

THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Widows and Old Age Pensions.

The Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Bill has now become law. In the Lords an attempt was made to insert the means qualification for elderly widows which had been rejected in the Commons, but the Lower House refused to accept this and their Lordships submitted. Certain other of their minor amendments were accepted. Broadly speaking, the effect of the measure is to grant pensions to an additional 372,500 persons at an expenditure averaging nearly £8,000,000 per annum up to March, 1936, and about £5,000,000 per annum during the following ten years, after which the cost will rapidly diminish. By far the most important group of new entrants is that of the 295,000 widows aged 65-70 of men of the insured class who died too soon to insure for widows' pensions. Another important group is that of the 24,000 wives aged 65-70 of insured men over 70. There are also 18,000 pre-Act widows with children who will now draw until the youngest child is sixteen instead of fifteen as before. Pensioners who emigrate to countries within the British Dominions will continue to receive their pensions. While regretting that nothing has been done for spinsters, who in many cases are as necessitous as the widows included and receive less in proportion to their contributions than most other groups of contributors, it must be admitted that there were almost insuperable actuarial difficulties against including these. Opinions may differ as to whether the best possible use has been made of the expenditure involved. But certainly there are few of the persons included who are of other than very small means and we may comfort ourselves with the belief that very little of the money will be wasted on them.

Women and the Civil Service.

On 9th December the Royal Commission on the Civil Service resumed its sittings and almost immediately the question of the promotion and pay of women Civil Servants blazed into prominence. Sir John Anderson, Permanent Under-Secretary to the Home Office, referring to differences in the conditions of men and women, said that women had their own separate establishment and their own separate ladders of promotion. They were, he added, considering amalgamation, and he himself was in favour of such a step, though the transition from the present system would be difficult. In reply to a question whether such amalgamation would involve the same rates of pay for men

and women, Sir John Anderson replied emphatically: "No That is an entirely separate thing." Well—we suppose that we must admit that in the Civil Service, pay on the one hand, and work, status and training on the other, are in fact "entirely separate things". We hope, however, that one result of the Commission's work will be to establish an intimate connection.

Equality in the House of Commons.

It is regrettable to have to record that the Speaker has turned down the request of the women M.P.s that the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery shall be thrown open to women as well as to men of due distinction, although we understand that in making the request Dr. Marion Phillips, speaking on behalf of her colleagues, made it perfectly clear that a consequential part of her request was the opening of the Ladies' Gallery to men. The Speaker has expressed his opinion that the arrangements in force work well, and have done so for years, and that he is not in favour of any alteration at present. One is tempted to add that they may in truth have worked well enough for the distinguished men who have had access to the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery. But what steps has the Speaker taken to ascertain whether or no they have worked well for the distinguished women who have been excluded? And what about the undistinguished men who have suffered a corresponding exclusion from the Ladies' Gallery? We agree with the view expressed in our correspondence columns last week by the Duchess of Atholl that if we are to have sex-equality in the matter of gallery accommodation it should be a real sex equality.

The Death Penalty.

The Government has lost no time in appointing the promised committee to consider the case for the abolition of Capital Punishment. The task of its members, which include Dr. Ethel Bentham, the only medical woman who has so far been returned to Parliament, is not an enviable one. Public opinion as evinced by the recent debate in the House of Commons has undergone a complete change on this subject. A former Home Secretary, Sir Herbert Samuel, on that occasion spoke against the death penalty, and we think the majority of our readers will agree with him rather than with one of his successors, Lord Brentford, better known as Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who told us in *The Standard* last Friday "Why I believe that murderers should die". All will agree, however, with the latter's view that no difference should be made between the sexes. One difficult aspect of the proposed reform which has been raised by a correspondent (page 351) deserves the attention of the Committee, though it may not strictly fall within the terms of their reference: the position of the wife of a man condemned to lifelong imprisonment or in the event of his freedom after a period of years. The whole subject is beset with problems of the gravest character, and a balanced statement of the case for and against, weighted on one side by the conclusions of the Committee, will help the public to make up its mind before Parliament is faced by a final decision.

The New Chivalry.

