

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### The Franchise Bill.

As we write it is not yet certain whether the Government intend to add to the Franchise Bill clauses disabling persons who have been in receipt of poor law relief from voting for the election of Poor Law Guardians. Earlier rumours that it is proposed to take away the parliamentary and local government votes of such persons are almost certainly false. The present state of affairs is said to be that there is a party in the Cabinet which desires such a change but the Prime Minister thinks that this Bill is not a good occasion for it. If this is in fact his view, we must say that we agree with him. The problem is both difficult and urgent, but we are not yet sure that it can best be met by a simple measure of disfranchisement. In Ireland an enormous improvement has been effected in what was a notoriously corrupt and chaotic system by altering not the franchise, but the method of administration; which is now superintended by centrally appointed commissioners. In view of the belief held in many quarters that the relief of able-bodied adults should be transferred from the local to the central tax-payer—a transference which must involve some curtailment of local freedom in awarding relief—we feel that what is needed is not hasty action, but a thorough inquiry, so that we shall not take so grave a step as the withdrawal of an existing franchise without feeling certain that alternative remedies have not been overlooked.

#### The Suffrage in Northern Ireland.

Lord Craigavon has given a pledge that if the English Government enfranchises all women of 21 and over, he will ask his Parliament to pass a similar measure. This is an additional reason for hoping that the Bill will be taken early in the session. We have been promised a special register for Great Britain in case the measure is not passed in time for the normal register, but this would involve an expenditure which it seems a pity to incur when it might be avoided by a mere adjustment of the Parliamentary time-table.

#### Women's Suffrage in South Africa.

The South African Women's Suffrage Bill, to whose fortunes we referred in our issue of 10th February, has fared better than we dared to hope. Having passed its second reading on 3rd February, by 53 votes to 50, an amendment was carried in committee by the Labour Party to restrict the franchise to European women. This development we fully anticipated. What we did not expect was that the Bill, so amended, would survive the hostility of the Nationalists at Committee stage. But this, in fact, it has done on 17th February. It has thus got further than the huge majority of its ill-fated predecessors. We shall await further news of its progress with interest. That it is a poor sort of a Bill, in its present form, mingling sex discrimination with race discrimination, we cannot deny. But it is doubtless better than nothing.

#### The Policy of the League of Nations Union.

Lord Cushendun, speaking in Parliament, and *The Times*, addressing its readers, have laid it down that a non-party organization such as the League of Nations Union should not press on its members or the country a policy which is known to be unacceptable to the government of the day. Lord Cecil, replying for the Union, has pointed out that governments change, but policy remains; that on the particular point at issue the Union is only reaffirming what it upheld before the government were known to be unfavourable to it, and that to adopt Lord Cushendun's interpretation of their duties would be in fact to debar themselves from consistently pressing any policy at all. Without holding a brief for any particular contention made by the League of Nations Union we, as one of the most successful non-party organizations known to history, feel bound to agree with this rejoinder. Such a society as ours achieves its end not by kow-towing to all governments in turn, but by acting as the independent critic of all of them—by pursuing our object in season and out of season, whether it is acceptable or not to Cabinets, Press, or individual statesmen. If we make concessions we make them for tactical reasons, because we think that we shall be well advised to make them, and so far from holding that we are "acting with impropriety" in attacking a government because it is a government, we have attacked all governments in turn, and if it seemed necessary would joyfully attack them again.

#### Edinburgh Corporation Bill.

Important propaganda among Members of Parliament has been taking place this week both for and against the Edinburgh Corporation Bill. The Edinburgh Corporation itself has circularized all Members of Parliament with a statement many points of which will be criticized and answered by the committee of women's organizations set up by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. A meeting of medical members of the House was held on Tuesday, 21st February, addressed by the Medical Officers of Health for Edinburgh, and a meeting in Parliament against the Bill, called by Dr. Graham Little, Dr. Salter, and Mr. Ernest Brown, is being held on the day we go to press. The Bill was down for its second reading twice last week, on 15th and 17th February, and on each occasion was obstructed. In an important letter to *The Times* on Tuesday, 21st, Dr. Graham Little writes as follows:—

"I submit that the breach of existing regulations occurs when the information is conveyed to any third party, that is, other than patient and treating doctor, and the breach is all the more momentous and indefensible when the patient would be subjected, as he will be by the proposed new regulations, to penal consequences resulting from that betrayal of confidence . . .

"The patient is to be compelled to "undergo treatment" (the nature of which is not specified) until he can produce a medical certificate that he is not suffering from venereal disease. In a disorder in which neither methods of treatment nor tests of cure are stabilized by present knowledge, such a requirement is a medical absurdity as well as a monstrous infringement of individual liberty."

#### The Conscription of Women.

The clause of Mr. Paul Boncour's War Mobilization Bill which deals with the conscription of women appears to have met in the French Senate with the fate which it deserves. On Friday, 17th February, it was finally defeated after fierce attacks from right and left. In the course of discussion General Stihl pointed out that one implication of the forcible requisition of women by their own government might properly be their forcible requisition by an enemy invading force. Be that as it may—the proposal to conscript women in war time is now dead as far as France is concerned. We make no apology to our sex equalitarian conscience for our failure to regret this consummation. We would gladly see the exemption which it embodies extended to men.

### There are Homes . . .

Last week the Manchester Education Committee defeated Mrs. E. D. Simon's motion condemning the dismissal of married women teachers by 12 votes to 6. In the course of a discussion, in which much solicitude was expended upon "the home life of England," reference was made to the "special case" of a woman who had wished to marry a wounded ex-service man for whom she was able and willing to work. A male councillor expressed the opinion that she "ought not to want to marry a man in that condition." It is difficult to imagine that impertinent and irrelevant interference with the home life of a particular class of persons could go much further, and one is tempted to fear, in face of such developments, that "the home life of England" is, indeed, in danger—though from a direction at present unsuspected by twelve members of the Manchester Education Committee. However—last week's defeat merely transfers the battle from the Education Committee to the City Council. It does not end it.

