows:—

"The Committee points out that the most important and necessary application of the principle of equality in nationality between men and women are:—

(a) Marriage shall no more affect the nationality of a woman than it affects the nationality of a man.

(b) The right of a woman to retain her nationality or to change it by naturalization, denationalization or denaturalization shall not be denied or abridged because she is a married woman;

(c) The nationality of a woman shall not be changed without her consent except under conditions which would change the nationality of a man without his consent.

(d) That facilities should be given to either spouse to acquire the nationality of the other.

(e) That in cases where the *jus soli* does not exist the nationality of a child may derive equally from a mother or a father. That in respect to the derivation of nationality from a parent, the nationality of the one parent shall be given no right over that of the other."

The report was signed by the eight organizations, the I.A.W.S.E.C. and the University Women signing under a clause that the equality referred to in the statement was understood by them to include the right of a woman to her own nationality and her right to retain or change her nationality on marriage with an alien. The university women also added a reservation that they signed the report except in so far as it dealt with children, since the federation had not discussed that aspect of nationality.

The meetings of the committee were very lively, since members differed greatly in their views as to the suitable length and contents of the report. Attached to it is a remarkable appendix, grouping those countries which have improved their legislation into different categories, and quoting lettering and number of the actual laws. The committee recorded its unanimous and deep appreciation of this invaluable piece of work compiled by Miss Paul and also of her initiative and faith which had called the consultative committee into being. The report, which is being printed by the League, will be shortly available at I.A.W.S.E.C., 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W. 1.

At the conclusion of the formal work the members of the committee decided to name a sub-committee of one member of

each of the eight organizations to work in Geneva but it was realized that intense propaganda must be carried on nationally between now and September to ensure that governments shall interest their delegates to support the women's demand. Mme Verone, as chairman, was asked to send a letter to each headquarters, begging them to circulate their branches to undertake a joint deputation of all available women's organizations to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Minister for Home Affairs, and to organize the Press and public opinion in support of an enduring system of law based on equality and justice.

LABOUR IN INDIA.¹

By ADELAIDE M. ANDERSON.

A direct immediate appeal is implicit in this most admirable Report which should concern an even wider range of peoples and readers than any of the various weighty reports, touching India and her affairs published within the last few years—possibly not even excepting the Simon Report.

It is abundantly clear, not less from the manner than the matter, that wise and steadfast advance towards a real solution of the urgent human problems manifest in the Report, concerns not only all Indians but all manual workers in every part of the world. Not only in the factories and workshops, but in mines, on plantations, and among dock and transport workers. Above all, this is made manifest for every country that will take heed, in East or West, where there is modern industrial development. The indications of spacious planning by the Commissioners, as to procedure and methods of gathering freely-given evidence, and the readability of the Report itself, assure one that in the detailed evidence, yet to be published, rich and living sources for the interpretation and application of the recommendations of the Commissioners will be available.

If proof were needed that the very foundations of a League of Nations must include an International Labour Organization, here is its material. And moreover, remembering the time when the work of inquiry was carried through, "the fact that political controversies have not prevented many who hold widely differing views in politics from co-operating with us for the benefit of labour; and we have been able to frame . . . recommendations without reference to possible changes in the Constitution"—surely we have in this a clue to truly fundamental conditions of health, wealth, and peace among the nations. That is registered, once and for all, by the simple declaration in the introduction to the Report itself—"The well-being of the people must be the primary concern of any government, whatever its form and composition."

Here has inevitably issued far more matter than a simple inquiry into "Existing conditions of labour in industrial undertakings and plantations, in British India, on the health, efficiency, and standard of living of the worker, and on the relations between employer and employed." Although the "recommendations" are duly and dutifully made, yet in all the circumstances of the world and its peoples, they do point onward to something lying beyond immediately attainable remedies; the lack of which leaves so much to be desired in the lives of travelling multitudes, especially in the East and the Far East, who are passing from ancient to modern methods of organizing production.