Attention has recently been called in the Press to the effect which the appointment of women to the chairmanship of certain local government committees in Edmonton appears to have had upon the speed of business. Indeed, members who arrived late for the School Free Meals Committee last week were astonished to find that the business had been completed in their absence. Council meetings which formerly averaged three hours have now been reduced in length by about two-thirds, and a recent Education Committee is said to have completed its work in fifteen minutes. Members of the Conservative opposition explain the

situation in the following manner: "A sense of chivalry," they say, prevents them from discussing matters as exhaustively as they would be tempted to do were a man in the chair. It is a matter of experience that the quality of chivalry reveals itself in many ways. Sometimes it takes the form of an offer of undesired and inequitable privilege; sometimes of a denial of right in matters of economic opportunity or political prestige. It may recruit the casualty list of a shipwreck with the able-bodied fathers of families, or exclude self-dependent women from remunerative occupations. But we feel that the chivalry of the Edmonton Conservative Councillors is beyond reproach. It is twice-blessed. It habituates those who give to the practice of rapid thought and verbal conciseness, and it economizes the time, the energy and the temper of those who receive.

Anachronism.

The Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Guy Warman, speaking in Blackburn last week in vigorous support of an equal standard of sex morality for both sexes, added to his enlightened advocacy of a good cause the astonishing statement that "women were harder on their fallen sisters than men". The phrase seemed to echo most strangely the discarded platitudes of a bygone age. The very words "fallen sisters" have a pre-Victorian ring. It is clear, then, that Dr. Warman deserves a timely reminder of the fact that, with one exception, the most powerful champion that the "fallen sister" had had against the moral and social persecution of men, was a woman: Josephine Butler. We might add that the one exception was, like Josephine Butler, provoked to direct His strictures against the bitter censures not of women, but of men.

Ourselves.

We wish to draw the attention of our habitual and still more our non-habitual readers to the issue with which we inaugurate the new year. Last year's record has its bright and dark side, but it is brimming over with interest—it is a record that should be handed down in family archives for future generations. We have our usual list of well-informed contributors to whom is added Mrs. Hamilton, M.P., who will write on "Women in Literature" and Lady Bailey on "Women in the Air". Mrs. Hamilton's weekly broadcast talks on recent novels have introduced her to hearers throughout the country, and we are glad to include her review of the books of the year written by women among our other annual surveys. Lady Bailey's feats are known to everyone. We would like to begin the new year with a large influx of subscribers. May we again suggest that readers who are really interested in the spread of the subjects for which we stand—and in some cases stand alone—should help as our voluntary agents. In days past our friends stood in wet streets to sell *The Common Cause*. To-day we have the vote. Are we too indifferent to the women's movement to find new subscribers for a paper which offers a weekly summary of its development?

Married Women's Nationality.

We reprint a letter from Miss Chrystal Macmillan which appeared in *The Times* of 10th December in another column. In our issue of 25th October Miss Macmillan brought the position up to date, and we trust this letter will give the matter the wide publicity which is necessary. A large public does not, however, read *The Times* regularly, and Press secretaries of women's societies will do well to send abstracts to their local papers.

Scotland—County Council Elections.

The elections for County Councils took place in Scotland on 4th December, and six women were returned, making a total of nine with the three returned unopposed. Women have been elected for the first time to the councils of Banff, East and Mid-Lothian, Moray and Roxburgh.

Echoes from the Past.

We read in *The Evening News* that funds of a Society formed to oppose women's franchise have now been handed over to a hospital. We are glad that a medical charity should benefit but would suggest that if there are any other funds from the same source available, that a more logical choice would be some scheme of education of present or future women citizens untainted by feminist propaganda, if such can be found nowadays. How strange it must seem to the girls of to-day that such societies could ever exist.

Bathing.

We called attention in our issue of 27th September to the desirability of providing bathing places for women in the

Serpentine. It will be remembered that an anonymous donor recently offered to give £5,000 for the provision of children's play grounds in London parks, to enable both men and women to bathe in the Serpentine, and for sun bathing. That was, however, conditional on a similar sum being provided by the Treasury. We now read with much satisfaction in *The Times* that Treasury approval has now been given for a Government grant of £5,000.

The Distressed Areas and Christmas Presents.