### . . . and Homes.

The Editor of the *National Review*, in his February issue, chronicles the woes of a "valued correspondent." The grievance in question arises from the operation of the Widows Pensions Act. Let him tell it in his own words: "Perhaps the people most hit by the Act are the humble folk, who, not being able to afford servants, have a few hours daily help from a charwoman. They, in many instances, find that the charwoman now lives on her pension and that of her children, and that she is no longer available as she used to be during their school-hours. What we must ask ourselves is what we are aiming at in creating this large new class of non-earners. . . ." Well, well! Here is a quandary. But need we "ask ourselves" for an answer when the Manchester Education Committee so clearly has one? Meanwhile, we suggest that the imposition of a hut tax on the African model might be an efficacious method of dealing with the difficulty. Potential coolies have been extracted from their native reserves by this ingenious economic device; why not potential charwomen from their homes? Or if one could by some means or another inculcate among such women a taste for alcoholic liquor . . .

### Women Health Visitors.

At a conference called last week by the Women Sanitary Inspectors and Health Visitors Association, the conditions of appointment as health visitors were discussed. Mrs. Amy Sayle described these as chaotic in so far as salaries, holidays, sick leave, promotion, and superannuation were concerned. Health visitors were required by the Ministry of Health to undergo a course of training extending over several years, and in many cases the salary after training was as low as £150 a year, with the not unnatural result that the number of women who present themselves for training is small. A resolution was passed asking the Minister of Health to appoint a committee of representatives of local authorities and health visitors to draw up suitable scales of salaries, holidays, and other conditions of service. We should like this inquiry extended. The time has come when the whole question of the recruitment, training, remuneration, and general conditions of those engaged in the public social services of the country should be undertaken.

### Great Britain Please Copy.

On 17th February an announcement in the *Journal Official* conveyed the information that in future women will be allowed to compete in examinations for the French Diplomatic Service. At present they will, however, be subject to the limitation that only home administrative posts will be open to them. Consuls and other members of the Diplomatic Service stationed abroad are liable to act as judges, to conduct marriages, and examine candidates for the army. For these functions women are at present legally ineligible. It is, however, anticipated in some quarters that the step announced on 17th February is a first step only, and that legal changes will shortly be set in motion whose results will extend the scope of women's activities in the French Diplomatic (which includes the Consular) Service. Meanwhile the French Government deserves some congratulation on its first step—one which makes us feel somewhat envious, for in this country only the Home Administrative section of the Civil Service is open to women, and this excludes them from posts at the Foreign Office, which Department falls within the sphere of the Diplomatic Service. Our envy was the more sharply whetted when we learned that one of the principal speakers at a woman's suffrage commemoration dinner in Glasgow on 6th

February had been Miss de la Barra, an able and enterprising young Chilean woman who occupies the very responsible position of Chilean Consul in that great commercial and industrial city. Well—we wish the best of luck to those French women who have applied to take part in the forthcoming examination for the Diplomatic Service. We hope that they are on the threshold of shining careers whose scope will eventually extend far beyond the bureaux of the Quai d'Orsay. It would, by the way be interesting to know whether they are required, like our own women Civil Servants, to pledge themselves to a celibate service.

### The Short Cut to Feminism.

A delegation of the National Women's Party of the U.S.A. has put in an unofficial appearance at the Havana Pan-American Conference, for the purpose of persuading the assembled Powers to adopt a treaty to secure throughout the New World, a complete legal equality of men and women. It will be remembered that for some time past the N.W.P. has been urging the adoption of an Amendment to the U.S.A. constitution, embodying the same principle. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent at Havana considers it "most unlikely that the treaty will be adopted, either by itself or as one clause of a larger agreement." We suspect that he is right. International declarations of this kind have difficult and sometimes unexpected legal implications in particular countries, and desirable as it is that these should be precipitated into the sphere of practical and controversial politics, it is not desirable that very much time and money should be spent in a demand whose likelihood of achievement seems to bear an inverse ratio to the width of its scope. For the advertisement of a new and startling principle such kites may serve their turn. But to-day the cause of feminism involves no new or startling principle.

### Wives.

The one great advantage that a man has over a woman—an advantage which no legislation can remove—is his wife. Every busy woman coming home after a hard day's work must have known what it is to long for a cosy soothing wife. Not merely soothing, no narrow domestic woman, but a helpmate, who would have next day's speech drafted, the morning's letters answered, and those articles which really must be read selected from all the newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines which encumber houses. There is no end to the usefulness of a sound, hard-wearing consort. In fact we are only beginning to realize all she can do for us. It is interesting to note, therefore, that Mr. Walter Runciman has found a new political sphere for wives as such acting purely in their capacity as wives. He intended to change his seat at the next election from Swansea to St. Ives, but the by-election in the latter constituency has upset his plans. Or would have upset them if he had not thought of getting Mrs. Runciman to contest the by-election for him. If she is returned it will be merely as a *locum tenens*, who is to retire in favour of her husband at the general election. She will therefore, it is to be supposed, feel even more bound than a wife would normally feel not to oppose his wishes in any way. In fact, for the remainder of this parliament, Mr. Runciman will virtually enjoy two votes and cast his shoe over two constituencies. It will be an interesting situation should it arise.

