

THE  
**WOMAN'S LEADER**

IN POLITICS                      IN LITERATURE AND ART  
IN THE HOME                    IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
IN INDUSTRY                    IN THE PROFESSIONS

AND  
**THE COMMON CAUSE**

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# THE WOMAN'S LEADER

AND  
COMMON CAUSE.

**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.

**SUBSCRIPTION**—British Isles, 10s. 10d. per annum, post free; Abroad, 13s. Subscriptions should be sent direct to the Manager, THE WOMAN'S LEADER, 62, Oxford Street. Unexpired subscriptions to "The Common Cause" have been transferred to THE WOMAN'S LEADER. CONTRIBUTIONS should be addressed to the Editor, who, however, accepts no responsibility for unsolicited matter. MSS. not used will be returned if accompanied by a stamped envelope. CORRESPONDENCE should reach the Editor not later than the first post on Monday. The Editor's decision as to insertion is final. PROSPECTUS.—The Common Cause Publishing Co. is issuing new £1 shares to the value of £10,000. Prospectus and all information to be obtained from the Manager, Common Cause Publishing Co., 62, Oxford Street, W. 1. Telephone: Museum 2702.

## NOTES AND NEWS.

### Murder or Attempted Murder?

The Representation of the People Bill has narrowly escaped assassination by the Standing Committee appointed to consider it. This is recorded in our leading article. Since that article was written, however, the face of affairs has changed. On Monday, the Labour members serving on the Committee addressed the following letter to the Chairman, Mr. William Nicholson: "We, the undersigned members, serving on Standing Committee D, being of opinion that a Bill referred to a committee should be dealt with in accordance with the standing orders, that hypothetical arguments regarding the ultimate fate of a Bill cannot justify the majority of those present in declining to proceed with that Bill, and that a motion adjourning the committee is not in itself sufficient to prevent the consideration of a Bill in all its clauses, beg to request you as chairman of Standing Committee D, in respect of the Representation of the People Bill, to summon a meeting of the committee to proceed with the consideration of that Bill." In response to that letter we hear, as we are going to press, that the Committee has been summoned to meet again this week. We hope, therefore, that the attempt has failed, but we cannot yet feel out of danger. We await events with some anxiety and with the indignation which such unworthy manoeuvres deserve. Sir Frederick Banbury's endeavour to kill the Bill by making the Standing Committee commit suicide was an ingenious idea, and quite worthy of such an old and hardened anti-suffragist; but we think that members of the Government were singularly ill-advised in lending their support to it. The Government is pledged to remove existing inequalities between men and women, and the fact that women between twenty-one and thirty have no votes is the most glaring of these inequalities. A very strong feeling was shown about it by young Labour women at the Conference last week, and we know that young professional women also deeply resent the delay in their enfranchisement. We think that M.P.'s who seek to put off the granting of votes to those who should be their constituents are merely laying a rod in pickle for themselves; but, no doubt, long before the time when those who are twenty-one now have grown to be thirty, these M.P.'s will be saying (and believing) that they always wished young women to have votes.

### Pensions for the Blind.

Dr. Addison has introduced a Bill in the House of Commons providing that blind persons unable to work shall receive a State pension of ten shillings a week at the age of fifty. This is a measure which not even the sternest economist will oppose. At the same time, what the blind most need is training rather than maintenance. The blind man who lives at ease is very little happier if at all than the blind man who works desperately hard for an insufficient living. The divergence between the practice of some American States and our own is instructive. There is an American city which has set apart a magnificent room at its public library for blind readers, providing an excellent choice of books in Braille type, and an attendant who waits on the

readers' smallest wish. The readers are escorted to and from their reading room, no expense is spared, and it is considered almost an outrage that they should earn a penny or move a hand to help themselves. They are not happy. The blind boys at Worcester College, the ex-soldiers at St. Dunstan's, learning to fend for themselves, are in very different case. We should only make shift to shield the blind from the world if we have missed our chance of training them to face it.

### Burning Controversies.

In view of the Budget proposals about taxes on excess profits the article by Col. Burn, M.P., which we publish this week, is of peculiar interest. In connection with this article and with others in the present and in forthcoming issues we wish to emphasise our policy, as stated at the head of these notes. Special taxes on profits, or on high incomes, the nationalisation of industry, labour proposals about social problems, trade guilds, food control, and drink legislation, are all subjects of burning interest to every citizen. They are also subjects of burning controversy. We believe that in giving a free field for discussion of these problems we shall do real service; but we exhort our readers not to content themselves with reading one article in our columns on any of these subjects, and, above all, not to read all the articles on one side and neglect the opposing ones. Those who follow the controversies week by week in our pages will, we think, find illumination, and be helped in making up their own minds if they have not already done so, or in finding arguments to strengthen their convictions if they have. Meanwhile, we hope they will not be indignant with us on account of views with which they disagree, and which are expressed in signed articles, or by correspondents. Our own views will be found in the leading article and in these notes, but must not be looked for elsewhere.