An appeal from a mining town appeared in our last issue; to-day another way of helping presents itself. Those who saw the exhibition of quilted work at Lady Denman's house last week were astonished at the variety and originality of the designs and patterns. Not only large and small quilts but cushions, bags, cot covers, dressing gowns were displayed to excellent advantage. Those who were unable to see the exhibit should visit Country Industries, Ltd., and encourage this praiseworthy revival of handicrafts in districts where the need is so great and opportunities of earning the wherewithal of livelihood so few.

QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

Thursday, 28th November.

CHILDREN ACT, 1908 (AMENDMENT).

Dr. Phillips asked the Home Secretary whether he is now prepared to say what action he proposes to take to put into operation the recommendations of three Departmental Committees on Sexual Offences against Young Persons, on the Treatment of Young Offenders, and on Metropolitan Police Courts and Juvenile Courts respectively.

Mr. Clynes: Various recommendations of these Committees not requiring legislation have already been brought to the notice of the Courts. Some of the recommendations have already been passed into law, while others have been noted for legislation at a suitable opportunity. As soon as the state of public business permits the Government is anxious to introduce a Bill to amend the Children Act, 1908, and the recommendations of these Committees are being taken into consideration in the framing of the Bill. As regards the Committee on Metropolitan Police Courts and Juvenile Courts its recommendations do not require legislation, and steps have been taken or are being taken to give effect to all of them, including the recommendations in regard to the reorganization of the Juvenile Courts in London.

Thursday, 5th December, 1929.

WOMAN PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mr. Lovat-Fraser asked the Home Secretary if he is aware that there are 468 courts of summary jurisdiction where no women probationer officers have been appointed; and if he can say how many women and girls have appeared before these courts and how many of those have been put on probation.

Mr. Clynes: I am informed that the number quoted by my hon. Friend is approximately correct. I cannot give the particulars asked for in the second part of the question, but I am well aware that women and girls are placed on probation by Courts having no women probation officers. The matter was recently considered by the Probation Advisory Committee, and it is hoped shortly to issue to Magistrates a circular letter drawing their attention to the need for women probation officers.

WOMEN POLICE.

Sir N. Grattan Doyle asked the Home Secretary the authorized increases in the number of women police in the Metropolitan Police Area; whether it is proposed to extend the scope of the duties performed by the women police; and, if so, in what way.

Mr. Clynes: Yes, sir. The increase in immediate contemplation is from 50 to 100. The scope of the functions of a police woman as an attested constable is in law the same as in the case of a man, but in practice the policewomen will conform to a special scheme of duties which will be subject to variation in detail in the light of experience. Certain questions of organization are still under consideration.

POLICY.—The sole policy of THE WOMAN'S LEADER is to advocate a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women. So far as space permits, however, it will offer an impartial platform for topics not directly included in the objects of the woman's movement but of special interest to women. Articles on these subjects will always be signed, at least by initials or a pseudonym, and for the opinions expressed in them the Editor accepts no responsibility.

NOTES FROM WESTMINSTER.

The principal business of the week has again been the Unemployment Insurance Bill and the chief protagonists have been not so much the Government and the recognized opposition parties as the Government and the embryo fourth party within the Labour ranks. Nevertheless, one sometimes doubts whether the cleavage is as deep or as dangerous as some Press critics think, or pretend to think. There are some shrewd heads, Scottish and English, among the "over-principled ruffians" (Mr. Lloyd George's quotation from Bagehot fits too exactly not to stick) led by Mr. Maxton. None of them probably wants or intends to precipitate an early General Election. But there is obvious truth in the contention on which his colleague Mr. Wheatley has more than once insisted—that if the Government is ever to dare anything, the time for daring is now, before the laurels won in the autumn at the Hague, at Geneva, and in the U.S.A. have wilted and while the country is still too full fed with the last election for any party to risk forcing another.

Another consideration which they cannot have overlooked is that the actual effect of their internal dissensions is not so much to "comfort the enemy" as to increase the popularity of the Labour Government with the safe, moderate people, who, with some qualms, voted Labour at the last election. Every time they read of something being refused by Margaret Bondfield, or Greenwood, or Snowden, to their own extremists, these safe people probably congratulate themselves upon the wisdom of their choice and their attention is diverted from the criticisms of over-expenditure levelled by opposition critics. Thus Maxton and Co. can in fact safely indulge their consciences without any fear of really endangering their party or losing their seats. Perhaps their leaders' perception of this accounts both for the existence and the mildness of the disciplinary measures taken against them. The boys must be scolded for trying to steal the neighbour's apples, publicly, so that everyone may see how honest paterfamilias is, but not too severely, lest they be discouraged from providing paterfamilias with further equally useful opportunities of demonstrating his firmness and his honesty.

