

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### Closing Days of the Parliamentary Session.

As we go to press the Contributory Pensions Bill comes up for its second reading in the House of Lords. Some minor concessions in its final stages in the House of Commons were made with regard to the payment of double pensions to the dependents of ex-Service men. The Bill will be coming up for its second reading this week in the House of Lords, but it is unlikely, owing to its being a Money Bill, and to the rapidly approaching end of the session and that any alteration of importance will be made. The House of Lords has agreed with the Commons amendments to delete the Furniture Amendment, though there was no indication that the Home Office had consulted with the magistrates again on the point, as Mr. Locker-Lampson had undertaken to do during the debate on this clause the week before in the House of Commons. Lord Askwith announced the intention of those interested in this reform to return to the charge at a later date. The Married Women Torts' Bill has passed through its third reading in the House of Lords and will doubtless be coming up in the Commons next week. The Lead Paint (Protection Against Poisoning) Bill may be coming up after it one night this week.

#### The Unsocial Socialists.

On 24th July the Belgian Chamber passed an amendment referring to a Commission the question of whether or no women shall vote at the forthcoming provincial elections. This decision, which counts as a setback to women's suffrage, was reached by 81 to 74 votes, the Catholics supporting the right of women to vote, the Liberals and Socialists combining to secure the shelving of the question, the Government nominally leaving its supporters free to vote as they pleased. We are glad to note, however, that this infamous betrayal on the part of M. Vandervelde's Government, which has been pledged, as a party, to the support of women's suffrage since 1921, was not accomplished without a lively passage of arms involving the suspension of one sitting. Upon the attitude, with regard to this matter, of the Belgian Socialist Government, we have already commented. We perfectly understand, though we in no way sympathize with, their cowardly and opportunist line of action. With the attitude of the Liberals we are also wholly familiar; for did not a Liberal Administration in this country violate its own principles in precisely the same manner and with even less tactical excuse?

#### Equal Pay for Equal Work.

Last week the Education Committee of the L.C.C. discussed the new Burnham Award, ultimately adopting the recommendation of the Teaching Staff Sub-Committee that it be accepted and applied to L.C.C. teachers. Our readers will remember that this award involves a slight but ingeniously adjusted aggregate reduction of salaries, falling proportionately more heavily on the women and thus tending to accentuate the existing inequality between the remuneration of men's and women's services. In the course of the discussion Miss Dawson, speaking for the women teachers, called attention to their continuing discontent with this inequitable and indefensible distinction. Mr. Bowie, speaking for the men, declared that the male salaries, also owing to the miserable smallness of their increments, were not being accepted with anything like resignation. With Miss Dawson's complaint we are in hearty sympathy. It is wholly unjust that a woman teacher should receive less than her male colleague who is doing precisely the same work, merely because she is a woman. If she received less than a man with a dependent family because her needs were less, there would be some social sense in it—provided that in the event of her having herself to support a family, she received more than a childless man.

#### Adopted Children.

The second report of the Child Adoption Committee which has just been issued consists of a draft Bill embodying the recommendations of the interim report which was referred to in our issue of 22nd May. Our readers will remember that there were two Adoption Bills before the country this session, the smaller of which was brought up for its second reading recently. The debate was at that time adjourned to await the report of the Committee, of which two women, the Duchess of Atholl and Miss Jewson, were members, and the Government promised to introduce legislation during the lifetime of the present Parliament. The draft Bill contained in the report gives power to Courts to make Adoption Orders with certain exceptions. In this connection it must be noted that Mr. Chamberlain intentionally excluded adopted children from the benefits of the Pensions Bill on the ground that the adoption of children is not at present legalized. If this state of affairs were remedied it would not be a difficult matter to bring them later within the scope of the Bill. We hope to deal more fully with the recommendations of the Committee in a forthcoming issue in view of the promise of the Government to proceed to legislation after the reception of the final report. In reply to a question by Sir Geoffrey Butler on Monday of this week the Home Secretary refused to make any statement at present as to the Government's intentions. The subject has received the consideration of no fewer than three special committees; surely the time is now ripe for action.

#### Liberalism's Forward Policy.

The Liberal Summer School Executive Committee has taken a step which will commend itself to all serious students of politics. There are certain practical applications of the Liberal faith about which Liberals are, so the *Manchester Guardian* tells us, agreed. They are agreed on the question of Free Trade, the Taxation of Land Values and (though it is a pity they did not discover their agreement when a Liberal Government was in power) electoral reform. But there are certain other questions on which they are not agreed, and which they have not yet, as a party, fully explored. These are family endowment, prohibition, the laws of inheritances, the policy of trade unions, and birth control. The Summer School executive has therefore set up five Commissions to deal severally with these subjects, take evidence, circulate questionnaires to Liberal Organizations,

and prepare reports to be presented to the summer school of 1926. We shall follow with special interest the work of those Commissions which deal with family endowment and birth control, and we will not conceal from our readers our belief that Liberal principles point clearly to acceptance of the former as an equitable basis for wage payment under existing conditions and to the inclusion of the latter among the legitimate activities of grant-aided maternity centres.

#### Parliament and Family Allowances.

The crisis in the mining industry was the occasion for the calling together of a conference in the House of Commons on Monday, 27th inst., by the three Presidents of the Family Endowment Society—Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir Henry Slessor, and Professor Gilbert Murray. Unlike the general run of conferences called by outside organisations and in startling contradistinction to an earlier conference on the same subject, the room was filled to overflowing by members of all parties, an interesting indication of the progress made by the Family Allowance movement in the last two years. The speakers included Miss Rathbone, Sir Henry Slessor, Mr. Ramsay Muir, and Mr. Hunter (of the *New Leader*). Lord Askwith was breaking a lance in the House of Lords over the Summary Jurisdiction Bill, and was unable to be present, though billed to speak. The hearing of proposals for family allowances in the present dispute in the coal industry and the success of the adoption of such schemes in the industry on the Continent were shown. We shall be returning to this subject next week.

