

# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

## AND THE COMMON CAUSE

Vol. XX. No. 4. One Penny.

REGISTERED AS  
A NEWSPAPER.

Friday, March 2, 1928.

### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL . . . . .	27
NO SEX DISTINCTIONS IN SOCIAL INSURANCE. By Eleanor F. Rathbone, J.P. . . . .	27
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL CLIMBS DOWN. By G. W. Currie . . . . .	28
HOMER LANE. By M. D. S. . . . .	29
NOTES FROM IRELAND. By Dora Mellone . . . . .	29
LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS. By Bertha Mason . . . . .	30

Annual Subscription for Postal Subscribers: British Isles and  
Abroad, 6/6.

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

### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### The American Cruiser Programme.

We must all be glad that the Navy Bill to be introduced into the American House of Representatives is to be very much less formidable than was originally proposed. The original programme was for seventy-one cruisers to be constructed immediately, and to cost £148,000,000. It is now intended to build fifteen 10,000-ton cruisers and an aircraft carrier, to be completed within six years, and to cost £54,800,000. Even more significant than the fact of this enormous decrease is the reason for the change of mind which has led to it. This reason is not any change in the international situation, but merely economy. The United States intended to equip itself with some new, exciting, and very expensive toys. It has come to the conclusion that the excitement is not worth the expense. We are glad that it has, not because we believe that any of the whole seventy-one would have been likely to be used in actual warfare, but because the type of excitement engendered by these toys is apt to spread, to change its proud paternal character, and to become dangerous. We must also feel that the action of the British Government in reducing, in spite of the agitation of the Navy League, our own tiny cruiser programme may have made possible this satisfactory result.

#### The League of Nations Union and Government Policy.

We referred last week to the strictures levelled at the League of Nations Union for venturing to criticize the Government. These have been continued this week, *The Times* taking the view that the sole function of a non-party organization such as the League of Nations Union is to make the League and its problems widely known in this country and emphatically not to criticize the policy of the Government of the day. In reply to this, Professor Gilbert Murray, Chairman of the Union, writes what in his opinion the real functions of the League are. He points out that the third object of the Union, for which it has received a Royal Charter, is: "To advocate the full development of the League of Nations so as to bring about such a world organization as will . . . finally liberate mankind from war and the effects of war." It would, therefore, he says, not only be out of accord with English traditions, but actually a failure to carry out the terms of the Charter, if its members elected did not think for

themselves, discuss moot questions and advocate the course believed to be the best calculated to attain the objects for which the Union stands.

#### The Prime Minister and Equal Franchise.

Many of our readers are looking forward to hearing Mr. Baldwin speak on the subject that for so many years has had pride of place in this paper. The great demonstration at the Queen's Hall on 8th March and the overflow meeting will convince the Prime Minister—if, indeed, he needs convincing—of the widespread satisfaction that is felt with regard to the present hopeful position. The thought of many will go back to the Queen's Hall demonstration ten years ago when the first instalment of the vote was won. Dame Millicent Fawcett, who has left the country for a fourth visit to Palestine, will on this occasion be present in spirit only, but she has sent a message which will be printed in next week's issue.

#### The N.U.S.E.C. Annual Council Meeting.

It seems probable that in the interests of harmony and unanimity at a critical time in the history of the woman's movement the contentious resolutions which sharply divided the Council last year to such an extent as to lead to resignations of newly elected officers and members of the executive committee will be held over until the first Council after the final suffrage victory. Notwithstanding this peace move the proceedings are likely to be anything but dull, for unless the work of the National Union is to come to a standstill except for Equal Franchise, certain important decisions must be arrived at in connection with social insurance (with which Miss Rathbone's article deals this week), the Edinburgh Corporation Bill, the Age of Marriage Bill which has just been drafted, and, not least, the position with regard to married women's work. Turning to International questions, resolutions will deal with the renewal of the Arbitration Treaty with the United States discussed last week in an article by Miss Courtney and the National Campaign for Disarmament. We have never thought that the vote was the final objective of feminism. Rather is it a beginning than an end as the lengthy agenda which lies before us proves.

#### News from Canada.

On Friday last the Provincial Legislative Assembly of Quebec defeated by 39 votes to 11 a private members' Bill providing that women should be eligible for the Provincial Franchise, and for election to the Legislature. It is indeed regrettable that Canada should lay so stubbornly behind her fellow dominions of Australia and New Zealand. In British Columbia, however, opinion seems to be somewhat more enlightened. There, the Legislature contains women, one of whom, Mrs. Ellen Smith, was asked last week temporarily to occupy the office of Speaker. This is claimed as a precedent for all British legislatures.

#### Births, Deaths, and Marriages.

On Saturday the Registrar-General published his official return of births and deaths during the last quarter of 1927. These, as already forecasted, show a lower birth-rate than any on record. Births totalled 152,754 (a rate per 1,000 of 15.4), and deaths 115,995. Thus, a relatively low birth-rate has given us, nevertheless, a substantial survival rate. Both the births and the deaths are as usual preponderantly male. The births

'Keep fit on  
cocoa'

**BOURNVILLE**  
SEE THE "Cadbury" ON EVERY PIECE  
NAME OF CHOCOLATE

Write  
Cadbury, Bournville  
about Gift Scheme

number 77,976 males and 74,778 females (a ratio of 1,043 to 1,000), the deaths 59,208 males and 56,787 females (also a ratio of 1,034 to 1,000).

