

THE  
**WOMAN'S LEADER**  
 AND  
**THE COMMON CAUSE**

Vol. XV. No. 25.



FRIDAY, JULY 20, 1923.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR POSTAL SUBSCRIBERS:—BRITISH ISLES, 6/6; ABROAD, 8/8.

FROM

THE COMMON CAUSE PUBLISHING CO., LTD., 15 DEAN'S YARD, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1.

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**NOTES AND NEWS**

**Rocks Ahead.**

The British Government has at last defined its attitude to the German note which has lain for so many weeks unanswered. The long period of delay was, as everybody knows, dictated by the hope that joint action with France might eventually be achieved. As to whether such delay was justified in view of the rapid deterioration of German economic conditions and the scepticism which many people felt regarding the reality of M. Poincaré's desire for an economic settlement, opinion is sharply divided. Now that it is at an end, opinion is united. With insignificant exceptions the people of this country agree with Mr. Baldwin that the Ruhr occupation is a disastrous method of debt collection, that the recent German offer of an impartial enquiry is worthy of consideration, and that the time is ripe for the British Government to take the initiative in saying so. Meanwhile, the reception of Mr. Baldwin's statement by the Paris Press, and M. Poincaré's answering reiteration at Senlis of an unchanging attitude suggest that this new phase of our own policy may lead the paths of French and British diplomacy still further asunder. Should this be the case, we believe that the people of this country have sufficiently long war memories and a sufficient understanding of French fears and difficulties to avoid slipping into anything resembling the national animosity which characterized Anglo-French relations in pre-Entente days. The substitution of French militarism for German militarism has not assisted the cause of European peace. Nor would that cause be assisted by the substitution in this country of an anti-French feeling for an anti-German feeling.

**Women and Cambridge University.**

The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Bill was considered in Committee on Wednesday, 11th. It was a great disappointment that the amendment moved by Mr. Butler to provide that the Commissioners of Cambridge University should make statutes and regulations in accordance with the recommendation of the Cambridge Committee of the Royal Commission on the Universities was lost. This amendment would have had the effect

of admitting women with certain exceptions to full membership of the University. The amendment was moved in an admirable speech by Mr. Butler, who made clear the harm which their non-admission to membership is having on the education of women at Cambridge, and on the University, and how, moreover, Oxford and Cambridge Universities were in a unique way national institutions supplying a particular kind of education to both men and women which could not be got elsewhere. The State therefore could not step aside. He was supported by Mr. Graham and others, but unfortunately both the Minister for Education and Mr. Fisher spoke against the amendment on the grounds that the change is one which, however desirable in itself, should be carried out by the Universities. As we have frequently pointed out in these columns, this "autonomy cry" is ludicrous on the consideration of a Bill which in its very essence consists of nothing but interference with the internal affairs of the University!

**A Point Gained.**

One cause for rejoicing is found in the carrying of Mrs. Wingham's amendment which provided for the appointment of a woman on the Statutory Committees of each University. This is a point for which the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship has been fighting for over a year, and if, as is only too possible, provision for the admission of women to membership will be determined by the Commission, the presence on the Commission of a woman will be extraordinarily valuable. With regard to Oxford, as the Statutory Committee for this University will be considering matters affecting both men and women Members of the University, the appointment of a woman is of great importance.

**Guardianship, etc., Bill, 1923—for and against in Committee.**

Interesting evidence has been given before this Committee this week by Sir James Greig, who presented an admirable digest of the laws relating to the Guardianship of Children

abroad and in the Dominions. He showed the extent to which Equal Guardianship Laws obtain in the United States—in that out of 48 States 34 have adopted the principle, so also in Canada has British Columbia and Alberta. Sir James, who, as the Member in charge of the Bill when it was before the House in 1921, spoke warmly in favour of it, and pointed out how the fact that the principle was being adopted in an increasing number of States was proof that it is not an insuperable difficulty to work out the principle in practice.