There is indeed a philosophy to be understood and weighed, lying within the Report, if not explicitly stated. No less could have been looked for under the guidance of the Chairman of this Royal Commission; for he bears a name, as it were, proverbial since the War, for its witness to the new initiative needed from the workers themselves, in collective groups, in industry.

The very subjects of some of the recommendations framed by the Commissioners inevitably turn our minds back to the widely international expression of thought and belief upon them, recorded in the Washington Conventions of 1919. Naturally, we look almost first to see how far the greatest industrialized country of the East is yet able to travel on the way of progress there pointed out. We want to discover whether India has passed beyond temporary concessions due to Eastern habits and customs springing out of an older form of industry.

Twelve years have passed and it is inevitable we should feel disappointed that unanimous support was not forthcoming from India for endeavours to exclude children so young as twelve

¹ Report on the Royal Commission on Labour in India. Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty, June, 1931. Cmd. 3883. Price 4s. 6d. Printed and published by H.M. Stationery Office.

REVIEW.

PIONEERING FOR PEACE.

League of Nation devotees often find it hard to believe that to so many of their fellow creatures the League is simply a bore—vaguely connected in vague minds with such dry-as-dust words as "secretariat" and "Protocol."

"The Assembly of the League of Nations . . ." begins the radio announcer—and simultaneously all over the country thousands of hands reach out to turn off their sets—or switch over to more congenial dance music. Let the aforementioned devotees, therefore, press into those hands copies of Miss Spaul's excellent book.¹ For here is the genuine stuff of romance—fit introduction to the work of the League for those who think of it merely as a method of wasting ineffectively their country's money, a bureaucratic assembly composed of thin-blooded politicians. The author never allows our interest to flag. Starting with a short account of that pioneer of peace, Grotius—she goes on to describe the personalities of the League, giving some little story about each illustrative of their character and of the kind of life they have led. No thin-blooded politicians here! Then she goes on to tell about the work the League has actually accomplished, giving an admirable account of the tragic burning of Smyrna and the rescue and settlement work among the Greeks which followed, also the work done in the suppression of the drug traffic, and of the fight against slavery and disease.

She tells of how the League averted serious warfare between Greece and Bulgaria in 1925, and how the colonel commanding the Bulgarian troops read that historic telegram from his own War Office, "Make only slight resistance . . . in view of the fact that the incident has been laid before the Council of the League of Nations which is expected to stop the invasion."

This would be an excellent book for children, to whom some form of hero-worship is necessary and inevitable. And here are the heroes of peace for them complete with adventures every bit as thrilling as those war can produce.

There are stories of the great work done in rescuing Armenian women and child slaves from their captors, Arabs and Turks. A woman's name stands out here, that of Miss Karen Jeppe, who was largely responsible for the organization by which Syria was combed out in the search for these slaves, a dangerous and splendid undertaking in which many of her agents lost their lives.

Again, another chapter tells the story of Lawford Childs, a true Jules Verne character, and how he went to South America to investigate the possibility of the settlement of refugees. He travelled as cook's mate on a steamer, and was shipwrecked on the way. "When the tug arrived in port, Mr. Childs, clad in dripping clothes and borrowed boots, explained to the port officials that he was the delegate of the Refugee Service of the International Labour Organization." "Your Excellency looks like it," was the laconic response.

His other adventures were well up to the standard of this auspicious beginning.

How about our disgruntled and uninterested listener-in now? By the time he has finished this book I believe his boredom will have been replaced by a desire to know more of such work, to know more about such men and women.

Miss Spaul has given the League the sort of propaganda it needs.

M. B. B.

¹ *Pioneering for Peace*, by Hebe Spaul. (Sheldon Press. 3s. 6d.)

THE
INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S NEWS

(Jus Suffragii)

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SOME POINTS FROM CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

It is only possible to select a few from the many interesting facts and figures to be found in Criminal Statistics for 1929. We may begin with an encouraging feature—the decline in the number of women criminals. The number of adult women found guilty of indictable offences has fallen by 22 per cent since 1907, while in the same period the number of adult women in the country increased by 24 per cent. The crimes committed by the diminishing number of women criminals are mainly those of the habitual offender—as, indeed, are the crimes of men. They prove the need for the Departmental Committee on recidivism which has recently been appointed by the Home Secretary.