#### "England's Green and Pleasant Land"—the Mining Areas.

There is surprisingly little in the Press about the acute privation which exists in mining areas in different parts of the country. Some letters from one of the affected districts which have recently reached us describe conditions of life tragic in the extreme. If these accounts can be verified they reveal a state of affairs which cannot be tolerated in a modern community. Women voters have a direct responsibility and they should make it their duty to find out what steps are being taken to bring it to an immediate end. Whatever the causes, whosoever the fault, it is unthinkable that some solution cannot be found to put an end to the physical and perhaps worse, the mental distress which our fellow creatures are suffering. There can be no excuse for any failure in our social administrative machinery which permits individual men, women, and children to suffer cruelly on account of economic crises over which they have no control. Employment centres to keep mind and body fit as well as adequate relief, must be provided. If the strain is too heavy for the local authorities, national resources must be drawn upon. The inarticulate suffering of isolated villages concerns every citizen, and must be ended. Writing in Westminster, without local knowledge, it is difficult to know what can be done, and we invite suggestions from those of our readers who have first-hand information and understanding of the problem.

#### "Dawn."

The controversy about the Edith Cavell film still rages and opinion is very divided on the subject. Its production before a large representative gathering at the Albert Hall was prohibited by the L.C.C. last week, though the audience was confined to invited guests. On Tuesday of this week Miss Rosamond Smith, Chairman of the Theatres and Music Halls Committee of the L.C.C., with other members of the committee, has been invited to see the film. If space were at the moment available in our columns, we would much like to revive our "Burning Questions" section with two articles, one on each side on this much disputed matter. We understand that Miss Cavell's family are against the production of the film, and that the Executive Committee of the National Council of Women passed a resolution against it as long ago as its last conference at Bournemouth. We shall look forward with interest to hearing the opinion of the Chairman of the L.C.C. Committee, who is so well known to many readers of this paper, as for many years a member of the Executive Committee, and for a time an honorary officer of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.

#### Nurse Cavell.

All feminists must view with a certain uneasiness the present recrudescence of the agitation over the treatment of Nurse Cavell. It was natural enough that in war time the execution of so noble a woman should shock the nation to whom she belonged. But ten years after the war, one is forced to reflect that this shock must have been due rather to her character and to the fact that she was a woman than to the actual circumstances of the case. Nurse Cavell deliberately chose to engage in work for which any man would have been shot without question. According to the official German account she was warned, when first suspected, that if she continued these activities she must expect the punishment that would be meted out to a man. Her sense of duty led her to continue them. It may have been harsh, but it can hardly be called outrageous, that the penalty should have been exacted. Our allies, the French, shot more than one woman whose work for the Germans was far less important in its results, and less dangerous in its example than the smuggling of men across the frontier. That these—according to the French police—were women of bad character, even though it be true, is irrelevant. War is brutal. Had Nurse Cavell been spared, we should have been able to applaud an example of wisdom and magnanimity, but we can hardly insist that she was entitled to mercy either because she was a woman or an exceptional human being.

#### The Red Indian's Civilization.

The *Observer* had an interesting article recently describing an interview with the chief of the American Sioux Indians, Ohiyesa, who is now in London. This vigorous old man, who

appears to be in the prime of life in spite of his seventy years (he expects to live to be a hundred), has something to say about the white man's civilization. Among other Indian customs which he compared to those of the white races which are gradually absorbing his own, was that of the limitation of families to five children, who are born at intervals of three years. Modern civilization in his opinion runs to "small chins and strained nerves."

#### Ellen Terry.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to Dame Ellen Terry on the attainment last Monday of her 80th birthday. It is, just seventy-two years since she first appeared upon the stage but something more than seventy-two years since she first appeared in a theatre, using its back premises as a sort of crèche while her parents earned the livelihood of nine children on the boards. And it is a good many years since she last appeared upon the stage in the leading part (if our memory serves) of the tragic "Good Hope." But since her last appearance, as before her first appearance, she remains an inveterate theatre-goer, and the kindly presence of the greatest British actress of our time graces many theatrical first nights. Long may she continue to gladden our world with her presence—her quick laughter, her quick tears, her ready sympathy and her glorious traditions. Long may she enjoy health and merriment, vivid interests and the love of her friends, those who are known to her, and the wider multitude of those who are not. And someday, perhaps the B.B.C. will give us the chance (denied to us last Monday by her inopportune attack of bronchitis) of hearing her voice again. But that, perhaps, is more important for the young who are not familiar with its peculiar ring. For those of us who are, there is little need of a reminder, for it "vibrates in the memory" like the best of music and to those old memories we can at all times "listen in."