On Monday Sir Chartres Byron, Chief London Magistrate, gave evidence against the Bill very much on the same lines as his evidence last year. Though bound to admit that there are certain gaps in the present law by which the mother suffers hardships, at the same time he is on his own confession so imbued by the fact that the father for "obvious reasons" should be regarded as the sole guardian of the child, that he finds many of the administrative problems insuperable. The Committee is obtaining the opinion of all London Magistrates on the Bill.

#### The Illegitimate Child—The Bastardy Bill.

It is satisfactory to report that the above Bill has passed its Committee Stage and Third Reading in the House of Lords. A small amendment was moved by the Government and accepted by Lord Astor, so that the Bill will have to return to the House of Commons before it receives Royal Assent.

#### Legitimacy Bill.

With regard to this Bill it is also satisfactory to note that Lord Salisbury has announced in the House that if the Bill is amended in the House of Lords in the Autumn Session the Government will do its best to arrange time for the amendments to be considered in the House of Commons, so that the Bill can become law this session.

#### The Axe at Work.

The question of the Metropolitan Women Police has been again raised in the House of Commons. On Wednesday in reply to questions from Lady Astor, Mr. Bridgeman admitted the value of the services of Women Police, but gave no indication that larger numbers were contemplated. The following day the matter arose again on the vote for the Home Office, when the urgency of the need for the protection of children against indecent assault was dwelt on in speeches by Mr. Briant, Lady Astor, and Mrs. Wintringham. *The Times*, in a sympathetic leading article on Friday entitled "Children First", pleads for the children, and states that the reduction of the number of women police to save a sum of something like £20,000 was totally unjustified. During the same discussion the inadequacy of the factory inspectorate was also referred to by Mr. Arthur Greenwood, Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, and others. It was pointed out that each inspector had every year to inspect 1,400 factories and workshops. The cost to the community of unnecessary accidents cannot be estimated though perhaps more capable of calculation than the cost of the ruin of child lives. But unfortunately the expense of a few additional salaries can easily be ascertained and an unimaginative nation allows such economies to be continued at the expense of human lives.

#### Lady Astor's Bill.

Lady Astor's Bill preventing the sale of intoxicants to young people for consumption in bars went triumphantly through its Report and Third Reading stages on Friday morning by 257 votes to 10. It is well that the rights of minorities should be safeguarded, but in view of the exceedingly small opposition, it seems a lamentable waste both of the time of the House and of the patience of the Bill's promoters that the small group of obstructors should have been able to hold the measure up by various well-known Parliamentary devices. The two hours on Friday were made full use of by Sir Frederick Banbury, who read lengthy extracts from Hansard and from other documents in inaudible tones and at a funeral pace which bored, if it did not actually irritate, the House. To him this prodigious success of a Private Member's Bill and the facilities afforded by the Government could be attributed to one cause, and to one cause only—the fatal feminine attractions of the promoter of the Bill!

The interests of sane temperance reform were well served by Mr. Scrymgeour, who in a speech of bitter but sincere invective denounced the Bill as a piece of hypocritical humbug, because it did not ask for total prohibition for adults and juveniles alike. Lady Astor made an admirable ten minutes' speech at the end in her own mixture of earnestness and gaiety. To the timid souls who nervously asked for assurances that this was not to be the first of a series of Temperance Bills, she very properly replied that it was not for her to say, but that it lay with public opinion and the House of Commons to secure fresh legislation as and when the demand for change made itself felt.

#### The Forces of Reaction.

Only the following ten Members could be found to vote against the third reading of the Intoxicating Liquors (Sale to Persons under Eighteen) Bill: Right Hon. Charles W. Bowerman, Right Hon. Sir William James Bull, Major William Phillips Colfox, L. Forestier Walker, C. S. Garland, Lieut.-Col. Sir F. Hall (Dulwich), Sir Neville Paul Jodrell, Col. H. Mercer, C. K. Murchison, and E. W. Shepperson. Tellers for the Noes: Sir Frederick Banbury and Lieut.-Col. Sir Martin Archer-Shee. Tellers for the Ayes: Viscountess Astor and Mr. Isaac Foot.