#### The Autumn Registers.—Act at once.

Women who are qualified as voters should make sure that their names are on the new lists of electors for the Autumn Register. These lists are now published, and can be inspected at the Municipal Offices, Public Libraries, the principal post offices in the area, and at church doors, etc. Should a name be omitted from the electors' lists or incorrectly described, application should be made without delay to the Registration Offices of the area (in London the Clerk to the Borough Council) for a claim form, which must be sent in by or before *Monday, 10th August, which is the last day for making a claim to amend the list.* The Autumn Register will come into force on 15th October, and it is on *this Register* that the elections for *Town and Metropolitan Borough Councils* will be fought.

#### Oakum Picking in Casual Wards Abolished.

On 5th June we drew attention to the new Casual Poor (Relief) Order, 1925, which came into operation on 1st May, and welcomed the provisions for the improvement of the conditions which are in force in the casual wards of institutions under the control of Boards of Guardians. At the same time we entered a strong protest against the retention of the useless and undesirable oakum picking task as one of the authorized tasks in casual wards, and expressed the view that a strong expression of public opinion in regard to the futility and soul-deadening effect of oakum picking, coupled with a demand for the repeal of the oakum picking provision of the 1925 Order, sent to the Government and to M.P.s, would have the result we desired, especially as the Minister of Health himself, in the House of Commons on 14th May, had in reply to a question expressed doubt as to the wisdom of retaining the provision. We now report with great satisfaction the issue on July 2nd by the Ministry of Health of a circular *abolishing the oakum task in casual wards* and making other improvements in the Casual Poor (Relief) Order, 1925. One of the immediate effects of the circular of 2nd July, is to be seen in the decision of the Metropolitan Asylums Board at their meeting last week, to replace oakum-picking by wood-sawing, wood chopping, and wood bundling. We believe that the example set will be quickly followed by Boards of Guardians in places where oakum picking still prevails. Our warm thanks are due not only to the Minister of Health, but to the many friends—notably Miss Wilkinson, M.P., and Mr. Theodore Dodd, J.P., of Oxford, who in and outside Parliament have laboured hard to secure the abolition of a futile and degrading task.

#### The Consultative Committee.

We congratulate the Consultative Committee of women's organizations on its fourth birthday. At the annual meeting on 7th July the present officers were re-elected, Lady Astor President, Mrs. Wintringham Vice-President, Lady Galway as Chairman, Mrs. Corbett Ashby as Vice-Chairman, and Mrs. de l'Hopital as Hon. Treasurer. There are now 65 organizations represented on the Committee and a useful year of work was

reported, after which Mr. S. W. Harris, of the Home Office, gave an interesting address on the work of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and the Protection of Children.

#### The Duchess of Atholl, the League, and Women's Organisations.

On Friday, 24th, the Duchess of Atholl met representatives of Women's Organisations at a conference convened by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, in order that they might have an opportunity of laying their views before her on the matters specially affecting their work which would be coming before the Assembly of the League in September. Miss D'Alberti, of the Committee on the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, spoke on the need for women on the Slavery Commission and on the Permanent Mandates Commission. Dr. Helen Wilson, of the Association of Social and Moral Hygiene, spoke on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children; Miss Eleanor Rathbone (N.U.S.E.C.) spoke on the work of the Committee on Child Welfare, which she is an assessor representing International Women's Organisations, and Dr. Hilda Clark, of the Women's International League, referred to the demand that the country should agree to compulsory arbitration of disputes (other than those it specially reserved) by the International Court. The conference felt that the matters it had at heart would be given careful and sympathetic consideration by our woman representative.

#### A New Recruit for the Food Council.

Mrs. B. M. Drapper, of Deptford, has been appointed by the Prime Minister as a member of the Food Council whose business it will be to protect the consumer on the lines laid down in the recent interim report of the Royal Commission on Food Prices. Mrs. Drapper is Chairman of the Greenwich Board of Guardians, a member of the Deptford Borough Council, Chairman of its Public Health Committee, and a London J.P. She is also a social worker of long standing. We do not congratulate her upon the burdensome and intricately difficult task which has been thrust upon her; but we do congratulate the Food Council upon the acquisition of a member whose experience suggests ability to reflect the point of view of a very inarticulate member of the community: the ordinary woman in the ordinary home, who spends her life administering a small income in the purchase of necessary things.

#### A Second Woman on the Food Council.

As we go to press we see in the complete list of the members of the Food Council, published to-day, that Mrs. Drapper is to be reinforced by a second woman member, Mrs. Ada Wilson. Mrs. Wilson, who gave evidence before the Royal Commission, is the wife of a plumber on the railway, and will ably represent the point of view of the working class housewife. Space will not allow us to discuss the published terms of reference of this important new body, but our readers are referred to our issues of 28th November, 5th December, 1924, and 15th May, 1925. Housekeepers will note with satisfaction that the supply and prices of flour, bread, meat, bacon, ham, milk, butter, cheese, eggs, fish, fruit, vegetables, sugar, and tea are selected as articles of general consumption requiring special investigation. The transactions of this Council cannot fail to be closely watched by the public, and we hope to return to this subject from time to time in forthcoming issues.

#### A Glaring Example of Sex Inequality!

Among our Press-cuttings this week was one entitled "A Sunday at Margate," extracted from the *British Weekly* of 23rd July. At first sight we saw no connexion between the contents of the article and the objects for which this paper stands until we reached some ominous lines. In a well-attended Baptist Church large numbers of children from local institutions filled the galleries. The boys were all allowed to leave before the sermon, but the girls remained until the end of the service. The writer asks if there is no society for equal citizenship in Margate to protest against this inequality! But perhaps the girls remained because they wanted to, or perhaps the incident is really a tribute to the keener intelligence of girls.

#### Votes and Responsibilities.

While the question of Votes for Women in Belgium is still *sub judice* women are not standing still. We read in *The Times* that a woman has been for the first time appointed Burgomaster at a commune named Waillet in the neighbourhood of Dinant.