### The Work of the League.

It is a great disappointment to those interested to hear that the Assembly of the League of Nations is not to meet until the Autumn. So far only the Council has met, and this, as is pointed out by the League of Nations Union in its organ, is only the Cabinet, as distinct from the Parliament of the League. It will be a great step forward when the more democratic and representative Assembly gets to work. Meanwhile, however, a good deal has been done in the last two months. The League has appointed a committee of jurists to formulate plans for the constitution of the Permanent Court of International Justice; it has co-opted the existing International Commission of Enquiry on Freedom of Communications and Transit as a provisional International Committee for Communications and Transit under the League, to give way some months hence to a permanent body similar to the International Labour Office; it has decided to set up a Health Bureau, and in order to deal with the present typhus epidemic in Poland a permanent Consulting Committee in hygiene is meeting in London. The League is taking in hand the matter of the relief and repatriation of ex-

enemy prisoners of war in Siberia; it is convening an International Financial Conference with a view to studying the present financial crisis and finding means of remedying it; and it is sending a mission to Russia, accompanied by a mission appointed by the International Labour Office. The success of the Washington Labour Conference and the establishment of the International Labour Office may be added to the list of the infant League's notable achievements. In addition, the League has been given certain onerous and extensive duties in connection with the Treaties of Peace. Such duties include, for instance, the appointment of numerous commissions, and the interpretation, in doubtful cases, of provisions of the Treaties. The appointment of Commissions for the Saar Valley and for Danzig was made at the first meeting of the League. The great task of the limitation of armaments has still to be undertaken.

### The League of Nations Monthly.

A great deal of the above information is gathered from "To-day and To-morrow," the monthly journal of the British League of Nations Union. We hope that many of our readers already study this periodical, which contains much important information not to be found elsewhere. Like ourselves, it has lately changed its name: it was formerly known as "The League." We wish it prosperity in its work for our common cause. Last week a correspondent asked us to allot some space every week to news of the League of Nations, and to record the doings of its Council or Assembly. This we intend to do. A weekly record will, we are sure, be of interest to our readers. We would call attention also to the articles on "Women in the League of Nations," and kindred subjects, which we are now publishing. But we hope that our readers will not stop at the information that we supply, but will go direct to the literature of the League of Nations Union.

### The Unhappiest Nation.

The case of Armenia is a living example of the urgent necessity for a real League of Nations with a body as well as a spirit. Of all the oppressed nations which it was hoped that the great war would set free, there is surely none in all the world that has suffered as bitterly as Armenia. Her murderous oppressor has now fallen; but among those who set her free there are none who are ready to undertake responsibility for her future. Among the great powers, America would be the obvious one to answer for the future of Armenia, and it is said that the President himself would be willing to assume full responsibility for a mandate, if he could hope for support from Congress. But the American people are at this time deeply discouraged from foreign ventures, and are disinclined to accept the responsibilities which, it seems to many of us, they have already incurred by their participation in the Great War. The Council of the League of Nations, on the other hand, is, we believe, not so much disinclined to accept the mandate as perplexed how to carry out the responsibility if it does so. It has neither the necessary funds nor the necessary force at its disposal.

### Scottish Education.

The Advisory Council of the Scottish Education Department conferred on April 22nd with the Secretary for Scotland. Mr. Munro made some interesting remarks on Advisory Councils in general, and on the work of this particular one. He said:—"Educational interest in Scotland was, and always had been, widespread and keen, and it could not be said that in the past the Department had suffered from any lack of advice and criticism. But that advice, or criticism, had hitherto been in a large part irresponsible, sporadic, and unco-ordinated in its character. When the Act of 1918 came to be framed, they felt that there was need, as part of the general and permanent educational organisation, for an authoritative body of carefully selected persons, who, after duly sifting and investigating the questions referred to them, should advise the Department in a responsible manner. On the second reading of the Bill in the House of Commons, he observed, with regard to the Advisory Council, that the local Educational Authorities must form the nucleus of such a body; but that it would be generally agreed that there were other bodies and persons whose opinions must be taken into consideration in matters of this sort. There were the Universities and other institutions for advanced studies. There was, above all, the whole body of qualified teachers, whose primary business in life was the furtherance of education, and who, of necessity, had the best knowledge of its practical requirements."