#### Women in Local Government.

Two outstanding successes of women candidates have recently occurred. Miss Snodgrass, who was unfortunately defeated last year after ten years' successful experience on the Glasgow City Council, was returned after a stiff fight by a majority of 373 in another ward at a by-election caused by the death of the sitting councillor. As all the three candidates went to the poll as so-called "moderates" it was obvious that sex prejudice was still at work in the opposition to Miss Snodgrass, but the women worked splendidly and the men voted with discrimination, with this most satisfactory result. Another fight resulting in the successful return of a woman is reported from Cambridge, where Miss Ellen Briscoe was recently elected a member of the Cambridgeshire County Council. Miss Briscoe is Chairman of the County Federation of Women's Institutes, and was for many years a member of the local Board of Guardians, as well as member for some years of the County Education and Insurance Committees. In Glasgow, in a ward where "everybody" goes out of town for the three summer months, there was a conspicuously small poll, but it is worth recording that in Cambridgeshire 712 voted out of a possible 837. Such interest in local Government is alas rare indeed.

#### Women and the Professions.

The Members of North Bow Congregational Church, Roman Road, London, E., have unanimously invited Miss M. G. Collins to become their Minister. Miss Collins received her theological training at New College, Hampstead. Miss Margaret Henderson Kidd, daughter of Mr. James Kidd, formerly M.P. for Linlithgowshire, was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh last week. Miss Helena Normanton, in wig and gown, took her seat among counsel at the Old Bailey yesterday. She is the first lady barrister to do so.

#### STOP PRESS

##### Latest News of Women's Bills.

The Matrimonial Causes Bill, the story of which Major Entwistle tells in another column, receives the Royal Assent to-day. As we go to press we are delighted to hear that the Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance Orders) Bill goes into Committee next Wednesday.

*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 women'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.

## NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

By OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT.

On Friday the Rent Restriction Bill followed the Housing Bill to the House of Lords; and our hard-worked Minister of Health may begin to look forward to a spell of comparative tranquillity. Its satisfaction may be poisoned by the memory of last Wednesday's "climdown" over the cherished reference committee sub-section. On the face of it all parties appear to have been satisfied by the acceptance of Sir Ryland Adkin's amendment, which in effect shelves the whole question by providing that the disputed committees do not become operative unless both Houses subsequently pass a resolution in their favour. It is doubtful, however, whether Mr. Chamberlain's satisfaction at the compromise is as fundamental as Sir Frederick Banbury's.

On the following day the Prime Minister's eagerly awaited statement on his reparations policy was read simultaneously in both Houses. In the Upper House it was followed by a short discussion—characterized by Lord Curzon as "a little irregular". In the House of Commons it was not discussed at all. It is generally believed that the statement as originally drafted was heavily expurgated at the cabinet meeting which preceded its publication. Every phrase likely to cause unnecessary irritation to M. Poincaré—including an expression of opinion on the part of the Law Officers of the Crown that the Ruhr occupation is not legally covered by the provisions of the Treaty—was carefully toned down. Little was given to the House beyond a bare statement of the Government's intention to take the initiative in accepting the German offer of an impartial enquiry into her reparation-paying capacity. Whether or no this reply will eventually be forwarded to Berlin in the name of the British Government alone or in the names of the four allied Powers remains to be seen. Meanwhile Mr. Baldwin has the united support of the House of Commons in the action which he is about to take. Very great is the general satisfaction that this country has at last a policy.

On Friday the long, intolerable strain on Lady Astor's patience was compensated by the thundering majority by which the House of Commons carried her "Under Eighteen" Bill. It was not any rebirth of good sense which in the end wore down

the destructive tactics of the Banbury group; but rather a definite assurance from Government quarters that time wasted on Friday would be made good at the expense of Government business at a later date. Apart from the size of the majority the debate was in no way remarkable. Everybody said exactly what everybody expected them to say. But it was sad to see a man so young as Major Colfox among the handful of hardened veterans who fought and died in the first ditch before the outer defences of alcoholic individualism.