It is only when the Bill reaches Report stage—and that will probably have happened before these lines are in print—that

WOMEN POLICE—THE PRESENT POSITION.¹

By EDITH TANCRED.

We are met to discuss how to secure the appointment of Women Police. Two questions were asked in the House of Commons during the same week in July this year—one on the compulsory appointment of Women Police and the other on the appointment of Probation Officers made compulsory by the Criminal Justice Act, 1925.

Sir, your replies to these questions seem to me to put the case for the desirability of compulsory appointment of policewomen in a nut shell. With regard to Women Police: Sir George Penny (U., Kingston-on-Thames), asked the Home Secretary what his intentions are as regards the compulsory appointment of policewomen. Mr. Clynes replied: I think the employment of Women Police by local police authorities may well be encouraged where there is scope for them, but it is not in my opinion a matter for compulsion.

With regard to Probation Officers: Mr. Lovat Fraser (Labour, Lichfield) asked the Home Secretary (1) how many benches of magistrates have failed to appoint probation officers as required by the Criminal Justice Act, 1925; and (2) whether he intends to take any steps to enforce the law. Mr. Clynes in reply to the first part of the question about numbers said: "Apart from one combined area where arrangements are in progress . . . only 12 out of 1,028 Petty Sessional Divisions were returned as being without Probation Officers at the end of last year; and this figure includes casual vacancies. In reply to the second part of the question about enforcing the law, Mr. Clynes said: A good deal has been done in recent years to improve the organization of the Probation Service with encouraging results, and I do not think there are any other steps which my department should take at present.

There we think lies the reason for the exasperating delays and discouragements experienced by the movement for Women Police. Since the passing of the Police Act, 1919, nothing at all has been done by the Home Office to improve the organization of the service of Women Police and no attempt has been made to carry out the law.

Sir Ernley Blackwell—the first witness called for the Home

¹ Speech by Miss Tancred at recent Deputation to the Home Secretary. It will be concluded next week and notes of other speeches will follow.

we shall know what either the rebels or the opposition critics have actually gained. So far, the chief concessions promised are on two points. Miss Bondfield is to stiffen up the obligation imposed on local authorities to provide training centres or classes and on unemployed juveniles to attend them. Also she is once more to attempt to solve the insoluble by reframing the clause substituted for the condition as to "genuinely seeking work" which has been the object of such bitter and persistent attack. It has been increasingly obvious that the only effective way of making sure that an unemployed person has done his best to find work would be to compel employers to register all vacancies with the Labour Exchanges and to stamp the card of every registered applicant who presents himself. But employers do not want this because it would be troublesome and Trade Unions do not want it because it would interfere with their prerogative of acting themselves as exchanges. So Miss Bondfield as steersman is fated to continue to steer the ship between the Scylla of laxity and the Charybdis of harshness with the inevitable result of crashing on one or the other.

On the questions of increasing benefits and reducing the waiting period and ante-dating the operation of the Act, the Maxton group put up a gallant but unavailing fight. Jenny Lee did excellently in introducing the proposal to raise the children's allowances from 2s. to 5s. She has learnt something since her first appearance in the last Parliament, and now that her speeches are ballasted with solid argument and purged of the cheap tricks of the election platform, the charm of her youth and sincerity find a response in the House. But the Chancellor has put down his foot on this and other amendments intended to implement more adequately the promise of "work or maintenance," and certainly so long as wages are unsupplemented by family allowances, the argument that there is danger in raising the unemployment pay of the married man with dependents above that of his normal earnings is hard to meet.

At the present rate of progress, it seems hard to believe that the end of this week will see the Bill through the lower House, and we are beginning to look forward to a much shortened Christmas holiday.

CROSS-BENCH.