### Educational Groups.

Our issue of 20th January contained an article by Mr. R. F. Cholmeley on a burning educational question, that is, whether music, art, needlework, cookery, carpentry, and metalwork shall form a group of subjects (IV) which might be taken as an alternative to one of the present groups of candidates for the First School Examination. To-day we print a valuable comment on Mr. Cholmeley's article from the President of the Head Mistresses' Association, and further, we append this remark of our own, made from the standpoint of mere parents. Why these groups at all? Why should cookery go with metalwork, or painting with music? Why if a child is studying one language is he or she to be forced to study another as well? May not the best choice for some children of so very obvious bent be a sample subject from each group—a science, an art, a foreign language, a craft, etc.—a choice which would assure to them a certain breadth of interest, besides giving them, should particular inclinations develop later, a start in that direction. We are sure that parents would welcome from one of these two great teachers an explanation of the theory of the group system, and some account of its working, for prima facie it would seem to act rather as a hindrance than a help to us in our endeavour to train our children into cultivated and broad-minded citizens,

### THE TRAINING OF UNEMPLOYED WOMEN.

The Minister of Labour, as reported under "Questions in Parliament," has stated that the grant for the training of unemployed women this year will be raised to £60,000, an increase of £10,000 on last year. While we welcome this indication that the Ministry values the work already being done, we would urge that the sum be made still larger if a reasonable proportion of the unemployed women are to receive any benefit from it.

Since 1921 the Government has recognized that training of some sort is valuable for women out of work, and the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment was in that year made responsible for carrying out schemes to be approved by the Minister of Labour. Annual grants of varying amounts have been given for this work by the Ministry which, from time to time, has also imposed certain restrictions.

At present there are only sixteen centres open, two of which are in Scotland, accommodating on an average about thirty students, who must be prepared to enter domestic service on the completion of their course. At all of these centres instruction is given for twelve or thirteen weeks in domestic work, including cooking and needlework, and every effort is made to find places for the women as they finish training. Many consider that at the present time it must be easy to find these girls work, and in some places that is so, almost all the trainees from a few centres being placed, but the average number obtaining domestic employment is only 66 per cent., showing that in many districts there are not the vacancies. In those areas where there is greatest unemployment, the families which might otherwise have been able to employ servants, are no longer able to do so on account of the trade depression.

It might be suggested that the centres should be limited to those areas where there is a real demand for domestic help, or greater facilities should be made for the transference of trainees to those places where work may be found for them. But this would not satisfactorily ameliorate the unemployment conditions in those districts which most require help. It is not every unemployed woman who is fitted to undertake resident domestic service, nor is it always possible for them to leave the district in which they have been working. That there is a demand for training in subjects other than domestic service, and also a demand for training in Home Craft without any requirements about entering domestic employment, was amply proved in the year following July, 1924, when the Government increased the grant to the Central Committee more than four times (£210,000) and the Ministry removed many of the restrictions limiting the conditions for training.

During this year a number of very successful Home Training classes were organized in industrial areas which were enthusiastically attended by older women who hoped to return to their usual

### AN APPEAL TO THE WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

By K. D. COURTNEY.

Every year, indeed almost every month, the question of international arbitration (using these words in their widest sense of the pacific settlement of international disputes), assumes greater political importance, and every year sees an increase in the number of countries which bind themselves by mutual agreement not to go to war with each other.

The year 1928 will be a crucial year in this progress from the rule of anarchy to the rule of law. In this year two arbitration treaties, one between France and the U.S.A. and one between Great Britain and the U.S.A., fall due for renewal. These Treaties, originally concluded in, have been renewed at five years intervals. They are of a very incomplete nature, excluding from their scope as they do matters concerning "honour and vital interests".

Beyond this, 1928 has opened with a remarkable invitation made by Mr. Kellogg, on behalf of the State Department of the U.S.A., for a multilateral Treaty between the U.S. and Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan for the "renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy in favour of the pacific settlement of international disputes".

The situation assumes a special interest, for organized women in Great Britain, as Mrs. Chapman Catt, writing on behalf of a group of nine women's organizations in the U.S.A., whose combined membership numbers many millions, has stated that at a conference of these organizations they have agreed to campaign in the U.S. in support of Mr. Kellogg's proposal, and they have issued an invitation to women's organizations in the countries concerned to carry on a similar campaign. For Great

employment again. Not only were they given something to interest them, but they were enabled to make immediate and practical use of their training in their own homes, and at the sewing classes were taught, for example, how most economically to convert discarded garments into clothes for their children.

These women are barred now from receiving this invaluable help as they cannot undertake to accept resident domestic service. Consequently in many areas where unemployment is worst the women are unprovided for. Incidentally a number of women who entered these courses without any intention of leaving their previous trade voluntarily took up domestic posts when they finished training; and that year the average number who obtained domestic posts after training, in those areas where there had previously been restrictions, was as high as before the removal of the restrictions.

The annual grant since then has been steadily reduced, and we fear that the promised increase of £10,000 for this coming year will not adequately meet the case, for there is no indication that the number of unemployed women is to any appreciable extent reduced. In 1926, the last year for which we have detailed figures, and when the grant available was £63,000, the percentage of unemployed women who received training was only 1.4, while the proportion of men who came under one or other of a number of schemes for the relief of unemployment was about 3.4 per cent.

Since the end of 1925, when schemes specially for ex-Service men were coming to a close, a few large centres have been opened for young unemployed men where they are given instruction for six months either as handymen or as landworkers, these latter being found places in the Dominions. Similar work for women is being done on a very small scale at Market Harboro' where the Central Committee has a centre for training young women in domestic science with a view to their going out to the Dominions. These need not necessarily be unemployed. It would be well if training of a more general character such as the "handyman" courses could be given to women in order that they may be kept employable and made adaptable. There might then be a greater chance of their finding employment. It has been suggested that training in land and dairy work would be suitable for many. At any rate we should very much like to see the restrictions imposed by the Ministry of Labour removed so that the women need not undertake to enter resident domestic service, and authority given to the Central Committee to investigate the need for training in other subjects. We hope, therefore, that the Minister of Labour will grant the request made by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, and receive a deputation representing a number of societies, when the urgency for even larger grants and for the removal of restrictions may be emphasized.

Britain, Mrs. Catt has sent her invitation to the Pilgrimage Committee, which in 1926 united a large group of woman's organizations in a campaign for arbitration.