#### The Spectator's Competitions.

It is disappointing to find that in the *Spectator's* recent competition open to men and women under 25 for the most practicable programme for the next Unionist Government "the entries received from women readers under 25 were not sufficiently interesting to justify the award of a prize." The maliciously minded may reason from this that young women are not interested in politics, though the vote is about to be extended; others may deduce the theory that politically minded young women are to be found in the Liberal or Labour Camps; still others may infer that young women do not read the *Spectator*. We believe that none of these assumptions are correct, and we venture to remind our distinguished contemporary that at least some of the young men competitors had been voting citizens for several years, whereas their young women contemporaries, if they are in politics at all, are still working for the vote. We hope, however, that women will be more successful in the new competition which closes on 2nd March. A prize of five guineas is offered for the best Leap Year proposal of marriage in the form of a letter. "Both men and women may compete, but the letter should, of course, be written as from a woman to a man." We who stand for equality of liberties, status, and opportunities between men and women fear that we may have incurred reproaches from the Complete Equalitarian that we have left it to our distinguished contemporary to call attention to the temporary removal of a time-honoured inequality in so pleasant a manner.

#### The Training of Blind Girls.

It is so usual to find domestic work over-estimated for in the education and training of girls that it is surprising to find that blind girls who are trained for different kinds of trades are inadequately prepared for household duties. In the seventh report of the Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind, it is recommended that blind girls should receive proper training for the duties normally falling to women in home life and suggestions are made to extend the training course for a further period of six months. The multifarious tasks which fall to the woman in the home are not so simple when they are performed by a sightless person, who must at the same time be trained to earn her living at some trade. There may be a case in connection with the blind girl for a training longer than that given to a boy, but we should have thought that the elementary instruction necessary could have been given during her later school years or in special evening classes.

#### EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL.<sup>1</sup>

The real fight with regard to the Edinburgh Corporation Bill has not yet begun, but a full debate in the House of Commons is likely to take place in the near future. Our readers will remember that the Bill provides for the compulsory treatment for venereal disease in the case of those whom the Medical Officer of Health is satisfied are a danger to the community, and have either not come forward for treatment, or have left treatment before being pronounced cured. It should be noted that the clause in the Bill as printed providing for the detention of such persons in institutions, has been dropped.

The opposition has so far succeeded in blocking the Bill on the various occasions on which it has been put down for its second reading; when this procedure has been followed sufficiently often, time will be allowed by the Speaker for a real debate. This may happen in another week or so.

In the meantime, the Edinburgh Corporation has not been idle. It has circulated to all Members of the House of Commons a long and able, but to us entirely unconvincing pamphlet on the reasons for their proposals, and has sent the chief officials concerned to speak to the Medical Committee of the House of Commons. The day after this meeting an opposition conference, instigated by the committee of women's and other organizations called together by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, was held in the House, with Mr. Philip Snowden in the chair. The chief protagonists against the Bill were Dr. Graham Little (*Ind., London University*), Mr. Pethick Lawrence (*Lab., Leicester West*), and Mr. Ernest Brown (*Lib., Leith*), and in favour of the Bill Dr. Drummond Shiels (*Lib., Edinburgh E.*), Lieut.-Col. Fremantle (*Unionist, St. Albans*), and Sir Basil Peto (*Unionist, Barnstable*). Letters from three of these have appeared in *The Times* during the week.

It is quite clear, therefore, that considerable feeling is being aroused on both sides, and that a keen debate on non-party lines is bound to ensue. The view of those who hold that the Bill should pass its second reading, if only to get a really thorough examination of its provisions in the committee stage, is countered by that of those who hold that once the principle has been accepted on the occasion of the second reading, the difficulty of ultimately defeating the Bill is undeniably very much increased.

The chief arguments put forward by those opposing the Bill are already well known to readers of this paper. They can mostly be grouped round the main contention that on public health grounds a Bill of this kind defeats its own ends; that the fear that secrecy will not be maintained and that compulsion may be exercised will be the most effective means of preventing patients coming forward for treatment, either at all, or certainly when their disease is still in its early and more curable stages. Dr. Graham Little makes a strong point of the fact that inasmuch as treatment during the first fortnight very considerably reduces both the chance of the disease taking hold and certainly of the

infectiousness of the patient, it is far more dangerous for the welfare of the community to have one person failing to attend in an early stage than it would be to have a far larger number, whose danger to the community has already been largely reduced by their early courses of treatment, as defaulters. Mr. Pethick Lawrence pointed out that once it was realized that not only defaulters, but also those who had never attended, would be liable for compulsory treatment, there would be a falling off in the attendance, not only at venereal disease clinics, but also at maternity welfare centres.

One amazing fact in the situation is that Edinburgh has, we are informed, the lowest rate for venereal disease of any Scottish city, and that on its own showing the rate of defaulters among those attending the clinics has dropped in four years from 45 per cent to 29 per cent, and of these some have ceased to attend the clinic for reasons such as removal to another area, continuance of treatment under a private practitioner, or death. This points to the fact that the voluntary system in Edinburgh is being admirably and successfully carried out, and it seems to us, therefore, that it is the very last place in the whole kingdom and the very last time in which a new and highly risky method should be tried.