It is depressing to note the increase in the number of suicides and of attempted suicides. The two together amounted to 8,003 in 1929, as compared with 5,876 in 1911. The increase has been steady and continuous since the war and gives rise to speculation as to whether it is a legacy of the war and war strain or whether it is due to unemployment and economic depression. Of those found guilty of attempted suicide 52 were punished by a sentence of imprisonment. It is difficult to believe that prison can ever be the right treatment in such cases.

It is always interesting to note the number and the result of appeals from Petty Sessions to Quarter Sessions. The number was small—232. No less than 51 were by motorists, a much larger number than by any other single type of offender. Drunkenness comes next with 18. In 61 cases the conviction was quashed, and in 59 the sentence was modified. The numbers are sufficiently large to cause anxiety as to how many cases there were in which the accused could not afford to appeal, but the conviction would have been quashed had he done so. It is very important in the interests of justice that Sir John Withers' Bill dealing with the cost of appeals should be passed into law as quickly as possible. There were 79 appeals against Bastardy Orders, and in no less than 29 the decision of the lower court was reversed.

Many people are under the impression that murderers are punished by being hanged, and that this acts as a valuable deterrent to others. The figures hardly bear out this theory. There were in 1929 84 cases of murder known to the police; 37 suspects committed suicide; 42 arrests were made; 21 of those arrested were found insane; 11 were acquitted; 7 were sentenced to death but had the sentence afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life; and a total of five persons were actually executed. In the face of these figures it can hardly be argued that fear of the gallows is an important factor in deterring would-be murderers from the commission of crime.

There is some discussion in the Report as to whether there has been any actual increase in the number of juvenile offenders. The number of boys under 16 found guilty of indictable offences has risen greatly since 1907, but as is pointed out this is no indication of any increase in crime. In 1907 there was no Probation of Offenders' Act, no Children's Act, no Juvenile Court, and there was naturally great reluctance to charge children in the police court. When we compare the numbers charged in 1929 with 1910, we find there was been an actual decrease. The number in 1928 was the lowest since 1910; there was a trifling increase in 1929, but so small as hardly to require notice. It is important to observe that the percentage of boys under 16 found guilty of indictable offences is much greater in the north than in the south, and this is especially the case with offences against honesty. The industrial depression in the North of England as compared with the South is quite sufficient to account for this excess of delinquency in the north.

Reference is made to the adventurous lawlessness found among young men between 21 and 30, and it is suggested that this is a result of the war years and that the numbers would have been larger had it not that some had been turned aside from crime by training in Reformatories or Borstal Institutions. This is, of course, true, but it is unfortunate that no mention should be made of the work of the Probation Officers who have had charge of thousands of young people who went astray between 1914 and 1918 and might have ended in prison had it not been for the probation system. Later on we are given figures to show the numbers of juveniles dealt with under the Probation Act and those sent to Home Office Schools, the number of the former being, of course, immensely greater than the latter. The comment is added that "greater use might well be made of the Schools." It might equally well be suggested that a larger number of the

children who were bound over might have been placed under the supervision of a Probation Officer, and that, if all Courts understood the value and possibilities of Probation and had at their service Probation Officers trained and experienced in dealing with young people, some children could properly be placed under their care instead of being sent away to schools.

CLARA D. RACKHAM.

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

Monday, 6th July.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (MIDWIVES).

The Countess of Iveagh asked the Postmaster-General whether in his scheme for extending the telephone system he will consider giving special facilities to midwives in view of the fact that many of them are unable to afford the telephone at trade rates, and that a certain number of maternal deaths are due to failure to secure prompt attention.