Before dealing further with Mrs. Catt's invitation and the response to be made to it in this country, it will possibly be convenient briefly to review the events which lead up to Mr. Kellogg's proposal, and to state the position in which affairs stand at the time of going to press. In June last M. Briand proposed to Washington a purely bilateral Franco-American Treaty by which the two nations would pledge themselves as against one another "respectively to renounce war as an instrument of their reciprocal national policy". The specific terms of M. Briand's proposal were not at that time made public, nor did any reply from Mr. Kellogg appear in the Press. At the beginning of January, 1928, however, the following proposal to France made by the Government of the U.S.A. was published:—"The Government of the U.S. is prepared to concert with the Government of France with a view to the conclusion of a Treaty among the principal powers of the world open to signature by all nations condemning war and renouncing it as an instrument of national policy in favour of the pacific settlement of international disputes".

To this M. Briand responded on 11th January by proposing (a) That France and America should lead the way by putting their signatures to any such multilateral pact; and (b) that the renunciation of war should be applied not to war generally, but simply to aggressive war. Mr. Kellogg replied at once that M. Briand's original proposal (of June, 1927) had made

no such qualification or limitation and urged that France should join America in a communication to the British, German, Italian, and Japanese Governments transmitting the text of M. Briand's original proposal and copies of the subsequent correspondence between the Governments of France and of the U.S. for their consideration and comment.

The text of M. Briand's note in reply to this communication from Mr. Kellogg was published on the 22nd January, and is occupied in the main with setting forth the difficulty of making such a Treaty as Mr. Kellogg proposed compatible with the Covenant of the League of Nations. This argument naturally calls forth the comment that it is hard to see why the multilateral Treaty proposed by Mr. Kellogg should be more difficult to reconcile with the obligations undertaken by Members of the League of Nations than would be the bilateral Treaty suggested by M. Briand last year.

It is at this point that the matter now rests:—It is understood, according to *The Times* of the 10th February, "that the State Department of the U.S.A. allow it to be known that Mr. Kellogg will soon resume the discussion with France in the matter of the multilateral Treaty affirming the desire of Great Powers to renounce the resort to war as an instrument of national policy".

Side by side with this exchange of notes between France and the U.S.A., negotiations for the renewal of the Franco-American arbitration Treaty have been taking place, the date for the renewal of this Treaty falling due in February. Its terms may appear any day as the Treaty has already been signed and is only waiting for ratification by the Senate. These terms are of the utmost importance in view of the fact that it will probably serve as a model for the Treaty between Great Britain and the U.S.A. to which Sir Austen Chamberlain referred in his statement on foreign policy made in the debate upon the King's Speech.

It has been necessary to make these points clear, for confusion might easily arise between Mr. Kellogg's proposal for a Treaty renouncing war, and the Arbitration Treaties which fall due for renewal this year.

Mrs. Chapman's Catt's invitation is concerned with the first of these and impresses upon us the epoch making character of Mr. Kellogg's proposal that his country and ours should renounce war as an instrument of international policy in favour of the pacific settlement of international disputes. It is in support of this pronouncement that the women in the U.S. are prepared to campaign. The invitation has come, be it noted, from the Government of the U.S.A. to Great Britain, similarly the intention to support the proposal comes from the women of the U.S.A. to the women of this country.

The Pilgrimage Committee is anxious to make an adequate response to this invitation, and is starting at once to organize an Albert Hall meeting to be held, if possible, in the month of May, to be addressed by American and British speakers. There will not at present be any attempt to organize a series of similar meetings in the country, for it is felt that we can well co-operate with the League of Nations Union which is at present carrying on a great campaign for arbitration and disarmament all over the country. The date of the Albert Hall meeting will be announced later.

The importance of this move on the part of the Government of the U.S.A. cannot be over-estimated, and we must show that the women of this country are ready to respond to it as eagerly as those of the U.S.A.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GROUP IV SUBJECTS IN NATIONAL LIFE.

By L. A. LOWE.

(President of the Association of Head Mistresses.)

The schools of the future will, I believe, owe a great debt of gratitude to Mr. Cholmeley for his foresight and independent judgment in maintaining that the plea of the Association of Head Mistresses for the recognition of Group IV Subjects on an equal footing with those of Groups II and III is a question concerning boys almost as vitally as girls. With the concluding words of Mr. Cholmeley's article of 20th January: "Whatever happens, it is to be hoped that no attempt to make a sex question of it will succeed: of all conceivable compromises that would be the worst"—the head mistresses are in cordial agreement, for they sincerely believe that no alternative examination for girls can meet the case which they put forward last autumn in their Memorandum.

At the Head Masters' Conference, held in December, alternative curricula and alternative examinations for girls were

almost complacently suggested by some speakers as the panacea for all ills, and it was intimated that what girls' education needed was a genius who would do for girls' schools what their own predecessors had done for boys' schools. From this it appeared to readers that head masters were wholly satisfied with the education provided for boys, while head mistresses must attribute their dissatisfaction to the lack of genius among their pioneers. It would be idle to recall the conditions which those enterprising reformers, Miss Emily Davies, Miss Buss, Miss Beale and others found in girls' schools, and the remarkable progress which was made in a few decades by borrowing much of what was, and still is, very good in boys' schools, but even then, at the beginning of the movement, girls' schools had the advantage in breadth and variety, for modern languages, art and music were more than mere "Cinderellas" in the curriculum.

Fortunately for the cause of education, the annual meeting of the Incorporated Association of Head Masters, covering, as Mr. Cholmeley says, a very much wider range of schools than the Conference, gave evidence in January of, dare we say, a "divine discontent" among a majority of those present, and in his article the writer has not only skilfully summed up the situation, but also generously acknowledged that the head mistresses have long and consistently worked for their reform. Consequently their attack cannot be condemned as either sudden or ill-considered. Ten years ago the struggle began with a considerable number of enthusiasts who saw that all was not well with the "Group System," as it affected girls' schools. Since then the movement has gathered force until, in 1927, it was backed by an almost unanimous vote of the whole Association.