An attempt was made, at the conference referred to above, by Dr. Drummond Shiels to show that the townspeople of Edinburgh were in favour of the proposals, and a warm appeal was made by him and by Lieut.-Col. Fremantle that those who were responsible for the successful methods at present adopted in Edinburgh were best suited to decide as to whether a change should be made. Mr. Ernest Brown, however, showed that far from the proposals having the support of the population, they had been put forward by the Corporation, and it was owing to the vigilance of some women's organizations (in fact, the Society for Equal Citizenship) that the intentions of the Town Council were discovered.

Another difficulty in connection with the proposals in the Bill is the difficulty, a well-known one, of proving that a patient is still suffering from venereal disease. So difficult is it to determine this that in certain cases only the most skilled members of the medical profession are competent to decide. The Bill would propose, however, that the power to compel treatment should be decided not only by the highly skilled specialist, but in a great many cases inevitably by the ordinary practitioner. Moreover, the medical examination for certain diseases in the case of women is of such an unpleasant nature that it is intolerable to think that any woman should be compelled by law to undertake it.

The battle is going to be a stiff one. All those interested in the question, either on the special grounds of public health, or on the grounds that the Bill, if passed, would probably fall most heavily on those classes of the population, such as prostitutes or vagrants, who come most easily within the clutches of the law, are asked to leave no stone unturned to express their views to the Scottish Office and to their Members of Parliament.

#### NO SEX DISTINCTIONS IN SOCIAL INSURANCE (continued).

By ELEANOR F. RATHBONE.

The following official figures illustrate the fact pointed out two weeks ago,<sup>2</sup> that even under the present scales of Unemployment Insurance benefit—the woman drawing less than the man—a much larger proportion of women's claims than of men's are disallowed by Insurance Committees.

Claims to "Extended Benefit" (i.e. benefit beyond that for which the claimant is entitled in respect of contributions paid) submitted to Local Committees between 13th December, 1927, and 16th January, 1928.	
Total claims from male contributors . . . . .	287,383
Total claims from female contributors . . . . .	34,142
Male claims recommended by Committee for disallowance . . . . .	30,332
Female claims recommended by Committee for disallowance . . . . .	3,308
Male claims recommended for disallowance on the ground that "not making every reasonable effort to obtain suitable employment or not willing to accept suitable employment" . . . . .	8,331
Female claims recommended for disallowance on above ground . . . . .	2,573

That is to say, of male claims, under one-ninth are rejected and only one in 34 is rejected on the ground that the contributor "is not making every reasonable effort", etc. Of women's claims, over a fourth are rejected and one in 13 is rejected for the above unpleasant reason. The Local Committees

<sup>1</sup> See list of donations on page 31; further donations are earnestly requested.

<sup>2</sup> See article "No Sex Distinctions in Social Insurance" in issue of 17th February.

which make these recommendations are mainly composed of representatives of employers and workpeople. In the case of the Committee best known to me, the women's claims are dealt with by a Committee of which the great majority are women, the chairman being a leading women trade union organizer.

Do these figures indicate that women are lazier than men? Certainly not; I believe that most people with practical experience will attribute the difference to three factors:—

1. That even now, with the woman's benefit at 15s., the man's at 18s. (about to be reduced to 17s.), the amount of the woman's benefit much more frequently than the man's treads close upon the amount of her weekly earnings, so deplorably low are women's wages.

2. "Unemployment" for a man is apt to mean the loafing existence which everyone who is not "born tired" heartily detests. "Unemployment" for a woman may mean that she will be as usefully and perhaps scarcely less onerously occupied in her own home, instead of a factory, shop, or office.

3. Domestic service provides an alternative occupation for women and claims may, under certain circumstances, be disallowed if this is judged "suitable employment" which the claimant has refused when offered.

Those feminists who are as much concerned with the dignity and credit of the woman worker (and upon her credit with

employers may depend her chances of "equal opportunity" of responsible work) just as much as with her financial advantage, may well hesitate in face of the above figures to press for the immediate raising of the woman's benefit to the man's level. Further, if benefit is to be kept proportionate to the contributions, this might mean (if she is already getting the full benefit due to her contribution it must mean) a raising of the woman's contribution to the man's level. The hard-working woman, with no source of income but her earnings, would pay a 1d. a week more in order that the pocket-money wage-earner might be even more acutely tempted than she is at present to regard her industry as merely a means of "earning my stamps," and so qualifying for a fresh period of benefit.

On the other hand, there seems considerable reason for doubting whether under Unemployment Insurance women, regarded as a separate class, are at present getting the full value of their contributions. Though the difference in contribution is only a penny, the average value of a woman's weekly benefit is 15s. 1d., that of a man's weekly benefit 21s. 8d., because of the much larger proportion of men who draw dependents' allowances. In Health Insurance, when there are as yet no dependents' allowances and greater liability to sickness among women than among men, the balance of advantage is the other way.