Mr. Atlee: The residential rate already applies in any case where nursing is not carried on in the house, and where the entry in the telephone directory makes no explicit reference to the subscriber's profession. I regret that I am unable to make any further concession.

The Countess of Iveagh: In view of the fact that this is a matter of very great importance with regard to questions of maternal deaths, cannot the hon. Member see his way to consider the special position of country midwives?

NURSERY SCHOOLS.

Dr. Hastings asked the President of the Board of Education the number of nursery schools completed, being built, and sanctioned in connection with provided and unprovided schools to date, and how many of these schools in each class are of the open-air type.

Mr. Morgan Jones: There are forty-four nursery schools recognized by the Board of Education, twenty-three being provided schools and twenty-one voluntary schools. There are eleven provided and three voluntary schools in course of erection. In addition, preliminary proposals have been sanctioned for twelve provided schools. Practically all the schools now being built are open-air schools; of the existing schools the majority are planned on open-air lines and the remainder have good open-air facilities.

THE PEACE MARCH.

A correspondent writes:—One o'clock and Big Ben looks down tolerantly upon the scurrying groups on the Embankment. No need to ask him what the excitement is about, the meaning of the banners and bands. It is Saturday, 11th July, and the Peace March to the Albert Hall is about to start. Walking east from the Temple one recognizes many a famous and historic banner from the Suffrage processions of old. The effective "Pax" banner of the Women's International League heads the procession, and the multi-coloured flags of other organizations too numerous to mention stand out bravely in the sunlight. "St. Joan" heads a large detachment, which grows as we march along, and the green, red and white of the N.U.S.E.C. is not far behind. Old friends and faces are there too, and "do you remember" is heard on every side. But the younger generation is well represented, and although in general women predominate, it is interesting to note that the number of young men and women are about equal. Walking under a political banner comes an old lady, whose memories date back to canvassing in the days of "Jack the Ripper," when women went about in twos and threes, and further down the line an enthusiast of nearly 80 urged the sheepish onlookers to come in "and do their bit." As the procession winds along Piccadilly, a gallant little figure standing in the road "takes the salute." It is "General" Drummond, the heroine of many a famous Suffrage march of the past, and how the Suffrage veterans straighten their backs and step out as we march past her critical eye! It is extraordinary how kind the policemen are, walking alongside with that air of detachment so peculiar to London "Bobbies" yet taking the deepest interest in the procession and the marchers. Perhaps they too, like the sympathetic crowds that lined the route from Blackfriars to the Albert Hall, were impressed with the sincerity and strength of purpose that animated some thousands of men and women of all ages and conflicting outlook to demonstrate co-operatively in favour of World Peace and Disarmament. If so, then the Peace March of 1931 was indeed worth while.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

President: Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY.
Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. VAN GRUISEN. Hon. Secretary: Mrs. RYLAND.
General and Parliamentary Secretary: Mrs. HORTON.
Office: 4 Great Smith Street, S.W. 1. Telephone: Victoria 6188.

WOMEN DELEGATES TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS ASSEMBLY.

20th JULY, 5 P.M., AT THE CAXTON HALL.

Many Societies are taking advantage of the meeting organized by the N.U.S.E.C. to meet Miss Susan Lawrence and Mrs. Hamilton. It will be an informal conference which the women delegates have promised to attend (Parliamentary engagements permitting). Various questions of special interest to women that are likely to arise at Geneva will be discussed. This conference is now an annual event, and has proved of very real value; there are many points on which the delegates are glad to have the views of organized women.

"POOR CAROLINE" TEA PARTY.

At Mrs. Corbett's delightful house in Kensington, Miss Winifred Holtby spoke on the growth of her novel, *Poor Caroline*. The subject was most amusingly discussed with her by Mr. Michael Franklin, and to them we are indebted for a most enjoyable afternoon. Many friends of the National Union were present, and greatly enjoyed the meeting, and were most grateful to Miss Holtby and Mr. Franklin for giving them the privilege of hearing them speak on *Poor Caroline*.