Office before the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure—says:—

"The position as regards the scope of the powers and duties of attested policewomen is thus a matter of law, and it does not appear to the Secretary of State that any alteration in this respect is called for."

In passing may I say that this seems to be a clear vindication of the position taken up by the N.C.W. for the last ten years that no fresh legislation is necessary for the establishment of Women Police.

If it is a matter of law, the law in question must be the Police Acts and what we ask is the application of the Police Acts to policewomen; that regulations should be made clearly defining the duties they will primarily be expected to perform—then "they will be brought within the scope of the Police Acts, 1890 to 1919, for all purposes". (Baird Committee, 1920.)

Mr. Dixon, Assistant Secretary in charge of Police Division at the Home Office, in his evidence describes the Police Act, 1919, as giving the Home Secretary power to make "far-reaching regulations as to conditions of service and the administration and organization of all Forces". Sir Ernley Blackwell assents to the proposition that the Home Secretary "controls the procedure of Police Forces throughout the country" first by H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary and second by regulations and circulars.

The only circular containing any instructions for policewomen is that of 21st November, 1924, which was sent to the Police Authorities with a copy of the Bridgeman Report. When a deputation representative of sixty-five nationally organized societies waited on the Home Secretary and the Secretary for Scotland on 26th March, 1924, Mr. Arthur Henderson said: "You are pushing an open door; you may take it from me that the principle of Women Police is granted." He went on to say: "The Home Office are much interested in the subject and are anxious to review the question in the light of the three and a half years' experience since 1920." He thereupon proposed to set up a Committee to review the experience and to make recommendations as to their future organization and duties. The Committee was composed of eminent police authorities and two women and they made, amongst others, two very important recommendations: (1) statements of women and children when

sexual crimes are in question to be taken by *policewomen*, (2) that the efficiency of the Police Force was improved by the employment of policewomen. That was FIVE YEARS AGO and the extent to which those instructions have *not* been carried out is indicated by the fact that only seven out of sixty County Police Forces and thirty-two out of one hundred and twenty-one Borough Police Forces employ policewomen—leaving one hundred and forty-two Police Forces in England and Wales employing no policewomen at all.

The reason for this deplorable state of affairs is startlingly revealed in Mr. Dixon's evidence on behalf of the Home Office before the Royal Commission. Asked to give the view of the Home Office with regard to the use of Women Police for the investigation of crimes and offences, Mr. Dixon said:—

"Our view is that the employment of Women Police in this field probably has a certain amount of scope on specialized lines: that at present it is in rather an experimental stage both as regards the question of principle and in particular as regards the best methods of making use of women for this purpose. . . . the women must find their own level. . . . one would like women to take the statements of girls and children. . . ."

The Chairman then asked: "Are you exercising your influence with the Police Forces generally in favour of the greater or less use of Women Police?" Mr. Dixon replied: "No. At present we are strictly impartial." The Chairman: "On the ground that you have not yet made up your minds?" Mr. Dixon: "Precisely."

This then is the view of the Home Office on 30th October, 1928, ten years after the appointment of the first official body of 112 policewomen for London—after the Departmental Committees of Inquiry for 1920 and 1924. After the issue of the Scottish and English Reports on Sexual Offences against Children, the Street Offences Report recognizing—"a special sphere of usefulness for Women Police," after the debates on the Savidge Case in the House of Commons in 1928—YET the Home Office has not made up its mind either on the principle of Women Police or on their method of employment.

The women's organizations met here to-day can assure you quite definitely that the views of the Home Office in no way reflect public opinion in the country generally. The report of the Royal Commission devotes much space and care to a careful study of Women Police and sums up in eleven recommendations on duties for Women Police. The members of the Committee were not specialists but representative public men and women weighing evidence in the same way as a British jury and their report (verdict) was "unanimous and without reservations of any kind". The *Times* leading article on 23rd March sums up the findings with regard to Women Police as follows:—

"There are only 150 policewomen in England, but the Commissioners consider this experiment so successful that they confidently recommend a substantial increase in their number and an extension in the scope of their employment." The N.C.W. with the help of the N.U.S.E.C. further tested the state of public opinion by approaching parliamentary candidates of all parties in 373 constituencies at the General Election. We asked for no pledge, but we received a great number of comments and replies from the candidates—the vast majority in full sympathy with our view that the *first step* is to obtain Statutory duties for policewomen; and it is on that point I now wish to say a few words.