Hence the feminist who, while not regardless of these practical considerations, is yet bent upon sweeping away every form of sex distinction in industry, naturally turns her face hopefully towards the device of differential scales of contributions and benefits, based not on sex but on the earnings of the contributors. The working of this plan is briefly described by Miss Martelli in her admirable little "Sign-post to Social Insurance":—

"Great Britain is almost the only state whose insurance schemes provide for a flat rate of benefits and contributions. In other countries either the insured population is divided into wage groups, as in Austria where there are nine, or in Italy where there are three such groups, contributions and benefits varying with each group, or else, as in Poland, contributions and benefits are a direct percentage of the wage, plus an allowance for dependents. The International Labour Office sent out a questionnaire on the subject of sickness insurance to the principal states of the world; 19 of the 24 Governments who answered the questions reported a system of graded benefits in their respective countries. The German Government accurately summarized the case for making the benefit variable in its statement that 'the justice of uniform rates of benefit is only apparent, since it disregards natural differences in calling, wages, and family situation, and, at the same time, favours unmarried persons in certain circumstances as compared with the father of a family. Sickness benefit is a substitute for wages which cannot be earned, and should therefore be in proportion thereto.'

"In insurance schemes where contributions and benefits are graded according to wages, there is usually no sex distinction. Men and women are treated alike in social insurance in Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Austria, and Poland. In Germany the contribution is a percentage of the worker's wage, whatever his sex, although the minimum basic wage may be fixed at different levels for men and women."

Mr. R. C. Davison has pointed out a possible disadvantage adhering to the above system of graded rates and benefits, viz. that it might result in the rate fixed for the lowest paid group of adults being lower than the present women's rate, and that this would press hardly on the lower paid women even though their contributions would be also less. This might be partly met by fixing a bed-rock minimum, based on physiological needs for the lowest group. But even if the system did result in financial disadvantage to some women workers, this might be worth incurring for the sake of the other advantages of the system, which Mr. Davison himself has well pointed out. The feminist does not ask to play with men a game of "Heads I win, tails you lose." If she wants complete identity of treatment, she must be prepared to take the rough with the smooth. There is a great deal to be said—feministically, sentimentally, administratively, and even financially—for a complete pooling of insurance risks, under which men would bear part of the burden of women's greater liability to sickness; women would bear part of the burden of men's greater liability to unemployment and to having dependents. Under the present system, it seems far from certain that it is not the man who is playing with the woman a game of "Heads I win, tails you lose."

### A PUBLIC MEETING of the Open Door Council

WILL BE HELD AT

#### THE Y.M.C.A. BUILDING

in the Ground Floor Reception Room, Entrance in Great Russell Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.C.1.

On FRIDAY, 9th MARCH, at 8 o'clock.

Chair: Dr. CHRISTINE M. MURRELL

Speakers: Miss CAROLINE HASLETT (Women's Engineering Society) on "How Night-work Restrictions Affect Women Engineers"; Mrs. ELIZABETH ABBOTT (Chairman of the Open Door Council) on "Restrictive Legislation and Women's Wage Rates"; Miss CICELY GIMINGHAM on "The Attack on Equal Education."

## THE HOUSING PROBLEM.

By G. W. CURRIE.

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL CLIMBS DOWN.

The language which was publicly used by the City Council with reference to those who drew attention to the inactivity which characterized its housing programme was so uncompromising that a partial reversal of the Council's policy is doubly welcome. Less than six months ago Admiral Bruce, as Chairman of a joint committee of the Housing and Public Health Committees, issued an apology for its position, couched in terms of vehement personal abuse, and with this rather absurd and childish document we dealt at the time. But it is worth while to return to its concluding paragraph: and in case we be thought likely to do it an injustice, we quote it in full: "The members of the Council might pander to the clamour of the moment and allow themselves to be stamped into indiscriminate spending of the ratepayers' money and betray the great trust that is reposed in them. They might play to the gallery, with an eye to the elections next year, and seek a transient popularity at the expense of the ratepayers. They might have done, and still might do all these things; but they have not and we recommend that they do not."

Most of our readers learned fifteen or twenty years ago just how much value to place upon rhodomontade of this third-rate type, and they learned also that the type of "bumble" who uttered it was as often as not the victim of unfamiliarity with elementary facts. The report in question was answered in a variety of ways. The *Spectator* declined to be closed; the report of the Westminster Survey Group was given a redoubled publicity; its tenant's leaflet (applicable primarily to London, but coming into use in other places) was circulated amongst the churches; it became known that individual parishes were taking action. The floods in early January drew attention to the state of utter neglect in which large numbers of tenants had for long been left. The City Council began to feel uncomfortable; they heard what the Bishop of London preaching in the flood areas, said: "It is a disgrace to everyone in this church if they are content to sit still in comfort when they know that there are some families where six or seven people are compelled to live in one room in appalling conditions. We must get up and fight to remedy this..." The position to which Admiral Bruce's report had committed the Council was widely condemned as utterly insupportable. Opinion inside the Council itself began to modify. On the 14th inst. it capitulated with the best grace possible in *The Times*.