It may be asked: Why all this pother about an examination and a group of subjects? Cannot art, music, domestic science, and the crafts be studied with equal or even greater interest without being accorded a full chance in a public examination? The answer is unfortunately "no," and for the following reason: the present conditions of school life are such that the compulsory groups of subjects in an important examination must receive the chief attention of the candidates, nor can it be otherwise. If success in an examination is going to affect the after-career of a candidate, it is only human nature for him (or for her) to put his chief energy into what will secure him his certificate. He may have real talent for art, for music, or for some craft, but he must pass in the language group, for which perhaps he has no ability, and so he strives to attain this bare pass (an achievement of questionable value!) and neglects those subjects in which he really can express himself and develop his own powers.

It has been suggested that Group IV subjects are a soft option. If they are so at present, they need not remain so, but I maintain that for more than one of them, at least, even as they stand at present, serious hard work and concentration, and some talent as well, are necessary.

Again, it has been said that Professional Bodies who have learnt to accept the "First School Examination" because they now realize its standard and scope, will cease to do so. I submit that this is a bogey with very little substance in it, for, like the Universities, Professional Bodies can also insist upon certain subjects—some of them do so to-day—and others, such as art schools, technical firms, etc., may prefer a certificate which indicates that there has been some serious training in an art or a craft.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize the following points: First, as long as the universities require an academic qualification, the large majority of boys and girls will perforce take Groups II and III; moreover, I believe that the large majority will by their own free choice ask to be tested in languages and in mathematics or science.

Secondly, the new movement is not revolutionary, rather is it a natural growth from an older stock. Art and music played a great part in Greek education, a section of which only permeated the great schools that to-day look on these subjects with distrust. Art and the crafts, and to some extent music, were of the very stuff and fibre of an education which produced the glories of the cathedrals and cities and of the church music and folk-song of our own past ages. Is it too much to say that, if the city fathers of the industrial period of the last century had felt that art in its widest sense really mattered, that it was not a mere luxury to be enjoyed by the few, the squalidness of some of the towns and villages which grew up then might have been avoided, and English men and women would not need to feel apologetic for the ugly groups of buildings which spoil many a beautiful countryside?

(Continued at foot of next page.)

### STREET OFFENCES COMMITTEE.

On Friday, 17th February, the Street Offences Committee heard evidence from the Rev. W. C. Roberts, Chairman, and Miss Alison Neilans, Secretary of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene. Miss Neilans, who had sent in evidence on behalf of her own Association and the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, had been asked subsequently to represent also the Women's Freedom League, and St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, so that, as the Chairman himself pointed out, she represented a considerable body of public opinion. The great interest taken in Miss Neilans' evidence is shown in the fact that the hall was crowded out and many of those who had come to hear could not find room. The evidence put forward both by Mr. Roberts and Miss Neilans was based primarily on the points embodied in the Public Places (Order) Bill which, as readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER are well aware, repeals laws specially directed against common prostitutes and lays down that it should be a legal offence for any person to behave riotously or indecently in public places, or to molest or solicit any other person. The Bill requires corroborative evidence of annoyance and any form of obstruction.

Both the witnesses had a long ordeal, as cross-questioning lasted all day. Miss Neilans in particular was before the Committee many hours, and showed herself to be a highly competent witness, well able to deal with all the questions put to her. The point on which she was most closely pressed was the extent to which injustice exists under the present law. Miss Neilans expressed the view that the mere fact that a woman is not brought up at all unless deemed to be a common prostitute is in itself an injustice, and contrary to principles of English law in other departments. When pressed as to whether it would meet the views of those she represented if all classes of persons, men, women who are not and women who are prostitutes, could be treated under the same law for soliciting, Miss Neilans pointed out that whereas sexual intercourse was not a crime, it was not desirable that the invitation thereto should be regarded as one. In emphasizing the need for proof other than police evidence that annoyance has occurred, she met the suggestion of the difficulty of persuading the person annoyed to give evidence, by pointing out that their reluctance would be considerably less if the law were changed so that all obstruction, whether for purposes of soliciting or otherwise, were dealt with under the same heading.

Miss Neilans laid great stress on the need for more women police. She gave it as her view that if only more uniformed police were patrolling the streets known to be frequented by prostitutes, and moved on anyone soliciting, the streets would be cleared up in the most effective way. She pointed out that this work would be better done if the police were women police. She brought no charge of bribery against the men police, but showed that the receipt of presents, etc., in their private capacity could hardly be avoided.

Miss Neilans made it quite plain that those she represented were as much if not more anxious than anyone else for orderly conduct in the streets, but pointed out that she did not think that the evil itself could be combated by legal methods. As the offences themselves of solicitation were unprovable, only injustice could ensue from any attempt to prove them. She showed, moreover, how at present women have no protection against accosting by men, unless they are prepared to come forward themselves to prove the offence.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GROUP IV, etc. (continued from previous page.)

Thirdly, it cannot be too often repeated that we, the supporters of this movement, are not asking for the compulsory inclusion of Group IV subjects. We only want an open door. We believe in breadth, in variety, and in elasticity in the "First Examination," because we feel that the examination should adapt itself to the curriculum; in short, we would see it guide with a light and sensitive hand the many and varied types of pupils in the Secondary Schools.

In pleading for Group IV subjects as subjects of national importance, we are thinking chiefly of the boys and girls themselves, that the examination may give them full scope to develop their individual powers, but we are thinking, too, of their homes and of the cities, towns and villages where they live, which will assuredly benefit when these subjects are recognized to be of as much importance as Latin or French, as Mathematics or Science to the English boy or girl. Surely, Mr. Neville Chamberlain's instructions (in the new manual issued by the Ministry of Health) to local authorities that they shall provide beautiful and harmonious buildings which shall not disfigure the countryside, are a sign that the time is ripe for this step, which we have been advocating, to be taken with courage and conviction.

### LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

The number of women candidates now adopted for election to the London County Council is fifty-seven. As we have already stated in this paper, all the sitting women members, with the exception of Miss Susan Lawrence, are standing for re-election. Many of the new candidates have previously stood. This is the case with Dr. Sophia Jevons, who contested West Marylebone in 1911 as an independent candidate when Miss Susan Lawrence resigned the seat. Although there was only a short time before the poll, Dr. Jevons secured 1,075 votes. She stood again in 1913 as a Progressive candidate for Dulwich, but naturally had no chance of election in a seat that is always held for the Municipal Reformers. For several years Dr. Jevons has been a member of the L.C.C. Education Committee.

In East Fulham Dame Beatrix Lyall, who is standing for the second time for re-election, is opposed to Mrs. Martin—the President of the Women's Free Church Council. It is interesting to recall that Dame Beatrix is a warm supporter of the Mothers' Union, of which she is a former President. During her term of office on the Council she has been an active member of the Housing Committee.

The Labour women candidates include Mrs. A. Salter and Mrs. E. M. Lowe, both of whom are standing for re-election, and whose work for the organization of Labour women and the amelioration of their home and health conditions, is so well known. Mrs. Salter was among the early group of women to secure election to a Metropolitan Borough Council, and has the distinction of being the first woman in London to hold the office of Mayor.

In Central Hackney Miss Adler, Lady Amherst, and Miss A. Sayle are all candidates. Miss Adler was first elected to the Council in 1910, when she and Miss Susan Lawrence were the first two women to be elected after the passing of the enabling Act. Practically from the date of her election Miss Adler served on the Housing Committee and her work to secure better housing conditions will always be remembered in connection with her work as a L.C.C. member. Miss Adler was also one of the prime movers in the initiation of the first Trades' Schools in London, the need for which she had realized through her work in connection with the Wage-Earning Children's Association. Lady Amherst, too, has had experience of county council work, having been a member of the East Sussex County Council. The Labour woman candidate, Miss A. Sayle, is President of the Women Sanitary Inspectors' and Health Visitors' Association, and has written a valuable book on the housing problem.

### COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 1928.

In addition to the names of women candidates already published in THE WOMAN'S LEADER, the following women are standing for re-election to County Councils:—

Buckinghamshire . . . . .	Mrs. Broadbent.
Cambridgeshire . . . . .	Mrs. Marcus Dimsdale.
Merionethshire . . . . .	Mrs. Morgan.
Middlesex . . . . .	Mrs. Baker, J.P.
Northumberland . . . . .	Miss Aitchison.
	Mrs. Middleton, O.B.E.
Sussex, West . . . . .	Mrs. Lintott.
Warwickshire . . . . .	Mrs. Dykes, O.B.E.

Mrs. Robert Simpson, J.P., is standing for the Southgate Middle Division of the Middlesex Council. She is a member of the Edmonton Board of Guardians.

We regret that in our issue of 10th February the names of Miss Ellen Briscoe and Mrs. Mellish Clark, who are standing for re-election to the Cambridgeshire Council, were incorrectly given.

### EQUAL FRANCHISE.

#### "THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY."

During the last few weeks the following Unionist Members of Parliament have signified their support of the Prime Minister's proposals with regard to Equal Franchise:—

Clayton, G. C. . . . .	Widnes.
Dawson, Sir P. . . . .	Lewisham, W.
Gault, Lieut.-Col. A. H. . . . .	Taunton.
Harland, A. . . . .	Ecclesall.
Horlick, Lieut.-Col. J. N. . . . .	Gloucester.
Iliffe, Sir E. . . . .	Tamworth.
Lougher, L. . . . .	Cardiff Central.
Nelson, Sir F. . . . .	Stroud.
Ormsby-Gore, Major Rt. Hon. W. (Govt.) . . . . .	Stafford.
Percy, Rt. Hon. Lord E. (Govt.) . . . . .	Hastings.
Perkins, Col. E. K. . . . .	Southampton.
Wragg, H. . . . .	Belper.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS.

By BERTHA MASON.

## COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

In our article of 3rd February, we drew attention to the importance of asking County Council candidates in districts outside the Metropolitan Police area whether if elected, they would undertake to support:—

(1) The appointment of women police within the county area.

(2) The election of women as members of the Standing Joint Committees.

The latter, as we explained, are responsible for police control in county areas.

We return to the subject to-day for the purpose of submitting to our readers an additional reason for bringing before County Council candidates outside the Metropolitan Police area; the question of the employment of women police, and ascertaining their views in regard to this matter. The reason is this.

A proposal has recently been submitted to the Royal Commission on Local Government now sitting, by the Home Office, that there shall no longer be a separate police force in any borough including county boroughs with a population below 75,000, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

This recommendation has received the warm support of the County Councils Association in its comprehensive memorandum of evidence presented to the Royal Commission.

The proposal, judging by the protests which are being evoked in various parts of the country, does not seem to be as popular with boroughs which are satisfactorily maintaining (and there are many such) their own police forces, as with County Councils. But that is another story concerning which we shall have more to say later.

The point to which we ask the attention of our readers at the moment is the effect of the Home Office proposal on the employment of women police. Will the proposal advance or retard the employment of women police? That is the question.

So far as we can see, the proposal of the Home Office, if accepted by local authorities, will not promote the employment of a greater number of women police. Up to the present time more understanding of, and sympathy with the movement for women police has been shown by borough authorities than by the Standing Joint Committee and those responsible for police control in county areas. There are various reasons for this, one being, possibly, that the Councils which appoint the Watch Committee in boroughs are popularly elected bodies. But be this as it may, the fact remains that up to the present time the movement for women police is viewed with more favour by borough authorities than by those responsible for police control in county areas.

As pointed out in our last issue, only in six counties are women police employed.

It would seem therefore that the proposal put forward by the Home Office and supported by the County Councils Association, of transferring the control of the police from boroughs now maintaining their own police force and acting through "Watch" Committees, to Standing Joint Committees of counties will not be advantageous to the employment of women police.