## FOUNDATIONS AND TOP STORIES.

Our minds have been so full of the new proposals with regard to social insurance contained in the Contributory Pensions Bill, that we have perhaps somewhat neglected to take full advantage of the opportunities for trying to overhaul and to fill in the gaps in our present Health Insurance System offered by the Royal Commission on National Health Insurance, which is still sitting though at present in recess. So far as we are aware, the only Women's Organisations giving evidence are the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations and the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. There is still time, however, when the Commission resumes its sittings in October for written memoranda and fresh evidence to be considered.

It was, in the opinion of many, a somewhat topsy-turvy arrangement for the Pensions Bill to have been superimposed on the National Health Insurance Act at the very time the foundations of the former were being examined. It is somewhat as if proposals were being put forward at this moment to build an additional dome on St. Paul's Cathedral or to increase the traffic passing over Waterloo Bridge. Should a free public health service be substituted for the insurance scheme which—but for the maternity benefit—covers wage-earners only, i.e., rather over 30 per cent. of the population? Should the approved societies, with their overlapping, their heavy administrative expenses, and, in all too many cases, their incompetence, be allowed not only to maintain their vested interest in the present insurance schemes but to add to them the enormous weight of widows', orphans', and old age pensions as well? We do not envy the Royal Commission its task; it is never encouraging to suggest changes which clearly have no chance of being adopted, or to put forward arguments on a matter which is *chose jugée*. No radical overhauling of our present national health legislation is therefore to be expected, but nevertheless certain important improvements in the present administration may be looked for.

What are the points then which most closely concern our readers? First, we ask that provision should be made for giving allowances on behalf of the wives and children when the husband or father is unable to carry on his employment owing to ill-health. In the same way as allowances are paid on behalf of the dependents of those unemployed, for any other reason, so should they be paid to the dependents of workers unemployed on account of sickness. The family expenses are obviously greater when there is the need for extra nourishment that sickness brings than when the bread-

winner is unemployed for other reasons. Yet the sick benefit to the worker himself is lower than the unemployed benefit. The knowledge that his family is in need is not going to hasten the convalescence of the sick man, and the lack of provision for his family at such times does not give that sense of security against unavoidable trouble, which a National Insurance Scheme claims to provide.

Secondly, we demand that provision should be made for giving medical benefits to the wives and children of insured persons. The giving of these benefits is a crying need to-day in view of the fact that the facilities for medical treatment for working women and (in all but the minor diseases which are dealt with at school and welfare clinics) their children, are notoriously inadequate—especially in the smaller towns and country districts. The married working woman, with her fear of piling up household expenses usually fails to seek medical assistance until after a great deal of avoidable suffering has taken place and diseases, preventable in their early stages, have taken a strong hold. The whole question of maternity benefit needs close attention from the point of view of its relation to the heavy rate of maternal mortality, with which we have dealt repeatedly in these columns. Some improvement is clearly essential—though whether this should take the form of an increased benefit, or the provision of improved medical and nursing services, we are not prepared to say. Lastly we come to the position of that pariah of all insured persons—the married woman. She is not allowed under the present Act to become a voluntary contributor. Why forsooth? Because, we are told, it is difficult to detect whether she is or is not really ill. Is she to receive sickness benefit on account of her being too ill to carry on her household task, if she struggles up to give the children their breakfast and to bath the baby? A difficulty, truly! But what about the hawker who may take his barrow out for an hour undetected or the unmarried sister housekeeping for her brother who carries on her household tasks? Clearly the responsibility for deciding about the benefit must rest with the doctor, and the married woman must be treated as other insured persons, and allowed to reap the benefit of her contributions by being allowed to become a voluntary contributor.

These and many other matters we commend to our readers, and ask them to bring their influence to bear on the Royal Commission while there is yet time.

## TWO SPRING VISITS TO PALESTINE, 1921, 1922.

By MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT, G.B.E., J.P., LL.D.

### CHAPTER XXVII.—WHAT OF THE FUTURE? (*Final article.*)

We were constantly struck during this visit by the very great mental capacity of the Syrians, whether Arab, Jew, or Christian. We were impressed on both our visits by the able men we met, several of them members of the Administration, and numbers of others in private positions, many of whom had been educated at the American College at Beirut. But of course I recognize the small value of such impressions of mere casual tourists. I have therefore the more pleasure in quoting the opinion on this point of the great traveller, Sir Richard Burton. It will be remembered that he was British Consul at Damascus for several years and that he had had from his boyhood unusual opportunities of comparing different races with one another as well as sympathy with the Arabs as a race, and this is what he says about the natives of Syria:

"There is literally no limit that can be laid down to the mother wit, the ambition, the intellectual capabilities of Syria's sons. They are the most gifted race I have as yet ever seen, and when the curse shall have left the country—not the bane of superstition, but the bane and plague-spot of bad rule—it will again rise to a position not unworthy of the days when it gave to the world a poetry and a religion still unforgetten by our highest civilizations"; and he continues: "A long and happy life should be still before it. The ruined heaps show what it has been. . . . It will become another Egypt of a superior climate and a far nobler race of men."

The identity of race between Syrians, whether Jew, Moslem or Christian, is another hopeful element in the situation. There is no danger of forgetting that brothers may be bitter enemies, such as Cain and Abel, or Esau and Jacob: still there is a bond of sympathy between members of the same race and a possibility of mutual understanding which tends to bridge over differences. In the case of Esau and Jacob the more generous part of the