### The Advisory Council.

The present Advisory Council consists of twelve members, among whom are Miss K. V. Bannatyne and Miss Mary Tweedie. It will act to a great extent through sub-committees, which will have the power of co-opting persons who are not actually members of the Council, but who possess special knowledge of, or interest in, the particular question to be discussed. The work of these sub-committees will, of course, be subject to the confirmation of the Council itself. "Experience," said Mr. Robert Munro, "must be the guide in deciding what questions should be referred to the Council by the Education department. But among those which will come before it at an early date are the admission to benefit of persons serving in schools not under the management of the Education authorities, the consideration of the general scheme of educational organisation made necessary by the raising of the compulsory age of school attendance from fourteen to fifteen, and the consideration of continuation classes in urban and rural districts. There is, we believe, no country in the world where education is a matter of keener interest to the mass of the population than it is in Scotland, the Advisory Council has fertile ground to work on, and we wish it all success."

### The National Council of Public Morals.

The Annual Conference of the National Council of Public Morals and of the Birth-Rate Commission, which was held at Londonderry House on the 23rd, was remarkable for illuminating speeches on the vital matters concerning their respective Departments by the Home Secretary and the President of the Board of Education. It is clear that the Government sets a high value on the work of the National Council, and is eager to consider and adopt many of its proposals. The National Birth-Rate Commission is on the eve of publishing what is considered to be an epoch-making report, which is being eagerly awaited by those who are interested in the physical, moral, and economical problems that confront us at every turn; after much research and sifting of evidence it will pronounce judgment on such vital matters as divorce, limitation of children, as well as bringing much new light to bear on the birth-rate and infant mortality generally. The birth-rate report being completed, a Commission has now been appointed to deal with adolescents. The work of the Council should have real and effective administrative results.

### The Home Secretary and Juvenile Crime.

Sound legislation depends, to a great extent, on research and investigation that must be done by specialists and social experts outside Parliament, and for this reason the Home Secretary was lavish in his praise of the work and value of the National Council. A more humane and kinder spirit has diffused itself through the Home Office of late years, which has transformed our whole system of Reformatory Institutions; what were penal institutions have become educational homes. Mr. Shortt is progressing still further along these more humane lines, and he is a keen advocate of licensing children back to their homes wherever this is possible and in the least practicable. He is also advocating strongly to all magistrates a much wider use of the Probation Act, as this system is proving most satisfactory. Another innovation which the Home Secretary is desirous of establishing throughout the land is that of Juvenile Courts, with women justices upon them, sitting in town halls, schools, parish rooms, anywhere, in fact, but in the police court; in London, all children will shortly be dealt with in this manner.

### From Nursery to Continuation School.

The Ministry of Education is now responsible for children between the ages of two and eighteen; the nursery schools that are to feed the elementary schools, and the continuation schools that are to carry on the work of the latter—under the Act of 1918—are yet to be developed. Local Authorities, Mr. Fisher said, were, at the present time, submitting their schemes, and, while begging for the support of Local Authorities, he emphasised the great need there would be for voluntary co-operation of all kinds. The spending of thirteen million pounds a year on elementary education, and then leaving the children at their most impressionable age to sink or swim, was about to cease; but if the new scheme, far in advance of any adopted by any other country, was to succeed and be as a beacon light to those who lagged behind, it could not be without the close co-operation, the enthusiasm, and the influence of women, which must be brought to bear throughout the country.

### Legislation Relating to Women in America.

One of the most marked characteristics of the times is surely the vast amount of legislation specially relating to women that is taking place everywhere. An American contemporary informs us that there are seven Bills concerning women now pending before Congress. An Army Re-Organisation Bill includes a section which makes provision for rank for the Army Nurse Corps. A superintendent will have the relative rank of major, an assistant superintendent that of captain, and so on down the scale to second lieutenants. The Alien Citizenship Bill provides that no woman who is an American citizen shall lose her citizenship by marrying an alien, and that no alien woman shall acquire citizenship by marrying an American citizen. A Labour Bill provides for the establishment in the Department of Labour of a Woman's Bureau, whose director shall be a woman, and whose duty it shall be to formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women. A Bill for the promotion of the care of maternity and infancy, and one providing for amendment to the Civil Service Law which will eliminate all sex differentiation, complete the list of measures that especially deal with women and promote their interests, but it is a very comprehensive one, and aims at ameliorating the lot of every class of woman, the professional woman, the working woman, and the mother.

### Diplomas in Journalism.

A considerable number of women are reading for the new Diploma in Journalism which has recently been instituted at London University, and there seems no reason to fear that a woman who has distinguished herself in this course should be confined to women's papers or the fashion pages of the dailies. One of the Sunday newspapers has engaged a woman as sub-editor; she works with her male colleagues and takes her share of foreign news and anything that is going. We understand that a London daily is willing to engage a woman to sub-edit general news, and to give her the same pay and working conditions as men. This equal pay principle had a notable victory when the National Union of Journalists, having obtained a minimum salary for men on editorial and sub-editorial work in October last, asked for the same treatment for women journalists and gained their point only a month later. Those who doubted whether the education of journalists was work worthy of a University course, would do so no longer if they had heard Mr. Garvin tell the Diploma class how he prepared himself for dealing with foreign news. An accurate knowledge of French and German, acquaintance with the history and economics of those countries, frequent if short holidays spent on their shores—all these were steps which the would-be writer on foreign politics might be expected to take. But how many young newspaper men have taken forty German papers—trade, provincial, and official—at a time? Such a prescription would be swallowed only on the advice of a master of his craft who had practised what he preached.