We never believed that Admiral Bruce would be able to maintain his ridiculous position: we did not even believe he would really wish to do so once he gave himself a chance of grasping the truth. We never believed that it was an impossibility to find more building land in Westminster if and when the City Council really wished to find it. Having found some we wish them success in the quest for more. For greater accuracy we quote the public announcement in *The Times*: "In connection with the proposed development of the property at the Ebury Bridge (Pimlico) end of the Grosvenor Canal, the General Purposes Committee of the Westminster City Council state that there will be a considerable amount of surplus land ultimately available, and they consider that the purpose for which it should be used should now be decided by the Council. The Committee are of opinion that the surplus land should be used for the provision of housing accommodation..."

This suggestion was embodied in a recommendation placed before the Council. Admiral Bruce supported it with his vote, and the Council unanimously agreed that this was the right course to adopt.

We now await particulars of this new scheme which is, it is stated, to include certain provision for a maternity and child welfare centre and a tuberculosis dispensary.

We shall probably not hear very much more of the peculiar views of the gallant admiral in the rôle of housing reformer so little suited to him. The proceedings of the City Council must frequently have been enlivened by his earnest, copious, and picturesque vocabulary. His knowledge of the housing problem cannot be regarded as up to date or in advance of the times. His preposterous abuse of other people has contributed largely to the Council's change of front; and for that reason, and on account of the obvious sincerity of his curious attitude, we confess to a sort of gratitude towards him.

## HOMER LANE.

To the general public Homer Lane is known as a unique American educationalist, a man of reputed personality and unconventional method, who for six years manifested his works at the Little Commonwealth, a certified reformatory school of unforgettable pleasing appearance, situated in the green fold of a Wessex hill; who, when that institution was closed under unexplained and apparently dubious circumstances, migrated to Bloomsbury, set up as a consulting psycho-analyst apparently without any professional qualification other than his own personal qualities and varied experience of life; who subsequently became implicated in police court proceedings involving the disinterment of sundry erotic letters written to him by a lady from whom he had accepted large sums of money, suffered deportation as an "undesirable alien," and a few months later died in Paris on 6th September, 1925.

But one development in this sequence of events is calculated to give pause to any such quick and undiscerning recital of Homer Lane's career in England. This is not any gesture of sufficient explanation or self defence on his own part. Indeed, few men appear to have taken less trouble to dissipate or even to recognize the existence of clouds which may obscure them in public estimation. The development to which we refer is the quick and headlong rally of friends to his defence in the hour of disrepute, and subsequently their eager determination to give to the world after his death an adequate explanation of his apparent mistakes, and an adequate realization of his work, his genius, and his innocence. Lord Lytton, Lady Betty Balfour, H. H. Symonds, the Bishop of Liverpool, together with many others who knew him intimately or had experienced the gifts of his reckless generosity and his intuitive comprehension, fought his battle with the world; and some of them have now given to the world as much of his teaching as can be embodied in a short memoir and a handful of lecture notes.<sup>1</sup> These last, it must be admitted, are handled with so great a skill by the two friends who have undertaken the business of editing them, that they present a coherent picture of Lane's approach to the study of childhood and adolescence and of his method of dealing with the problems presented to him by the varied life of his difficult Little Commonwealth at Batcombe.

Homer Lane's teaching, set forth on paper, is both interesting and comprehensible—but to readers of modern popular psychology it may not appear to be original. It involves a familiar insistence upon the formative significance of the first few years of childhood, and an indication of the probable operations of infantile repressions, together with suggestive illustrations of how their subsequent effects may be scientifically dealt with. But the lay reader is left with the suspicion that in Homer Lane's actual handling of human difficulties and abnormalities, an intuitive judgment—a quick response to the needs of his subject—came first, and that the response would have been much the same had he never taken the trouble to justify his technique in the light of any scientific method of his own or any body else's. The method of trial and error, with a maximum accuracy of trial and a minimum wastage of error, must have served him well from the outset of his promising educational career to its unhappy premature end. There was another quality which served him well, too, in his dealings with children and adolescents at any rate, and that was his unusual gift of craftsmanship. The material equipment of the Little Commonwealth, was largely the work of his hands. This rare command over matter, reinforcing a no less rare comprehension of mind, seem to have combined to equip him in an intense degree with the personal influence which, according to Dr. David's memoir, he himself was wont to repudiate as an instrument of psycho-therapy.

All said and done, he was a rather mysterious man; mysterious in what he did, and in what he failed to do. And because of what he failed to do (since the stars in their courses fought against him) the memory of what he did is embodied not in an educational institution planned by him, not in a gospel written by him, but in the affection, the admiration, and the unshakable trust of a small circle of men and women who knew him better than the Government department which closed his school or the police court which condemned his gospel. M. D. S.

<sup>1</sup> *Talks to Parents and Teachers*, by Homer Lane, with an Introduction by Dr. A. A. David. (Allen & Unwin, 5s.)

### National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.

#### Great United Equal Franchise Demonstration.

##### PLEASE NOTICE.

NO Reserved Seats can be kept at the Queen's Hall after 8.5 p.m.  
Please be in your place as early as possible.

## NOTES FROM IRELAND.

By DORA MELLONE.

MRS. RACKHAM'S VISIT TO DUBLIN.