bridging was done by Esau (see *Genesis*, Chap. xxxiii). According to their own traditions Jews and Arabs are all descended from Abraham, the former through Jacob, the latter through Esau: there are also no doubt Syrians who are descended from the Canaanites, Hittites, Jebusites, etc., whom the children of Israel failed to exterminate or drive out. But these differences should not prevent their ultimately forming a united Nation if they have the will that this should be. There is a great difference of race, appearance, language, and manners, between the Highlanders and Lowlanders of Scotland; also between the Celts of Wales and Cornwall and the inhabitants of Kent and Sussex, but these differences have only added to the strength and vitality of the nation they have united to make. The rash expression of one of the Zionist leaders that he hoped to see "Palestine as Jewish as England is English" was in essentials extremely harmless if looked upon with eyes opened by a little study of history. England is English because it has had the political instinct of unity and the sense to see that the forces of union for the various races inhabiting our small island were stronger than the forces of separation. For England comprises many different racial elements: Roman, Phœnician, Spanish, Norman, Dane, Saxon, Flemish, French, Huguenot, and Celt. All these have had their share in making England English. It would be better for the Jews in Palestine to aim at making Palestine Palestinian, than at making it Jewish: but understood in the sense I have first indicated it is merely an intelligent political anticipation. The name is in fact already selected: the political name of the Holy Land is not Jewry but Palestine, and this we are told is derived from the aboriginal inhabitants of the country before the Children of Israel, whether Jew, Christian, or Moslem, arrived in it or had come into existence as a political community in any way. Disraeli with his quick eye for race and with all importance he attached to it, could see no difference in blood between the Jew and Arab of Palestine; both are

Semites, and "the Arabs are only Jews on horseback" (*Tancred*, Book IV, Chap. iii). But "Syria was a great country when France and England were forests" (Book IV, Chap. ii).

What then are the chief assets of Palestine at the present moment? They are, to recapitulate, first of all, the substitution of an honest and able administration in which all the chief races of the country are taking part for the old corrupt and corrupting Turkish rule: the spread of education and the real demand for it among Moslems as well as among Christians and Jews: the very great natural mental capacity of Palestinians: the identity of race between the most important sections of the population. Now that the Mandate has been confirmed, the Government of Palestine will have the power of raising a loan and will therefore be enabled to promote the material and moral development of the country more rapidly than heretofore. Up to the present a large proportion of this very important work has been in the hands of private persons and religious communities, among whom the Jews stand out pre-eminently for generosity and broad-minded intelligence: but it is, to say the least, very desirable that the Government should be able to take its share in this great work. Under better conditions, is it not reasonable to hope and expect that the venomous hostility of a section of the Arab population against their cousins the Jews will be placated? Those who have seen them working together are convinced of the possibility of their reconciliation. Col. Patterson, who raised "the Judeans" during the war, writes "that Jewish troops garrisoned a very large slice of Palestine for over a year after the close of operations, and lived in small groups scattered about the country in Arab villages and Bedouin camps. There was never the slightest friction between the cousins." (See *The Times*, 21st May, 1921.)

And Mr. L. Stein, Secretary of the Zionist Organization in London, in an article in *HEADWAY* (the Organ of the League of Nations Union, of January, 1922), cites case after case within his recent experience of Christians, Jews, and Arabs working cordially and successfully together in the gendarmerie, in commercial operations, such as regulating the orange trade of Jaffa, in road making, and in the supply and remuneration of labour, all showing that in "an atmosphere unfavourable to political propaganda Jews and Arabs are capable not merely of mutual tolerance but of active co-operation where they are conscious of having interests in common." After the ratification of the Mandate the Zionist Organization issued a very conciliatory appeal to their Arab brethren declaring that the Zionist Jews have never contemplated "over-ruling the other inhabitants of the country or turning them out of their homes. . . . Our aim is solely to live calm and peaceful lives in concert with all other nationalities in this free land . . . so as together to convert the joint home into a progressive commonwealth. . . . The Hebrew nation and the Arab nation," this appeal concludes, "had a common destiny in the past: they acknowledge the same patriarch: why then should there be strife between brethren! Rather let us share the common ambition—to rebuild the wasted portions of our Holy Land for the welfare of ourselves and that of all mankind."

At the formal proclamation of the Mandate on 11th September, 1922, the High Commissioner's speech breathed the same conciliatory spirit. Sir Herbert Samuel said: "I earnestly hope that under the broad shelter of the British Empire the period now opening will be one of peace and progress for Palestine and will be memorable both for an Arab and Jewish working on that historic soil." (*The Times*, 13th September, 1922.)

Whether there has been any friendly response to these appeals I know not. But whether there has or has not they have a lasting value and are certainly in tune with the highest teachings of Christianity: from this point of view they bode well for the future.

There is another encouraging feature to be found in the deep and lasting love which the land inspires. This is one of its inalienable possessions and upon such a foundation a great edifice can be reared.

#### OUR MOST HONOURED CONTRIBUTOR.

For nearly two years, with a brief interval, we have had the privilege of printing articles from the pen of Dame Millicent Fawcett, until recently Chairman of the Board of Directors. This week contains the last of the second series of "Two Spring Visits to Palestine." We are proud to think that the contents of the book *What I Remember*, which had such a cordial welcome

from the public, first appeared in our columns, and we hope that Dame Millicent's fascinating sketches of modern Palestine will similarly appear shortly in permanent book form. We wish, on behalf of our readers as well as ourselves, to thank Dame Millicent for the distinction which she has conferred on us by her greatly valued contributions, and to express the hope that she will from time to time continue to write for us. We know that even the cold contact of the printed page gives pleasure to large numbers of women who are too remote to have the happiness of more personal relations.

#### HUSBAND AND WIFE BEFORE THE LAW.

##### DESERTION REPENTED.

By ALBERT LIECK.

A question which long exercised the minds of justices anxious to do justice according to law, was what is the position of a wife who has left her husband on grounds insufficient in law to get her an order of maintenance, when she has failed to get such an order, and desires to go back to her husband?

Prima facie, having definitely left her husband without a good reason in law, she has deserted him, and a deserted spouse is not bound to resume married life with the deserter. This view, strictly acted upon, was bound to work injustice. A wife might have very real grievances, although taking an exaggerated view of them; and it was very hard if an error of judgment fallen into under a sense of outrage was to be taken as an irrevocable decision. For some time the High Court decisions have tended to relieve this hardship, and now comes a decision of wide, unless carefully used, too wide, effect.

The chain of cases began with *Timmins v Timmins* (1919), which decided that a deserted husband could at any time put an end to his desertion by a *bona fide* offer to return. The decision was not of great authority, the Court of two judges being divided and the view of the senior being allowed to prevail.