(To be continued.)

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[We reprint the following letter from *The Times* of 10th December.]

MARRIED WOMEN'S NATIONALITY.

THE HAGUE CONFERENCE.

SIR,—May I call attention to another aspect of the nationality of married women not dealt with in your recent references to the question? I refer to the forthcoming Codification Conference of the League of Nations at The Hague next March, which will consider a possible international convention. It will be agreed that, if any convention is adopted, it should be in line with the trend of modern legislation and modern political thought, and not such as to prevent the introduction, or effectiveness, of legislation in line with that thought. And yet the agenda treats the married woman as a class apart and would seem to be largely conditioned by the assumption that a general rule, almost universal in Europe and North America twelve years ago, that a married woman follows the nationality of her husband, is still in force and suitable for crystallization internationally.

In the present-day world, however, there is no such general rule, nor does modern political thought support it. The great republics of South America have always recognized the independent nationality of the married woman. In these last 12 years the laws of Russia, of the United States of America, and of France, including Algeria, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Reunion, have provided that a woman national who marries a foreigner retains her nationality and that a foreign woman who marries a national of one of these countries does not acquire her husband's nationality unless she asks for it. Within the same time Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Belgium, Rumania, Yugo-Slavia, Turkey and Cuba have extended important nationality rights to married women. The Prime Minister before the General Election said he agreed that married women should have nationality in their own right. The First Committee of the German Reichstag has recommended a change in its law. The International Council of Women and the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship are holding a joint demonstration at The Hague at the time of the Conference to urge that a woman, whether married or unmarried, should have the same right as a man to retain, or to change, her nationality.

One proposal on the agenda, namely, that each state shall recognize that nationality may be acquired or lost by marriage, is specially dangerous for a married woman whose country has enabled her to retain her own nationality; for it might be interpreted as limiting the privileges she enjoys as a citizen of her own country. Another proposal, that loss of nationality by a woman on marriage with a foreigner should be conditional on her acquiring her husband's nationality, is intended to prevent statelessness. But it has to be remembered that to prevent a woman being stateless by imposing on her a nationality for which she has not asked, or to prevent her being of double nationality by taking from her a nationality she may wish to retain, is no substitute for the right to decide for herself, as a man decides, what her nationality should be.

One proposal is of special interest in recognizing modern tendencies, in that it gives a choice to the woman and also provides that a husband and wife may be of different nationalities. It is that which proposes that where a man changes his nationality during marriage a woman should not change hers without her consent.

One of the draft rules of the Conference calls for amendment. It is that which proposes that, whereas the plenary sessions of the Conference should be held in public, the sessions of the committee on nationality should be held in private. Private sessions are a danger to the weak, and especially so to the married woman, who under the proposals, unless these are radically altered, as I trust they may be, is dealt with separately, and therefore liable to be excluded from the safeguards provided for others.

CHRISTAL MACMILLAN.

4 Pump Court, Temple, E.C. 4.

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PERSONAL ATTENTION. MODERATE CHARGES.

PETRUCHIO.

*Petruchio*¹ leads Miss G. B. Stern into a strange new by-way of literary endeavour. In times past she has held her readers inexorably fettered within the palpitating framework of mundane life. Not that they have been unwilling prisoners; there is after all wide scope for movement and vivid colour within its four corners, and its absence of ceiling is well known. But now she conducts us along a new road, one on whose surface we see the print of Elizabeth's dancing feet en route for her *Enchanted April*.

Her story, true to its Shakesperian nomenclature, has a double plot. There is the story of the young Englishman who marries, in a fit of airy and reckless romance, a young and wholly primitive Italian peasant girl. For a while, and with the purposeful connivance of his putative mother, he allows her to fulfil her foolishness as a pampered *Signora*. Until at last, finding her unbearable, he assumes a new rôle (a long disused dramatic genius suddenly reawaking in him), whips her forcibly back to her native olive groves, plays the Mussolinian husband and knocks her into the shape of quite a decent contented and properly servile Italian peasant wife. But surprisingly enough, he finds in this new rôle a queer fulfilment of his own hereditary nature—and here we meet the contact of the second plot. For his mother, the American mother who kept him super-civilized, grateful and dependent, is not after all his mother, but his step-mother. And she too has a very pretty love affair of her own, mysteriously entwined with this same domestic complication. It is a delightful and unexpected story, remote and vivid and unreal, full of wit and imagination—the perfect anæsthetic for a crowded, slow, and grimy railway journey.