On Monday the House reverted to its discussion, interrupted on 20th March, of the pros and cons of capitalism. A debate of this kind on a subject so vast in its scope, in an assembly economically so uneducated, is bound to be disappointing. Its hearers would have learned more about the possibilities and dangers of socialism had the discussions been concentrated upon a definite and concrete socialist proposal, such as the Sankey nationalization scheme. As it was, the speeches were for the most part strings of ill-supported generalizations with a few irrelevant facts thrown in here and there like currents in a bun. The most interesting and intriguing speech was perhaps that of Mr. Lloyd George. And though the lobbies subsequently buzzed with the derogatory comments of his past and present supporters he was the only anti-socialist speaker who attempted to argue out the most effectual anti-socialist point: that Great Britain, by reason of her peculiar and precarious economic conditions, is the worst country in the world in which to try socialist experiments. He did not argue the point well, but he did it better than anybody else. However, there is nothing to be said on behalf of the fatuous proposal for an inquiry into the causes of our present industrial discontents, with which Mr. Lloyd George wound up his curiously double-edged attack on socialism. Indeed, nobody took it seriously at all. An inquiry forsooth! How many inquiries has Mr. Lloyd George initiated into this very question—and into what dark departmental pigeon-holes has he stuffed their various recommendations for reform?

*[The views expressed in this column are those of our Parliamentary correspondent, and are not our editorial opinion. Like so many other things in this paper they are expressly controversial, and comment upon them will be welcomed.—ED.]*

## THE ADVENTURE OF A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL.<sup>1</sup>

By C. F. ENTWISTLE, M.P.

*In this and in next week's issue Major Entwistle tells the story of how the Bill for Equality in Divorce drafted by the N.U.S.E.C. was passed into law.*

It is one of the great drawbacks of our Parliamentary system that it is almost impossible for a Private Member to introduce a Bill on any subject of wide and general interest and get it passed through all its multifarious stages into law. It is difficult enough for the Government, with its power of appropriating the whole of Parliamentary time, to get through its own legislation, and the "slaughter of the innocents" is a familiar sight at the end of every session. I have known many admirable measures, even though "starred" by the Government, go year after year without getting on to the Statute Book.

#### THE ART OF OBSTRUCTION.

The House of Commons is rightly very jealous of the power of criticism vested in the individual. The necessary corollary of this is that a skilful Parliamentarian single-handed can work wonders in the gentle art of obstructing legislation. In later days the amendment of procedure, by the introduction of new forms of closure of variegated and picturesque nomenclature, such as "the kangaroo" and "the guillotine," has considerably curtailed this power of obstruction, but not nearly to the extent of giving a Private Member a reasonable chance of piloting a Bill through the House.

In the last Parliament the Government made a practice of expropriating for its own business the whole time of the House. In this Parliament the Government has relaxed to the extent of allowing two or three Fridays for the second reading of Private Members' Bills, and two Fridays for the report and third reading

stages. A ballot was held to determine the order of precedence in which Members could select a Friday for the second reading of their Bill.

#### ORDER OF PROGRESS.

If a second reading was secured it was essential to obtain a rapid passage through the Committee stage of the Bill upstairs, as the Bill first through Committee had precedence in obtaining one of the two days allotted for the report and third reading.

As most people are aware, a Bill to become law has to be read a first and second time in the House, then it has to go through a Standing Committee, in which it can be drastically amended. Afterwards it has to go through a report stage in the House, where it can again be amended, and finally the Bill has to be read a third time. The Bill is now through all its stages in the House of Commons, but it has by no means completed its adventurous course. The same stages have to be gone through in the House of Lords. If the Lords amend it in any particular, the Bill has to come back to the House of Commons to see if the Commons are prepared to accept the Lords' amendments. If they disagree the Bill again goes to the Lords, and this game of shuttlecock may proceed for a considerable time until either the Lords and Commons at last agree, or the Bill is lost through lack of time. If the Bill is a Private Member's Bill, any amendment by the Lords will probably be fatal, as no time is allotted to Private Members' Bills for consideration of Lords' amendments.