In 1923 (Court of Appeal 1924) came the case of *Thomas v. Thomas*. There the refusal of a wife to return to a husband on his repentance was held to be justified. The justices had refused to give effect to an offer of the husband to take her back when he had, after a long course of ill-usage, ordered her out of the house. The Divorce Court and Court of Appeal upheld their decision.

Quite recently we have the case of *Kenney v. Kenney*. A wife took proceedings before justices for desertion. They failed, and the wife sought to go back. Her husband refused to receive her, and this refusal subsequent to the first proceedings was itself held to be desertion. We are not told in the report what the circumstances were which first put husband and wife apart, and this is unfortunate, because on a rational view of the matter they are all-important. The repenting party ought to have nothing worse than hasty action to repent of. It would be exceedingly unjust to a husband, if a wife who has treated him badly for years and then levanted, can again force herself upon him whenever she chooses to do what she calls repenting.

The true line is laid down in a case decided by a metropolitan magistrate in June last (see "The Justice of the Peace," 27th June, 1925). The circumstances are too long to detail here, but they are highly instructive. Briefly put, the husband had been guilty of some cruelty to his wife, and had been bound over for an assault upon her. Her application for a separation on the ground of persistent cruelty failed, and thereafter he steadfastly refused her *bona fide* requests to have her back or to allow her access to the children.

The magistrate held this to be desertion, contrasting the conduct of the bad husband in *Thomas v. Thomas* with the conduct of the wife in the case before him, which amounted at the worst to foolish and ill-considered action, long repented of. He attached particular importance to the words of the Master of the Rolls in *Thomas v. Thomas*: "It must be for those who hear the whole evidence to decide whether the conduct amounting to desertion is no longer to be regarded, so that there is no excuse for the refusal of the other spouse to repent."

"I have," said the magistrate, "heard the whole evidence and decided that the wife's conduct in leaving her husband, which, if indeed persisted in would no doubt amount to desertion, has, if it ever did amount to desertion, no longer to be so regarded. The defendant has no excuse in law for refusing cohabitation. That refusal, reiterated in open court after every opportunity of consideration, amounts to desertion on his part."

#### IN AUBREY HOUSE GARDEN.

On Thursday of last week the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship shed its habitual armour of lofty impersonality, resolved itself temporarily into the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and celebrated the recent ennoblement of its ex-President, Dame Millicent Fawcett, with a wholly delightful garden party. The Misses Alexander provided the garden—the most glorious of gardens, on Campden Hill: a garden familiar to Kensington suffragists as the scene of many old encounters, and as we learned in the course of the afternoon, associated in the mind of Dame Millicent herself with a first introduction to Henry Fawcett under the auspices of its earlier occupier, Mrs. Peter Taylor. Who was there? It is impossible for us to give a complete list, space forbids. Nor it is easy to make a rational selection since every person there played a notable part, prominent or obscure, in the movement which Dame Millicent led. We can only select at random from the archives of our own random observation.

Miss Rathbone was there—presiding, as immediate successor to the N.U.S.E.C.'s first President. Lady Frances Balfour was there, and Mrs. Crichton, and Mrs. Philip Snowden, and Mrs. Oliver Strachey. And all these ladies spoke from a platform backed by banners which had seen service in many processions. Lady Astor arrived late, hot-foot from the House of Commons, and delivered from the verandah steps a short impromptu sermon on the danger of pomposity, of whose total absence Dame Millicent is so striking an example. One might add that Lady Astor is herself admirably well qualified to preach upon the dangers of this unpleasing quality. Miss K. D. Courtney was there, who carried the Hon. Secretaryship of the N.U.S.E.C. through some of its most burdensome and difficult years. One hoped that in spirit her colleague and contemporary, Miss Catherine Marshall, was there too, for the years of her Hon. Parliamentary Secretaryship were also among the most strenuous of the Union's History. Mrs. Pethick Lawrence was there, and Lady Rhondda and Mrs. Ayrton Gould, whose presence as former members of the "W.S.P.U." reminded us that the spirit of the N.U.S.E.C. cannot rise up and exclaim "Alone I did it!" Miss Palliser, Miss Dimock, Mrs. Cholmeley, Miss Ward, Miss Philippa Strachey, and many other leaders and former workers of the London Society were there, recalling the services of that busy organisation to the common cause. The presence of Miss Ashton from Manchester conjured up old visions of many turbulent mobs reduced to polite attentiveness by a stinging torrent of oratorical gems. Miss Beaumont, Lady Pares, Mrs. Claude Taylor, Lady Balfour of Burleigh, and a host of energetic and extraordinarily efficient workers (many of them under 30 and voteless) were there busily engaged in the provision of tea and actively demonstrating that when you want anything of that kind done really well, there is everything to be said for doing it yourself. But to resume: Lady Selborne was there, and Dame Adelaide Anderson, late Chief Woman Inspector of Factories, who did as much for the cause by the efficiency with which she filled her pioneer office as she would have been enabled to do had she been freed from its cramping restrictions upon public agitation. And Miss Chrystal Macmillan, about whose prompt action for the relief of Belgian refugees at the beginning of the war Dame Millicent made an interesting revelation. And Mrs. Auerbach, treasurer of the N.U.S.E.C. at a time of maximum turnover, and Lady Beilby, and Miss Agnes Garrett without whom no gathering in honour of Dame Millicent is altogether complete, and Miss Clough, of Newnham, and Miss Atkinson, another member of the long and noble line of Honorary Secretaries. There were many others too numerous to mention including distinguished guests from Australia, Canada, Switzerland, and other countries, as well as representatives of Societies of the National Union scattered throughout the country. And we think, or choose to think, that the anonymous donor of £1,000 to the N.U.S.E.C. "in honour of Dame Millicent" was also there; but of her (or him?) we can say little except that she must have been an old suffragist, for does not her homage to the suffrage leader point to that fact? And she must still be closely in touch with the work of the N.U.S.E.C. or how could she have known how badly it needed £1,000 to complete its still unfinished task—votes for women on the same terms as for men as well as for the new work which is crowding upon it? But of this at least we are certain: the spirits of Miss I. O. Ford, and Dr. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, and Mrs. Ostler, Mrs. Harley, and Dr. Elsie Inglis were there—for how, when so many of their old friends were gathered together and wanting them so badly, could they have failed to come?