Dublin Women Citizens have had the great pleasure of a visit from Mrs. Rackham, who generously gave time and labour to help them in their struggle to safeguard the position of women on juries. Mrs. Rackham addressed a meeting of the Rotary Club and well-attended public meetings in Dublin and Kingstown. In both places it was felt that Mrs. Rackham's address, given as it was from a fullness of knowledge and a width of experience, was most helpful. Press reports were excellent and the publicity thus obtained will be a real help in the effort to obtain practical realization of that equal citizenship "which is guaranteed in the Constitution of the Irish Free State."

"OUR HERO."

The speaker concluded her address on Josephine Butler and the League of Nations Report on the Traffic in Women and Children, and sat down. Up rose one of the more elderly members of the Guild: "Madam Chairman, I'm sure we've all listened with pleasure to what the lady speaker has told us about our hero. We've read about it all in the papers, but we never heard it put that plain. And as to what the weemen should do when they've all got the vote, it makes me think of what I read in the paper some poet said, Omer Khayim I think he was called, how we should take the scheme of things entire, and he said how we should crush it all to bits, but I think we weemen should just put the bits together and make it all over again better, and that's what we ought to do when we all get the vote. Then the weemen, like Josephine Butler, won't have all that time to put in before they get things done."

The lecturer sat overwhelmed. To meet a quotation from Omar was sufficiently trying. But the vision of the "scheme of things entire" presented to the unhappy young woman voter to reconstruct, was too terrible. Surely even she will cease to flap under that burden of responsibility!

## QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT (GRANT).

Miss Lawrence asked the Minister of Labour whether he has received the remonstrance sent to him by the Central Committee on Women's Employment as to the amount of the grant, together with a request that extra assistance should be given to Scotland and to certain distressed areas in England as well as to Wales; and whether he can hold out any hope of making the additional grants requested.

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: I have received this letter and have it under consideration.

Miss Lawrence: Can the Minister hold out any hope of being able shortly to make a statement?

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: I hope that it will not be long. I am actually considering the matter.

Mr. Buchanan: Is the Minister aware of the acuteness of the position in parts of Scotland?

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: Yes.

Mr. Batey: Are we to understand that the proposal which the Minister is considering is to give an additional grant to the north of England, seeing that he has given £10,000 to South Wales?

Sir A. Steel-Maitland: I have already said, in reply to the question, that I have this letter. If the hon. Member will read the question he will see that my answer covers the point.

FRANCHISE BILL.

Viscountess Astor asked the Home Secretary whether, in view of the proposed introduction of a new Bill to extend the franchise to women on equal terms with men, he will take immediate steps for instructions to be given to the registration officers in all constituencies that, when making the annual survey in April or May next, they shall include in that survey the necessary particulars of the prospective new electors, in order that those particulars may be incorporated in the register of electors which comes into force in October next, thereby avoiding the expenditure and delay of an additional survey for that purpose and expediting publication of the register of electors.

Sir V. Henderson: My right hon. Friend has no power to give any instructions of the kind suggested, but the Noble Lady should be satisfied with the statement recently made by the Prime Minister that suitable provision will if necessary be included in the Bill so as to enable the new voters to vote at the next General Election.

(Continued on page 31.)



COMING EVENTS.

BONCHURCH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

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

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

MARCH 6. 1 p.m. 117 Buckingham Street, Adelphi. Luncheon. Speaker: Miss M. Hole, "Rhodesia."

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Annual Council Meetings. MARCH 7-10. At St. George's Hall, Great Russell Street, W.C. Sessions: Wednesday, 2.30-4.30 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m.-12.45 p.m. and 2-4.30 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-12.45 p.m. and 3-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. All Sessions open to the public.

Reception. WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7. 8.45 p.m. King's College for Women, Campden Hill, W. 8. Musical Recital.

Mass Demonstration in Support of Equal Franchise. THURSDAY, MARCH 8. 8 p.m. In the Queen's Hall. Speakers include the Prime Minister. Overflow Meeting in the Mortimer Hall (close by) at 8 p.m. Chair: Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Speakers: Lady Astor, Sir Oliver Lodge, and others.

Public Luncheon. FRIDAY, MARCH 9. 1 p.m. In the Criterion Restaurant. Speakers: Mr. W. T. Layton, C.H., Sir Robert Newman, M.P., Mrs. Philip Snowden.

Edinburgh S.E.C. MARCH 2. 8 p.m. Usher Hall. Protest Meeting on the Edinburgh Corporation Bill. Speakers: The Viscountess Astor, M.P., Councillor Dorothy Jewson, Dr. Graham Little. Chair: Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

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

OPEN DOOR COUNCIL.

MARCH 9. 8 p.m. Y.M.C.A., Great Russell Street, W.C. Public Meeting.

SIX POINT GROUP.

MARCH 6. 5 p.m. 92 Victoria Street. Miss C. Haslett, "Women and Engineering." Chair: Miss Naylor.

TYPEWRITING AND PRINTING, Etc.

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

TO LET AND WANTED.