The series of theatrical and literary tea parties will be continued in the autumn, and anyone interested who does not already receive notices of these parties is invited to send their name and address to the Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., 4 Great Smith Street, S.W. 1.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (ANOMOLIES) BILL.

The N.U.S.E.C. has been working to secure support to the amendments to this Bill put down by Miss Rathbone. These amendments: (1) delete the clause which puts married women in a special category, (2) make the inclusion of women on the proposed Advisory Committee compulsory.

WOMEN MORTUARY ATTENDANTS.

At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee a resolution was passed urging that women should be available at mortuaries to handle women's bodies. At the moment this is always done by male mortuary attendants, and the British College of Nurses has evidence that the greater repulsion and sorrow is felt by the relatives of dead women whose bodies have been handled in public mortuaries by men. Local action might well be taken by Societies on this question.

AT GENEVA DURING THE LEAGUE ASSEMBLY.

All readers who contemplate visiting Geneva during the forthcoming Assembly of the League of Nations will welcome the news that the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship is once again opening a temporary office in the vicinity of the Assembly Hall, where visitors will be welcome. Full particulars are given in the letter from Mrs. Bompas, printed below.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FORTHCOMING ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AT GENEVA.

MADAM,—Every year more and more women from different countries tend to come to Geneva in September during the sitting there of the Assembly of the League of Nations. More and more the interest taken in the questions dealt with by the League increases; and more and more all those concerned with international problems realize that it is often through the organization of the League, or at any rate with its support, that a satisfactory solution is to be found. The fact that the Assembly of 1931 will deal with two questions of special concern to women's societies, namely the nationality of married women and preparations for the Disarmament Conference, will no doubt increase the number of women visitors this year. It must also be borne in mind that the presence in Geneva of statesmen from all countries, makes co-operative action by women's organizations much easier; and finally so many Congresses, Conferences, etc., are grouped round the

meetings of the Assembly or its Committees, that anyone who wishes to take advantage of an enlarged horizon in international life needs to spend at least a few days in Geneva in September.

As it has done for the last five years, the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship desires to provide an agreeable and convenient meeting place for these visitors, whether they come to Geneva for the first time or are old friends. During the whole month of September, therefore, a Temporary Office will be opened at the same address as last year, 6 rue de Saussure, first floor, so near the Assembly Hall that it is possible to come in and spend a few minutes there during the translation of a speech. As in former years, there will be entrance cards for the Assembly, information on the League of Nations, on the international woman's movement, on Geneva; there will be women's papers and the addresses of women who are staying in Geneva, etc. Every day at four o'clock there will be tea for our visitors, may also use the Bureau for their business appointments. Official or informal receptions and lectures on feminist subjects which touch on the League of Nations will take place two or three times a week. The fact that the Board of the Alliance will be meeting in Geneva in the middle of September will bring to this Office (directed by Mlle Gourd, representative of the women's organizations on the League of Nations Child Welfare Committee) many well-known feminists, including Mrs. Corbett Ashby, our international President, Adele Schreiber, M.P. (Germany), Mme Plaminkova, Senator (Czechoslovakia), Rosa Manus (Holland), Mme Malaterre-Sellier (France), Dorothee von Velsen (Germany), Miss Sterling (Great Britain), Mrs. Bompas, Headquarters Secretary of the Alliance, etc.

All readers of this paper who may be coming to Geneva between the 1st and 30th September are warmly invited to take advantage of the service offered by the Office, and to let us know of their arrival, being assured of a warm welcome.

K. BOMPAS,
Headquarters Secretary.

I.A.W.S.E.C.,
190 Vauxhall Bridge Road,
S.W. 1.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES.

CARDIFF W.C.A.