#### NOTES ON DRESS.

[*"The Well-dressed Woman's Do's and Don'ts"* by Elise Vallée. Methuen, 2s. 6d. The arrival of a review copy of this book reminds us that we have hitherto devoted insufficient space to this important aspect of a woman's life. As our readers will doubtless expect a lead from us on this as on all other important matters, we have instructed a special correspondent to undertake a fortnightly dress column of which the following will be the first.—Ed.]

Miss Elise Vallée opens her useful little book by insisting (in my own opinion not unduly) upon the importance of the elastic belt. This should be made to measure. "To those who are unable to go to Paris for their things there are hundreds of corset makers who make the belt . . . such as all French women now wear; and in London a famous French firm has a place in Bond Street." I quote this piece of information in order to provide readers of the *WOMAN'S LEADER* with an added incentive to attend those Annual Conferences of feminist bodies which give one so valuable an opportunity of shopping in the Metropolis. But there is more to be said about the elastic belt. "Don't forget that nothing you put on will look right until you perfect your 'mannequin.'" I do not altogether understand this piece of advice—having hitherto believed that a mannequin was an entire female figure. This, however, would suggest that the word refers to that part of the human frame which lies directly under the elastic belt. But to proceed: "Do wear your belt next your skin. The object is to appear to be wearing none. Don't wear it over your chemise. . . . Never wash, or have cleaned, elastic belts." This last piece of advice reminds me of a written injunction (for whose record we are indebted to M. Romain Rolland) received by the great Michael Angelo from his father. "My son," he wrote, "above all, never wash. Have yourself cleaned sometimes, but never wash." With such, and even greater solicitude must we treat our elastic belt.

We now pass to the question of "maquillage," or making up, and my readers will be delighted to learn that in the opinion of our expert author "it is possible to 'make up' without having in the least a vulgar appearance." Only—"When choosing the lip-stick, always avoid those that give a brown or violet tinge to the lips. Though very dark colours are generally considered in better taste, it is a fact that the light shades, if thickly applied, are less noticeable and have a more natural appearance. Never use greasy lip-salves—they are vulgar looking and if you so much as take a drink of water will leave marks all over the glass." Quite so. I myself, owing to an incurable liking for the taste of cream in tea, prefer to continue with the greasy kind. But I admit that they are vulgar looking. Meanwhile "do clean your face thoroughly with cold cream every night." It appears that Michael Angelo's father was right after all.

We now approach the question of underclothing. But since our author is of the opinion that "very few women wear anything but silk nowadays for their undergarments, and this habit is by no means as extravagant as it sounds," I must unfortunately dismiss the whole section as out of date. I am not permitted by the Editor to say that Mr. Churchill is right or wrong, though I have my own opinions. But the fact remains, this present habit of wearing silk underclothing has, or will, become more extravagant than Miss Elise Vallée had reason to suppose. Which brings us to the all-important question of fashion. "All fashions," our author considers, "are beautiful," only some of them take a little getting accustomed to. Even the despised bustles of late Victorian days were "undoubtedly beautiful, and perhaps even artistic." (I will not at this point waste time by challenging a definition of Beauty which concedes an extreme excellence to that which is artistic.) Anyhow—in the matter of fashion it is, Miss Vallée assures us, "almost an impossibility in these days" to be too thin. Oh, quite. Quite. How very strongly do we feel this—the utter impossibility of being too thin. It simply cannot be done. In the first place it is not necessary to have all your clothes cut "half an inch larger everywhere than your actual measurements" in order to "prevent any appearance of strain." And it is not merely beautiful, (perhaps even artistic) to be thin—it is convenient in an office. Take my own case, for instance. The possession of this beautiful physical attribute has on two occasions at least made it possible for me to enter the *WOMAN'S LEADER* office when both the Editors and the Manager were already there. It has not been easy—an inch more from back to front would have made all the difference. But it has been made possible.

And now, before proceeding to the important matter of hats and dresses, there is one trivial matter to which Miss Vallée

(Continued at foot of col. 1, page 214.)

### THE LAW AT WORK.

#### THE HOWARD LEAGUE FOR PENAL REFORM.

We owe the Howard League a great debt of gratitude for the two publications they have recently issued. The Howard League Journal, No. 4, and the Annual Report of the League. We can read in these as nowhere else accounts of what has been achieved in the direction of Penal Reform and also of the questions which are at the moment the objects of practical interest and concern.

It is rightly pointed out that when we compare the publications of the League twenty years ago with those of to-day we can see that the advance that has been made in penal administration is simply amazing. In those days there was no Probation Act, no Mental Deficiency Act, no women as magistrates, police, prison doctors, or nurses, and no Juvenile Courts. The silence rule and separate confinement reigned supreme in prisons, and there were seven times as many of the short sentences of two weeks or less as there are to-day. We can only hope that the progress made in the next twenty years will be as great, and perhaps when this century has become history it will be seen that the need for reform is no less to-day than it was 20 years ago.

To deal with what is immediately before us, the Criminal Justice Bill dwarfs all else in importance. The two subjects in the Bill which mainly concern the Howard League are Probation and Unconvicted Prisoners. The establishment at last of a real system of Probation is of course welcomed, but it is greatly to be regretted that the Bill perpetuates the dual control by which a Probation Officer may be primarily a servant of his voluntary Society and only be engaged by the Court for the particular duty of supervising Probationers. This cannot be a satisfactory arrangement either for the Probation Officer or the Bench, and it is made worse by the provision in the Bill that the salary of the officer in such cases may be paid not to the officer but to the Society which employs him. We regret that as a result of this system of dual control Probation work is and will be a closed field to many persons who are not prepared to submit to religious tests.