HAMPSTEAD.—Pleasant BED-SITTINGROOM (gas stove); 21s. weekly, including light, bath, bi-weekly attendance. Co-operative diningroom. Seen by appointment.—Miss Edgell, 34 Meadway Court, N.W. 11.

KENSINGTON.—Comfortably furnished BED-SITTING-ROOM, close to Earl's Court Station. Gas fires; meals in restaurant. Terms moderate. Tel., Western 1,201.—Box 1,464, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1.

TWO furnished ROOMS in private house, no attendance; 6 minutes from Tube.—34 Old Park Avenue, Balham.

LADY receives PAYING GUESTS, country home, overlooking golf course, delightful surroundings; every comfort, moderate terms; short or long visits.—Miss Knowles, Peppard Common, Oxon.

TO LET.—Two good unfurnished ROOMS, use of kitchen. Ladies only. St. Mark's Road, N. Kensington.—Box 1,493, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, S.W. 1.

KENDAL.—Restful and cheerful. From 2½ guineas a week. 350 feet up; grounds, 5 acres; open view to the sea. Tennis, golf links, garage. Excellent cooking. Motor buses to all parts.—Mrs. Williamson, Underfell, Kendal.

PROFESSIONAL.

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

PUBLIC SPEAKING.—Classes, Lectures, Private Lessons, Speech Club.—Miss Lucy Bell, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. 1.

JESSIE D. WALLINGTON (Drugless Practitioner) treats all conditions of ill-health by natural methods—spinal therapy, osteopathy, dietetics, etc. Particularly successful with nerve cases. Consultation by appointment.—37 St. George's Road, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W. 1. Telephone, Franklin 6487.

POST VACANT.

LIVERPOOL WOMEN POLICE PATROLS.—Wanted, Patrol for street duty. Previous experience of social work preferred. Height over 5 ft. 5 in., age 25-30, sound sight and hearing.—Apply by writing, Director, 5 Cases Street, Clayton Square, Liverpool.

FOR SALE AND WANTED.

HUTTON'S "NEVER-FADE" IRISH LINENS are ideal for Summer Dresses, Curtains, etc. Guaranteed absolutely fadeless, 2s. 10d. per yard (36 in. wide). 71 artistic colours including 10 newest shades. 71 Patterns FREE.—HUTTON'S, 47 Main St., Larne, Ulster.

KITCHEN OR PANTRY TOWELS.—Made from very strong Heavy Irish Linen Yarn, guaranteed all linen. Will wear for many years; size 22 x 27 ins., 9s. 6d. doz. Complete Bargain List FREE.—HUTTON'S, 47 Main St., Larne, Ulster.

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

DRESS.

SPECIAL.—LADIES' CHAMOIS GLOVES, white or natural 4s. 11d. pair, grey or fawn 5s. 11d. pair; exceptional value, guaranteed washable.—Mrs. Plevin, 126 Northgate, Chester.

LACE.—All kinds mended, cleaned and restored, embroidery undertaken; church work, monograms, initials.—Beatrice, Box 1,141, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Expert advice on what to do with your girls. Addresses to schools and societies in London and Provinces by arrangement.

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

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 4th March. 3.30, Sir Evelyn Murray, K.C.B. 6.30, G. Holland, Esq., "The Sense of Life."

CHARGES FOR PREPAID CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS.

	INSERTIONS.			
	One.	Three.	Six.	Thirteen.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
12 Words . . .	1 0	2 0	3 6	7
18 " . . .	1 6	3 0	5 3	10 6
24 " . . .	2 0	4 0	7 0	14 0
30 " . . .	2 6	5 0	8 9	17 6

Additional words at 1d. per word.

Payment may be made by postage stamps. Postal Orders and Cheques should be drawn to The Common Cause Publishing Co., and crossed.

If a copy of the paper is required, postage should be sent.

Persons using a Box Office Number and requiring replies to be forwarded by post must send sixpence to cover expenses.

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

15 DEAN'S YARD, LONDON, S.W. 1

Edward Wright & Cavendish Bentinck Lending Libraries.

These two libraries contain some three thousand volumes, including sections on current political, economic and social matters of special interest to women as citizens, as well as a historical section of the Women's Movement, which dates back to the 15th Century. Boxes containing approximately 20 books are available for Societies, Study Circles, etc.

SCALE OF CHARGES.

For individuals, 10s. 6d. per annum for two volumes per week, or 3d. per volume per week. Book-boxes 5s. per one month.

For Societies of the N.U.S.E.C., 15s. per annum or 5s. per book-box per three months.

For Societies other than those of the N.U.S.E.C., 25s. per annum, or 7s. 6d. per book-box per three months.

Inquiries should be addressed to the Honorary Librarian, at the above address.

N.B.—Carriage both ways to be paid by the subscribers.

THE WOMAN'S LEADER can be supplied direct from this Office for **1½d.** including postage. Send 6/6 to the Manager, WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1 (Telephone Victoria 6188), and the paper will be sent to you at any address for a whole year. Persuade your friends to do the same.

Please send THE WOMAN'S LEADER to me for twelve months. I enclose 6/6.

Name .....

Address .....