The opinion we put forward was endorsed by Commandant Allen in a recent conversation with the writer, in which she (Commandant Allen) pointed out that another recommendation of the Home Office for a reduction in the police force of the country would, if carried out, be a further obstacle to the appointment of women police, for to appoint women and at the same time to reduce the male force would be an unsatisfactory method of procedure from the standpoint of efficiency. As a matter of fact we cannot imagine that such a step would be taken!

The proposals to reduce the police force and to absorb borough forces in county forces are, however, before the Royal Commission, whether they will be accepted remains to be seen. But it is well to bear in mind that strange things do happen unless public opinion is alert, and in view of the fact it is extremely important that the views of candidates now in the field should be ascertained in regard to the employment of women police, and the appointment of women members of Standing Joint Committees.

(Continued on next page.)

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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

## ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING.

7th, 8th, 9th, 10th March, at King George's Hall, Central Y.M.C.A.

First Session.—Wednesday, 7th March, from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. Please note the time of this session has been altered, and is now as above.

Reception.—The reception, 7th March, at 8.45 at King's College for Women, Camden Town Road, W. 8 (by kind permission of the House Committee). Tickets for this reception are much in demand, and visitors who wish for tickets should apply as soon as possible (price 2s. 6d. each). Miss Margaret Walker, F.R.S.C.O., whom we previously announced as Miss Margaret Layton (she is the same person!) and Miss Irene Sairbourne will give a recital.

Public Luncheon, Friday, 9th March, at 1 p.m., at the Criterion Restaurant, Piccadilly. The speakers at the luncheon will be Mr. Walter T. Layton, C.H., Sir Robert Newman, M.P., and Mrs. Philip Snowden. Tickets for the luncheon, price 5s. to members of the N.U.S.E.C. and their affiliated Societies, and 7s. 6d. to non-members, can be obtained on application to Headquarters.

## UNITED FRANCHISE DEMONSTRATION.

Queen's Hall, Thursday, 8th March, 8 p.m.

Tickets.—We hope it may be found possible to find room in the Queen's Hall for a few more applicants, but we earnestly appeal to all who apply after this date to accept tickets for the Mortimer Hall overflow, if the Queen's Hall is impossible. Sir Oliver Lodge is among those who has very definitely consented to speak at the overflow, and there is every prospect of the overflow being a splendid and enthusiastic gathering. Please note: No seats can be kept vacant after 8.5 p.m.

Stewards.—A rehearsal for stewards who are able to attend, will be held at the Queen's Hall on Saturday, 3rd March, at 5 p.m. Entrance to Hall by door No. 15, Riding House Street.

Community Singing.—Mr. Martin Shaw has kindly consented to conduct a final practice of the songs in the Main Hall of the Guildhouse, Eccleston Square (four minutes from Victoria) on Saturday, 3rd March, at 7 p.m. It is earnestly hoped that secretaries of organizations co-operating in the Demonstration will do their utmost to urge their members to attend.

Decorations.—Evergreens are urgently needed. It would be greatly appreciated if members and friends of the N.U.S.E.C. living in the country would send gifts of evergreens as soon as possible to Miss Auld, c/o Messrs. Gaunt and Jarrold, 34 Marsham Street, London, S.W. 1.

Societies who have not yet sent banners are asked to do so at once, and in no case later than 3rd March to the same address. All particulars from Miss Auld, 15 Dean's Yard, S.W. 1.

## EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL.

A conference of Members of Parliament organized by the N.U.S.E.C., on behalf of the Edinburgh Corporation Bill Committee, has been called in the names of Dr. Graham Little, Mr. Ernest Brown, and Dr. A. Salter, and will be held at the House of Commons on Wednesday, 22nd February. The arguments against compulsory treatment of persons suffering from venereal disease will be given by Dr. Graham Little, Mr. Pethick Lawrence and others. The Members will be urged to oppose the Edinburgh Corporation Bill which gives power to the Medical Officer of Health for Edinburgh to enforce by legal action, if necessary, treatment of such persons at special centres.

## MIDDLESBROUGH BY-ELECTION.

Copies of the questionnaire have also been sent to the three candidates at the Middlesbrough By-election, and we hope to have the replies in time for publication next week.

## SUMMER SCHOOL.

A sub-committee has been appointed by the Executive Committee to deal with the preparations for the Summer School, which will be held this year at St. Hilda's Hall, Oxford, for the week 4th to 11th September. The preliminary programme will be ready for publication very shortly.

## ST. IVES BY-ELECTION.

Copies of the N.U.S.E.C. questionnaire have been sent to the three candidates at the St. Ives By-election, in which we are particularly interested on account of Mrs. Runciman's candidature. No answer has as yet been received to the questionnaire. Mrs. Runciman writes she cannot make use of non-party help.

## STREET OFFENCES COMMITTEE.

Evidence was given before the Street Offences Committee on behalf of the N.U.S.E.C. by Miss Neilans, Secretary of the A.M.S.H. on Friday last, 17th February. A report of this is published elsewhere.

## REPORT OF THE I.A.W.S.E.C. PEACE CONFERENCE.

A full report of the Amsterdam Peace Conference, held last November, under the auspices of the Committee for Peace and the League of Nations of the I.A.W.S.E.C. is now ready. The resolutions are given in English, German, and French, and the speeches are given in full in the language in which they were made, with summaries in the other two languages. The whole report, which contains much interesting matter, can be obtained from the I.A.W.S.E.C. Headquarters at 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W. 1, price 2s. 6d.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## "MARRIAGE."

MADAM.—In the remarks made in last week's WOMAN'S LEADER with regard to Signor Mussolini's contemplated introduction of compulsory eugenics, I was surprised to see marriage referred to as a human institution. It is, of all things on earth, a divine institution; and it is only because man has desecrated it that "most difficult" can be applied to it. If men were taught its duties and limitations, the difficulties and problems that confront governments and society to-day would be solved.  
Lynn. (MRS.) E. A. RENNY.