If Clause 13 become law in the form in which it was amended in Committee a great grievance that exists to-day will be to a last extent modified. The time spent by unconvicted persons awaiting trial in prison will be shortened from anything up to five months as it is to-day to a maximum of one month. This seems almost too good to be true and we hope that administrative difficulties will not be allowed to stand in the way and hinder what the legislature in this clause clearly intends.

The Journal deals with so many questions of interest that it is difficult to know which to select for mention here. There is an article on habitual criminals in which it is urged that the law should be altered so that a habitual criminal might be sent to preventive detention without first serving a sentence of penal servitude. Many judges hesitate to condemn a man to both the imprisonment and the detention when they would be quite ready to sentence him to the detention only. There are in prisons elderly men and women of weak or deficient intellect who simply go in and out of prison until their convictions run into three figures. They cannot be certified under the existing Mental Deficiency Act, but they are quite incapable of looking after themselves in the world. If they are to be detained indefinitely it is essential that they should not be treated by punitive methods but be given as much freedom as is consistent with order, together with simple pleasures and the visits of their friends. This would be less cruel than the continuous conviction and punishment that goes on to-day.

The reviews of books and official publications are of great interest to the student of penal reform and give a good idea of what has been published on the subject within the year. There are also articles on the progress which is being made in other countries. We recommend our readers to obtain the Journal for themselves from the offices of the Howard League, at 18 Savoy Street, Strand.

C. D. RACKHAM.

#### NOTES ON DRESS.—(Continued from page 213.)

very rightly calls our attention. The importance of proper selection in the matter of jewellery. "Nothing," she tells us, "is more ugly and in worse taste than rubies, sapphires, emeralds, etc., all worn together." There is a great deal of truth in this.

[There is. But our readers do not require to be reminded of it. The fact is, and with due respect to the ability of our correspondent, we feel that this is not quite the sort of stuff we want. Indeed we have decided from henceforth to suspend our fortnightly dress column.—Ed.]

### NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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#### THANKS TO AN UNKNOWN DONOR.

Once again the National Union has been the recipient of a magnificent gift through the magic of Dame Millicent Fawcett. A draft for £1,000 was handed to her at the Garden Party last week with the enclosed letter: "Will Dame Millicent Fawcett kindly accept the accompanying draft for £1,000 in aid of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, which owes its present proud position in a great measure to her noble and splendid work." The Executive Committee of the National Union at its next meeting will decide in what manner this unexpected gift can be utilized to promote especially the objects which Dame Millicent and the National Union have in common. Meanwhile the officers, in accepting from Dame Millicent this munificent tribute, desire on behalf of the Executive Committee and the whole Union to give their most grateful thanks to the unknown donor.

#### SUMMER SCHOOL, 25th AUGUST TO 8th SEPTEMBER.

Major Hills, a staunch friend and member of our Executive Committee, has kindly consented to give a lecture on the Right of Private War, instead of Mr. Arnold Foster, who is unfortunately unable to be present. Mlle. Bertillon, a French Barrister of distinction, will speak on Penal Reform in France. There is very little room left in St. Hilda's, so that those intending to come should communicate at their earliest convenience. It will always be possible, however, to get rooms outside when St. Hilda's is full. School fees will be £1 5s. for members and £1 10s. for non-members for the fortnight, and 15s. for members and £1 for non-members for one week. A registration fee of 10s. should be paid on application, which will be deducted from the fee for the course. Fee for single lectures, 2s., may be paid at the door.

#### GARDEN PARTY TO DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT, G.B.E.

We feel that the Garden Party to Dame Millicent Fawcett was an unqualified success. A full account is given in another column. We should like, however, to add our satisfaction that so many of the old suffrage workers from London and different parts of the country were able to be present, among whom were Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Dowson, Mr. and Mrs. Pilcher, Lady Scott Moncrieff, Mrs. Alys Russell, Miss Willis, Mr. and Mrs. Boulnois, Mrs. Corbett. We should also like to take this opportunity of thanking first and foremost the Misses Alexander for the loan of their beautiful garden, the speakers, contributors of money, cakes or flowers, and last, but not least, the Entertainment Committee and its indefatigable band of workers. It is perhaps invidious to select names from so many helpers for special thanks among this Committee, but we cannot refrain from calling attention to the hard work undertaken by Lady Pares, Miss Fielden, Miss Beaumont and Mrs. Claude Taylor to whom much of the success of the party was due.

#### LOST PROPERTY.

Would the guest at the Garden Party at Aubrey House, on the 23rd, who took away by mistake a Tom Thumb umbrella with carved white bone handle, kindly communicate with Miss Mary Fielden, 5h Grove End House, N.W. 8.

#### AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY.

The Office will be closed from Friday evening, July 31st, to Tuesday morning, August 4th.

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### WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

(BRITISH SECTION, 55 GOWER STREET, W.C. 1.)

The International Executive Committee of the Women's International League has recently been meeting in Innsbruck, bringing together representatives from many countries. Such meetings are excellent training grounds for those who want to help nations to work together for world progress, and one of the most hopeful signs of peace is the great increase that is going on in the number of international organizations for every kind of activity.

The W.I.L. was born in the middle of the war at a time of the greatest difficulty for such intercourse, and now that the desire for peace is popular its great task is to study and understand the real causes of war and the solid basis on which goodwill and co-operation can be expected to grow between nations that have become used to antagonism and hatred.

This study has led the League to press for the extension of arbitration, and the Committee welcomed the desire shown by all the Governments at the Fifth Assembly of the League of Nations to agree to this, while at the same time it expressed its objection to any extension of the scope of the "sanctions" included in the Covenant. With regard to the limited "Pact" now under consideration, an interesting point was made by the Polish delegate, who believed that it was the very idea of a limited Pact that frightened the other Powers and made an atmosphere in which conciliation and reasoning were almost impossible.

The Committee regarded the Minorities question as one of the most important in international relations and urged all the National Sections to study very carefully the position of racial Minorities for which their respective Governments have responsibility. Much material has been collected about Minority questions in Eastern Europe. The British Section realizes that its Government has complicated and difficult problems of this kind which need much study and wisdom for their solution.