M. D. S.

"A SIMPLE TREATISE."²

The distinction between Central and Local Government is always found in civilized states and the relationship between the central and local institutions of a country must always be of great practical moment; for upon it will depend the real extent and value of the share open to the average citizen in the work of government.

It is the purpose of Miss Bright Ashford's book to make clear what that share may be, to deal with machinery and facts not with results. Those who have read it and who are not entirely devoid of vision will realize the great power possessed by local government for good or evil not merely over the material prosperity but over the character of the people. It is to be hoped that many readers of this excellent little book called by the author "A Simple Treatise" will also read those mentioned in the bibliography and take part in actual local government work themselves. Those debarred from doing this will certainly be helped to record their votes wisely by consideration of the facts so clearly put before them in this concise account of a vast and very complicated subject. Comments by the author are few, owing to limitation of space, but are those of a mind trained by practice and experience in these subjects. The inclusion of a chapter on Public Assistance is of particular value at this moment, bringing the book up to date in local government legislation. There is no topic before the public which has received so much attention as that of the Poor Law and there is no subject which deserves to be, and should be, more carefully studied by citizens. It is indeed to be hoped that those who read the few pages devoted to this subject in this book may have dormant interests revived and receive an impetus to inquire further into one of the most pressing social problems of the present, as of the past, generation. A special chapter is devoted to the government of London, the greatest example of local self government in the world. The need for a greater cohesive force in London government, for greater civic consciousness in her citizens is well known and the author of this book wisely recognizes that a knowledge of her municipal institutions, of her problems, and of her collective interests is necessary if this is to come about.

Other chapters, containing an immense amount of information, deal with Registration, Finance, Education, Public Health, Maternity and Child Welfare, Lunatics, Housing, Highways, Commons, Baths and Wash-Houses and Municipal Trading.

¹ *Petruchio*, by G. B. Stern. (Chapman and Hall, 7s. 6d.)

² *Local Government, a Simple Treatise*, by E. Bright Ashford, B.A. (P. S. King & Son, Ltd. 2s. 6d.)

Study of this great subject makes it clear that England is pre-eminently the country of local government. Central legislation has in recent times created, perhaps somewhat arbitrarily, new units and organs of local government. But the great outlines of local government in England were drawn ages before central government (as we understand it) came into existence.

That it is impossible to understand the present machinery of local government unless we know, however vaguely, something of its past is recognized in this book. Those who have studied the subject are aware of its own peculiar charm.

It is a good thing for all of us, whatever the subject, to recognize its highest ideal, to approach it with a fullness of purpose and with the hope that the time devoted to the furtherance of knowledge, from whatever standpoint, may be spent to the advantage of the individual and to the betterment of our fellow men. This "Simple Treatise" on Local Government will undoubtedly assist the average citizen in the achievement of these ends.

DEATH OF DON JUAN.

It is hard not to suspect Miss Brittain of having written *Halcyon*¹ as a great joke. We know Miss Brittain as an accomplished journalist, and this book of ninety-two pages is excellent journalism, written apparently at top speed and full of rollicking statements. We begin to scent the jester in her mouthpiece Professor Minerva Huxterwin when she tells us on page ii that "instruction in the technique of sex-intercourse. . . . is far more necessary to marital happiness than the most expert culinary skill"; and still more when we find birth control instruction recommended as part of the curriculum of every elementary as well as every well-conducted secondary school.

Before long we find a certain contradiction in many of the author's statements. For instance, she cannot forgive the Victorians for sleeping and eating together over long periods of years, monogamous in appearance, but in reality living lives of "camouflaged promiscuity." Yet the strict voluntary monogamists of the year 2000 are to be given a positive excess of accessibility. With silent airships providing week-end trips to Australia and America for a few shillings, no dangerous absences from one's lawful spouse or partner in a Second Contract will be possible for more than a day or two. The prostitute and the mistress (essentially different, we suppose, from the partner in second contract) will disappear from the social scheme, for all wives will be as alluring as education, economic freedom, lack of petty jealousy and rejuvenating serum can make them.