## THE EDITH CAVELL FILM.

MADAM.—I had some difficulty in seeing the point of the analogy drawn in your editorial paragraph on the Edith Cavell film (in the last issue of THE WOMAN'S LEADER), between the public outcry against the proposal to put "Mrs. Warren's Profession" on the stage, and the "semi-official opposition" to the exhibition of the Cavell film. Your reference to Mr. Bernard Shaw's ironical observation in regard to the former seems, however, to indicate the character of hypocrisy as common to two cases. For Mr. Shaw's opinion, with which you evidently agree, charges the British public with readiness to greet vice with a cheer at one moment, and to revolt against it at another when presented seriously in a realistic way such as would be likely to bring home the evil to those who were in earnest in the cause of virtue. The question whether there is justification for this opinion of the British public may be passed by. From the point of view of the paragraph it is perhaps not very relevant, as in the case of the Edith Cavell film you do not refer to the public but to "semi-official" opposition.

There is, however, another important difference between the two cases, viz. between the opposition to a serious presentation of vice on the stage, following on the welcome accorded to frivolous presentations of vice by musical comedy and the opposition to the Edith Cavell film, together with approval of some other war films. And this difference is highly relevant to the question of hypocrisy.

We are "solemnly" told, you say, that the Edith Cavell film is in a different category from the other war films. The word "solemnly" here suggests affectation and falls in with the notion of hypocrisy. But why is it thought to be in a different category? Surely the treatment of this matter in the paragraph wholly overlooks the essential actualities. The present opposition whether "semi-official" or proceeding from members of the ordinary public—and it seems to be of both kinds—is based on the view that whilst the other war films do not tend to recall or re-voke the bitter feelings and passions of war time, or only in a very minor degree, the subject of the Edith Cavell film is peculiarly fitted to excite intense emotion of this kind. Rightly or wrongly large numbers of English and Belgians held this event to be one of those in which the Germany of the war time most outraged their feelings in regard to war between civilized nations. It may be argued that there were worse acts, perhaps on both sides. But this is a question of actual psychological factors and the effect. The presentation of battle scenes with all the incidents which necessarily accompany modern warfare does appear to be in a very different category from this point of view, and this is the vital point. There need be no hypocrisy in countenancing the one and discountenancing the other. The revival of the subject of Edith Cavell's life and death at the present moment in a vivid way might be in its degree a factor unfavourable to the process of reconciliation. Naturally THE WOMAN'S LEADER takes the view that more stress should not be laid upon the shooting of a woman in such circumstances than upon that of a man. But can it be said yet that this is the usual attitude amongst the mass of cinema frequenters?

The expression in the editorial paragraph—"a little diplomatic friction" seems a strange misreading of the chief grounds of the objection. Would it not be better if those who deplore the presentation of any war films should take the opportunity of supporting the opposition. To one which might prove an extreme example of the dangers of such exhibitions, rather than make it an occasion for a little dissertation on inconsistency, if not hypocrisy, whether displayed (ex hypothesi) in high places, or by some of our fellow citizens?

King's College,  
London.

HILDA D. OAKLEY.

## QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT (GRANT).

Mr. Batey asked the Minister of Labour whether he is making a grant this next financial year to the Central Committee of Women's Employment; and, if so, the amount of the grant?

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: I am glad to say arrangements have been made to give the Central Committee next year a grant of £60,000.

Mr. T. Williams: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how that compares with the grant to the same Committee in 1924?

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: No, I cannot say as to 1924. As regards last year, it is an increase of £10,000, this increase being made specially for the purpose of giving additional help in mining areas.

## CHILDREN ACT.

Viscountess Astor asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if it is proposed to introduce during the present Session a new Children Bill to amend the Children Act of 1908?

The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Lieut.-Colonel Sir Vivian Henderson): My right hon. Friend much regrets that owing to the pressure of Parliamentary business, it will not be possible for him to introduce a Children Bill this Session.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS. (Continued from page 22.)

## ELECTIONS FOR COUNTY COUNCILS, 1ST TO 8TH MARCH.

We draw attention to the lists in another column, of women candidates for County Councils. In a fortnight from to-day polling will have taken place, and the new Councils, which will serve for three years, will be elected. We appeal to our readers to do all in their power in the few days which remain between now and 8th March (which is the last day for polling) to bring before electors the importance of securing suitable women as members of County Councils. To ensure this, women electors must go to the polling booth on the appointed day and vote.

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## COMING EVENTS.

## BONCHURCH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

MARCH 7. 3 p.m. Friendly Societies Hall, Ventnor. Miss Berry, "Poor Law Reform."

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

East Croydon W.C.A. FEB. 20. 3 p.m. Eldon House, Wellesley Road. Mrs. Abbott, "The Responsibility of the Vote."

Edinburgh W.C.A. FEB. 27. 7.30 p.m. Royal Arch Hall, 76 Queen Street. Reception to Women elected to local boards in the city. Music and speeches.

FEB. 28. 5.15 p.m. 27 Rutland Street. Study Circle Lecture. D. M'Nally, Esq., "Between School and Full Employment."

Preston W.C.A. MARCH 5. 7.30 p.m. Orient Cafe, Friargate. J. Openshaw, Esq., J.P., "The Young Offender."

## SIX POINT GROUP.

FEB. 28. 5 p.m. 92 Victoria Street. Miss Beesley, "Women in Insurance." Chair: Mrs. Hoster.

## SOCIETY OF FRIENDS PEACE COMMITTEE.

FEB. 29. 8 p.m. Meeting House, Euston Road. Public Meeting on the Outlawry of War. Speakers: Prof. Gilbert Murray, Prof. Noel Baker. Chair: Lord Parmoor.

MARCH 8. 8 p.m. Queen's Hall. Great United Equal Franchise Demonstration. Speakers include the Prime Minister, Sir Oliver Lodge, Miss Rebecca West, and many others. OVERFLOW MEETING in MORTIMER HALL (close by) at 8 p.m. Chair, Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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ster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Members' Library,  
Books on Suffrage, Sociology and Economics, Hansard, latest  
Government Publications, Periodicals, Newscuttings. 10-8  
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EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall  
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