It will be seen from the above that I embarked upon a tremendous undertaking when I set out to get my Bill for Equal Divorce passed into law.

<sup>1</sup> Matrimonial Causes Bill, 1923.



**NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.**

Offices : 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W. 1.  
Telephone : Victoria 6188.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.**

The Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women will be held in Edinburgh on 16th to 22nd October, 1923. The N.U.S.E.C. is entitled to appoint ten representatives. Affiliated Societies are asked to nominate Delegates and to send in their names to Headquarters by Monday, 23rd July.

**NO-MORE-WAR DEMONSTRATION.**

The N.U.S.E.C. is anxious to send a banner to the above Demonstration in London on Saturday, 28th July. Those who would be able to help by carrying the Banner or by marching behind it are asked to communicate with Headquarters.

**NEWS FROM SOCIETIES. STROUD AND DISTRICT W.C.A.**

A joint meeting of the Stroud and Ebley Branches of the above was held in the garden at Ebley Court, by kind permission of Lady Proctor Beauchamp, on Thursday, 12th July. Mr. Ford, of Newport, gave a most interesting and inspiring address, describing the doings of the Newport Branch, and reporting on the Plymouth Conference. The meeting numbered well over 100, and great enthusiasm was shown.

**DURHAM S.E.C.**

A garden fête under the auspices of the Durham Society for Equal Citizenship took place in the grounds of Dr. T. B. and Mrs. Jevons' residence, North Bailey, Durham, yesterday. There were varied attractions, including a performance by children trained by Mrs. W. T. McDermid and folk dances by girls from the Durham County School. Miss E. Christopher, Principal of St. Hilda's College, presided, and the opening ceremony was performed by the Mayoress (Mrs. Robert McLean).

**NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE.**

Mrs. Fawcett, J.P., L.L.D., will contribute an article. Major Entwistle's will be concluded, while one on Summer Schools will be of topical interest. Owing to pressure on space the column entitled "The Law at Work" has been omitted this week.

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1923-1924

APPEARING EARLY AUTUMN

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Edited by Miss EVELYN GATES

with the assistance of

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(b) The Guardianship and Custody of Infants Bill, also initiated and promoted by the N.U.S.E.C. and now under consideration by a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, would make a woman, for the first time, the legal parent and guardian of her children equally with the father.

(c) The Separation and Maintenance Orders Bill, also the N.U.S.E.C.'s own Bill, and likely soon to become law, makes it easier for a woman to obtain relief from a cruel or neglectful husband.

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 JULY 22. Blandford and Toxeth.  
 JULY 23. Oxford, St. Albans.

JULY 24. Oxford.  
 JULY 25. Wellingborough and Oxford.  
 JULY 26. Oxford.  
 JULY 27. Steyning, Oxford.

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IRISH LINEN PILLOW-CASES.—Plain linen pillow-cases made from real good quality of Irish linen, which we can recommend. 4 plain cases, size 20 x 30 ins., for 14s. Hemstitched linen pillow-cases, real good quality, size 20 x 30 ins., 2 cases for 13s. 6d. Write for Summer Sale List—TO-DAY.—HUTTON'S, 41 Main Street, Larne, Ireland.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LONDON SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE.—Secretary, Miss Philippa Strachey. Change of Address: After 21st June, address Wellington House, Buckingham Gate. Enquiries: Room 6, 3rd floor.

THE PIONEER CLUB has reopened at 12 Cavendish Place. Town Members £3 5s.; Country and Professional Members £4 4s. Entrance fee in abeyance (*pro. tem.*).

THE FELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Eccleston Guild House, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1: Sunday, 22nd July, 3.15, Music, Poetry, Lecture, Dr. Deamer, 6.30, Maude Royden: "An Old Testament Story and a modern Play."

ALLEVIATE LONELINESS by forming Congenial Friendships, home or abroad.—For particulars write, Secretary, U.C.C., 16 L, Cambridge Street, S.W. 1.

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