Miss Brittain promises us universal and genuine monogamy only after the complete removal of all restrictions upon the paid work of women. We are all to be married early, for love instead of subsistence. Farewell to all "dangerous" waiting and separation; to letter-writing and the love that grows vaster than empires and more slow. In place of inward resistance we are offered a series of "minute glandular operations", and all irrational passion will be treated indulgently as a physiological disability. And the mother who finds pregnancy exceptionally inconvenient has her little operation too—the unborn child will be removed one month after fertilization and grown in a Gestative Solution.

Miss Brittain seems to know quite a curious type of wives, described on page 86 as "green-house plants", "the well-groomed cow devoid of mental qualities", the "carefully-reared animals", but apparently she has never met our old friend the charwoman, or the spinners, weavers and winders of the textile trades. Some of the "provincial matrons" and "suburban aldermen" (what *are* suburban aldermen?), whose alleged strident indignation towards sex-reform Miss Brittain so much deploras, would be able to tell her that early marriage is almost universal among this considerable section of women who earn their living both before and after marriage. That "under-financed home to which she must not be permitted to contribute by her earnings" is a meaningless phrase to the cotton weaver who tends three looms, and her marriage is neither more nor less happy than that of other people, and the possession of some culinary skill tends to marital harmony. On the whole, we think that sexual normality is fairly general and the best sex-instructor the person one loves. Miss Brittain certainly enjoyed writing this booklet, but she has not killed Don Juan yet.

A. L. W.

¹ *Halcyon, or the Future of Monogamy*, by Vera Brittain. (Kegan Paul, 2s. 6d.)

COMING EVENTS.

B.B.C.

Wednesday, 18th December. 10.45 a.m., Mrs. Oliver Strachey: "A Woman's Commentary."

ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN.

20th December. 7.30 p.m. 46 Kensington Court, W. 8. Display of Cinematograph Films, arranged by British Electrical Development Association.

HOWARD LEAGUE FOR PENAL REFORM.

13th December. 1 p.m. Luncheon. Pinoli's, Wardour Street, W. 1. Speaker: Mrs. Rackham, J.P.: "Public Opinion and the Treatment of Crime."

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE.

17th December. 5.30 p.m. Annual Meeting. 46 Tufton Street, S.W. 1. Tea obtainable in restaurant before meeting. For Agenda see WOMAN'S LEADER, 29th November.

MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.

13th December. 8 p.m. W. McG. Eager, Esq.: "Youthful Rights and Crusted Wrongs."

NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

Edinburgh W.C.A.—14th December. 11 a.m.—6.30 p.m. East Room, 27 Rutland Street, Exhibition of Handicrafts.

17th December. 7.30 p.m. Dance, bridge and progressive whist. Palais de Danse, Fountainbridge (in aid of Association funds).

Kensington and Paddington S.E.C.—12th December. 5.15 p.m. Pembroke Lodge, Pembroke Gardens, W. 8. Rev. Geikie-Cobb: "The Need for Marriage Law Reform." Chair: Lady Victor Horsley.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

12th December. 4.30 p.m. Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, Miss Morgan Gibbon: "My Election Experiences." Chair: Miss Flowers.

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HOVE.—"Wendover," 29 Lansdowne Place, Board-residence; minute sea; separate tables; gas fires bedrooms.

AVAILABLE FOR PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, small furnished bedroom with use of bath in private flat in W.C. 1 district (no meals); 20s. weekly.—Box 1,578, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 4 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON AND NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE, 35 Marsham Street, Westminster. Secretary, Miss P. Strachey. Expert advice on Openings and Trainings for professional women; interviews 10—1 (except Saturdays) or by appointment.

EDUCATED HOME HELPS BUREAU, 190 Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 1, requires and supplies educated women for all domestic work. Holiday engagements. Registration: Employers, 2s. 6d.; workers, 1s. Suiting fee: Employers, 10s. 6d.; workers, 2s. 6d. (Victoria 5940.)

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, 14th December, 6.30 p.m., Maude Royden: "Some Emotions and the Guildhouse."

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