### A NEW DEVELOPMENT.

We call the attention of our readers to two paragraphs dealing with topical points of local government contributed by Miss Bertha Mason, who has generously promised to edit a weekly section on Women and Local Government, beginning in the early autumn. In a subsequent issue we intend to describe our new plans more fully.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### JUBILEE OF INTERNATIONAL ABOLITIONIST FEDERATION.

MADAM,—The Assembly of the League of Nations meets in Geneva in September and some of your readers may be in that district either for the Assembly or on holidays. On 4th and 5th September the International Abolitionist Federation is celebrating its 50th anniversary in Geneva, and my Committee very cordially invite any who may be interested and able to attend to take part in those celebrations.

4th September will comprise an afternoon and evening public meeting, but on the 5th there will be a luncheon and an excursion on the lake, followed by tea in the private grounds of one of our Geneva friends.

I think it is true to say that the Abolitionist Congress held in Geneva in 1876 was almost, if not actually, the first International assembly for any humanitarian or idealistic object. Now all the world flocks to Geneva for these purposes. Perhaps some who go may like to associate themselves on the occasion of its Jubilee with the Abolitionist Federation and pay a tribute to the men and women who fought the system of State Regulation of vice when all the experts approved it.

Full particulars will be sent on application.

ALISON NEILANS,

Secretary, Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

#### "THE INSECURITY OF THE WOMAN'S VOTE."

MADAM,—I was greatly interested by the paragraph "Another Franchise Anomaly" in the WOMAN'S LEADER, 17th July, and I can testify to the truth of the statement "the insecurity of the Woman's Vote." Since 1918, I paid rent for an unfurnished room in my parents' house, and I owned my own furniture. I got a vote in 1919. I may say I always had a rent-book which I regularly showed to the official who called each time the register was being revised. After the death of both my parents, the house was given up, i.e. 25th March, 1925, and I, with my sister, took a self-contained furnished flat for the time. We bought a house—with vacant possession—by auction, 30th April, paying the deposit that day; we signed the deeds 16th June, and paid remainder of money 24th June. Now, when I go to the Registration Office, I am told I cannot be placed on this register nor yet on the December list, as owing to the house having to be "done up" I had no furniture there on 15th June. So I shall be disqualified for a year. Also my sister is in exactly the same position owing to the same circumstances.

As the man at the office remarked, if we had been men in these circumstances there would have been no question of disqualification. I may say also my mother suffered disqualification for six months, as my father died first, and she was taken off the following register, and only after application at the Registration Office was she again put on the list as having the "six months occupier's qualification," though as a matter of fact she had lived in the house for some years.

Such is the great disadvantage under which women rest, and surely cases like these must bring home to people the great need for equal rights of citizenship.

May I again reiterate for the benefit of those who have unfurnished rooms that a rent book is an invaluable asset!

A DISQUALIFIED VOTER.

### CONSERVATIVE WOMEN AND EQUAL FRANCHISE.

MADAM,—I have read your paragraph in this week's issue on "Votes for Women—the new campaign," and it appears to me to be somewhat misleading.

It is true that Conservative women are to study "Equal Franchise at 25," but you omit to say (quite unintentionally I am sure) that Equal Franchise at 21 will also be under consideration.

It is not always realized that we have a very large number of younger people within the Conservative Party, who are strongly in favour of Equal Franchise at 21, and when we are reinforced by such eminent Diehards as Sir Henry Craik and Sir John Marriott, we think it must be obvious that the restriction of the franchise at 25 for both sexes is politically impracticable.

BERYL C. M. WILSON (Mrs. S. B. WILSON).

### REGULATIONS WHICH DESTROY REGULATION.

MADAM,—In reply to Miss Neilans, it was the "Association for Moral and Social Hygiene" which recommended to, and lent me, about 1921, Fiaux's *Les Maisons de Tolérance* as an authority on Regulation . . . and as it happens, French Regulation. Also, when girls run away from the licensed brothels the morals police, as they are called, fetch them back, etc. For these and other reasons (including the description in 1924 of the outside of four *maisons tolérées* at St. Malo and Dinan, those at Dinan having in addition to the closed shutters the windows on the ground floor barred at the bottom) I consider I was justified in saying "If a nation permits young girls to be shut up in these licensed brothels." This statement does not necessarily, and was not intended to, imply they were closed houses of ill-fame. A third edition of *Les Maisons de Tolérance* was published by the author in 1896.

No, I did not miss the point about the Strasburg incident, as it is unimportant as an argument against the prohibition of foreign girls in licensed brothels; laws and regulations are always broken by some people at all times and everywhere; and this must be a difficult regulation to carry out. Nevertheless, the regulation that men under 18 are not to be admitted to the French regulated brothels is effective, e.g. in that it appreciably lessens the number of clients, those who are the direct cause of the slave traffic in women and children. Likewise, the prohibition of girls under 21 in all French brothels prevents a wholesale traffic in quite young girls and children. Miss Neilans herself says as far as she is aware there are no closed houses in France under Regulation to-day, simply because they are not allowed by regulation.

The other argument against the prohibition of foreign girls in licensed and other regulated brothels that it regulates, and so thus in a sense tolerates them, is true, but so do the regulations mentioned above. Does the "Association for Moral and Social Hygiene" then wish to get rid of these regulations? If not, how can it object to taking a further step in the same direction and when it is the only effective thing that can be done and is being done now?

In the replies received by the League of Nations from those countries which have a system of regulation it was stated, particularly by the countries of South America, that about 80 per cent. of the inmates of those houses are foreign girls. Therefore, by prohibiting their sale and other employment in all those houses, numbers of those houses must collapse. Can Miss Neilans deny this? In Holland, when foreign women were prohibited from entering former licensed houses, these houses decreased in number.

F. K. POWELL.

[We have asked Miss Neilans to reply to this letter, when the correspondence must cease.—Ed.]

### NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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