A delightful garden party was held on 1st July at Dan-y-Bryn Radyr, by kind permission of Sir Lewis Lougher and the Misses Lougher. In ideal summer weather, the beautiful gardens were at their best, and a most enjoyable time was spent. A short meeting took place before tea, the speakers being Mrs. Maclean, who gave an account of a recent visit to Vienna, and Mrs. Shaxby, who invited members to join the Cardiff contingent who are going up to London for the Disarmament Demonstration at the Albert Hall on 11th July. The chair was taken by Miss Barke. Tea followed on one of the lawns under beautiful trees, and after that the guests wandered about the grounds as they pleased, watched a display of dancing by pupils of Miss Worsley, or listened to songs contributed by several members or friends of the Association. The hon. secretary, Miss Muriel Sanders, and the organizing secretary, Mrs. Alfred Thomas, with their many helpers, made the gathering one of the most successful of the Association's summer meetings.

PRESTON W.C.A.

The Report of this Society for the year ending 30th April shows that no less than eighteen new members joined during the year, and such interesting and topical subjects as Women Citizens of To-day and To-morrow, The Exploitation of Youth, Powers of the Watch Committee, Preservation of the Countryside, Unemployment and the Bank Rate have been discussed at the meetings. The Reunion took the form of a whist drive, which was fairly well attended and much enjoyed. A special feature of last year's arrangements was the dinner held at the White Horse Restaurant on 27th November, at which Miss Stoneman, M.A., was the guest of honour. Miss Stoneman was one of those who formed this Association out of the Women's Suffrage Society in 1919. Mrs. Todd received the guests and presided at the Dinner. Interesting speeches were made by members of the Education Committee, and the event was very much enjoyed by all present. The local Members of Parliament were approached on the Nationality of Married Women Bill, and urged to support any amendment which would exclude the University Constituencies from the scope of the Electoral Reform Bill.

The ENGLISH FOLK COOKERY ASSOCIATION will be glad to receive information respecting Scottish, English, Irish and Welsh food and cookery customs, ceremonial dishes, and cakes (local and traditional). 2s. 6d. weekly will be given for the best received written on a post card addressed Miss White, E.F.C.A., care of THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great Smith St., Westminster, London, S.W. 1.

COMING EVENTS.

B.B.C.

Monday, 27th July. 7 p.m. Miss V. Sackville-West, "New Books."
Wednesdays. 22nd July. 10.45 a.m. Miss Lloyd George, "The Week in Westminster."

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

23rd July. 1 p.m. Luncheon at 17 Buckingham Street, Strand.
Mrs. B. Nehru (India), "The Indian Labour Commission Report." Chair:
Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

BRITISH SOCIAL HYGIENE COUNCIL.

29th July-5th August. Summer School, St. Hughes College, Oxford.
Speakers: Professor T. Arthur Thompson, Professor Cyril Burt,
Professor Winifred Cullis, and others. Particulars from Cartaret House,
Cartaret Street, S.W. 1.

SIX POINT GROUP.

23rd July. 6 p.m. 92 Victoria Street, S.W. 1. "What the Equal
Rights Treaty Means—to Married Men and Women," Mrs. Archdale.
Chair: Miss Fraser.

TYPEWRITING.

M. McLACHLAN and N. WHITWAM—
TYPISTS.—4 Chapel Walk, Manchester.
Tel. 3402 City.

MISS HOBBS, 121 Beaufort Street, Chelsea,
S.W. 3.—Typewriting, Shorthand, and
Longhand Service; visiting, with or without
machine; arrangement by correspondence.

TO LET AND WANTED.

WESTMINSTER, near Abbey.—Furnished
Flat to Let; 2 bedrooms, sittingroom,
kitchen, bath; 15th July-15th September.
Tel. 3/3s. or offer.—Box 1642, THE WOMAN'S
LEADER, 4 Great Smith Street, S.W. 1.

TO LET, Furnished Bed-Sittingroom in flat;
pleasant outlook; sunny; near Tavistock
Square.—Box 1,640, THE WOMAN'S LEADER,
4 Great Smith Street, S.W. 1.

KENSINGTON.—Attractive Furnished Flat
to Let; suit two or three professional
women; kitchen, bath; electric light, tele-
phone; 3 minutes tube, bus; rent 2½ guineas.—
Write, 3 Sinclair Gardens.

FREEHOLD Detached Bungalow, £520; main
drainage; company's water, gas; two
bedrooms, two living rooms, bathroom (hot
water); offices; beautiful views.—Jack Cottage,
Newlyn, Penzance.

UNFURNISHED ROOMS for Ladies; one
or two still available in excellently ap-
pointed and well recommended house just
opened; best part St. John's Wood; rents
16s., 20s., and 28s.; telephone; nice garden.—
Box 1,644, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great
Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

LADBROKE GROVE.—Attractively
furnished bed-sittingrooms, with partial
board; good cooking; moderate terms;
Phone, Park 9829 or write, Box 1,645, THE
WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great Smith Street,
S.W. 1.

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Write, Coulson, 80 Oxford Terrace, W. 2.

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equipped; three rooms, kitchen, bath;
£85 per annum.—33 Bath Road, Bedford
Park, W. 4.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION.

COTSWOLDS.—Tudor Guest House;
Picturesque village; good walking centre.
beautiful wooded country.—The Croft, Sheeps-
combe, near Stroud, Glos.

CHATEAU near Limoges.—English girls
anxious to improve their French during the
holidays received by French lady in her country
house; eight bedrooms available; large park
and farm with own produce.—For personal
references apply to Mrs. Rathbone, Greenbank,
Liverpool, or Mrs. Godfrey Warr, 26 Edwardes
Square, Kensington, W. 8.

FRENCH Lady (widow) and three children
(10-15) would like to hear of English family
(seaside or country) where children could board
inexpensively. Mother would help in house
and give lessons in exchange; or can any reader
recommend really cheap lodgings, or offer
suggestions for assisting Mme. C. and children
to have a holiday in England?—Write, Mrs.
Corbett Ashby, c/o, THE WOMAN'S LEADER,
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WENSLEYDALE.—Board - Residence, com-
fortable Georgian house; near Aysgarth
Falls; centre unspoilt scenery; sunny garden,
own vegetables; garage; annexe to let as bed-
sittingroom; motor-coach or rail to Aysgarth.
—Smith, Warnford, Thoraby, Aysgarth, Yorks.

LAKE DISTRICT.—Comfortable; good
cooking; inside sanitation; electric
light; very moderate terms; highly recom-
mended; excellent centre.—Davies, Priory
Boarding House, Cartmel, Grange-over-Sands.

CORNISH COAST.—To let, Furnished Bunga-
low; 8 minutes sandy bay, lovely views;
4 bedrooms, sitting-room, kitchen, bathroom;
6 gns. weekly.—Write, Hawke, Kosikot, St.
Merryn, N. Cornwall.

MISCELLANEOUS.

CAN any reader of THE WOMAN'S LEADER
tell another of some place (either in
England or abroad) where lessons (without
exams.), sports, and intelligent companionship
could be obtained for a daughter aged 16?
Particularly desires to learn German and
swimming. A family possibly, or small school.
Recommendation from personal knowledge
specially valued.—Address, Box 1643, THE
WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Great Smith Street, S.W. 1.

FOR SALE AND WANTED.

SECOND-HAND CLOTHING wanted to buy
for cash; costumes, skirts, boots, under-
clothes, curtains, lounge suits, trousers, and
children's clothing of every description; parcels
sent will be valued and cash sent by return.—
Mrs. Russell, 100 Raby Street, Newcastle-on-
Tyne. (Stamped addressed envelope for reply.)

PROFESSIONAL.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND
ADJUSTED. Consult Miss H. M. Baker,
275 High Holborn, W.C. 1. Income Tax Returns,
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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
WOMEN'S SERVICE, 27 Marsham Street,
Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey,
Members' Library, Centre, and Restaurant.
Bedrooms obtainable at reasonable charges.
Advisory Bureau open to non-members.
Minimum house subscription 10s. 6d. per
annum.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse,
Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 19th
July, 6.30: Maude Royden, C.H., D.D. "Peace
—an Appeal to the Younger Generation."

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