### Employment in March.

According to the Labour Gazette, Trade Unions, with a membership of a million and a half, report that hardly more than one per cent. of their members were unemployed at the end of March, much less than half the number reported in March of last year, or in January, 1920. For the whole of the industries covered by the Unemployment Insurance Acts, the percentage of unemployed is 3.6. Neither of these methods of calculation, it will be noticed, include trades in which women are largely employed, and the figures as to women willing to work but unable to get employment are unobtainable. The Gazette gives the rise in the cost of living as 132 per cent. above July, 1914. In skilled trades the rise in money wages has not kept pace with increased cost of living, but in the case of labourers in the engineering, building, ship-building, and iron moulders' trades, wages have outstripped the cost of living, and stand at from 161 to 180 per cent. over the 1914 level. Agricultural labourers' wages come very close to compensating them for increased expenses, but without any margin for improved standards of living. In all trades a considerable reduction of hours accompanied the rise of the money wage. In professions, on the contrary, the effort to attain the pre-war real income tends to a greatly lengthened working day.

### National Health Week.

The National Health Week has been fixed for May 2nd to 8th. The object of the meetings arranged for this period is to foster in the community the sense of responsibility for public and personal health—a health conscience for the people. It is believed that the improvement in health conditions is fast approaching its limit on existing lines. Great Britain has done more than any other country to safeguard its citizens from disease, and what further progress is possible—and very much is possible—will come by way of personal effort. The fatalistic attitude as to disease and death which was common in antiquity and throughout the middle ages, is obsolete so far as our Government is concerned, but it persists in individual citizens. It is to be found even in the families of doctors and nurses. Samuel Butler veiled a great truth in his paradoxical story of a Utopia where invalids were punished and criminals sent to hospital. Health Week impresses upon us all that it is our duty to be well, and in this it has the support of medical science, "Christian Science," faith-healing, and most of the orthodoxies and heterodoxies of medicine.

### The General Nursing Council.

Trained nursing, which has until now lacked the self-government, the unified curriculum and the official register which should mark its status as a profession, enters at last into its kingdom. The first General Nursing Council has been appointed; its successors will be elected by the members of the profession, now to be enrolled and registered. Very general satisfaction is felt at the constitution of the Council; the various branches of nursing are fairly represented, and neither party to the long-drawn registration dispute has been slighted or favoured. More than this, the representatives of the various interests are themselves eminent in their profession; the Chairman, Mr. J. G. Priestly, Q.C., is a very happy choice; the Board of Education has done well to select Miss Tuke as one of its members. Nurses as well as matrons have seats on the Council, provincial as well as London training schools are drawn upon, and mental and poor-law nursing are not forgotten.

### The Register and Curriculum.

The register of trained nurses must at first include women of very various qualifications, many of them with qualifications inferior to those which will be demanded from the young nurses to be trained under the new regulations. The *bona-fide* nurse will be with us for many years yet, and for the next five or six years at any rate "trained" will continue to have so many shades of meaning that the general public may be forgiven if they fail to notice any very overt signs of the evolution of the profession. But such a transition period is unavoidable, and long before it is past we may expect to see a great revival or renaissance of the nursing spirit, like that which swept over the profession of medicine a generation or two ago. We congratulate the nurses on the outcome of their long battle for recognition and organisation, and as we do so we are very conscious that their gain is the gain of the community.

### The Professional Union of Trained Nurses.

The Professional Union of Trained Nurses, although only four months old, has already some useful work to its credit. It was registered under the Trades Union Act in the middle of March, and its Hon. Secretary, Miss MacCallum, has just been appointed by the Ministry of Health as a representative of the P.U.T.N. on the first Nursing Council set up under the Nurses Registration Act, 1919. Under the auspices of the Union a mass meeting for nurses was held on Saturday, April 24th, to celebrate the registration of the Union as a trade union, and also to discuss the advisability of a Trained Union for Nurses, and it was decided that it was in keeping with the present order of things that nurses should require a union—to protect themselves, not in defiance, but in defence. The day is now past when it is not considered respectable to belong to a union; professional men and women as well as manual workers realise that only by co-operation can they achieve desirable and tolerable conditions of life for themselves in their separate spheres. Members are being enrolled into the Union in great numbers, and by the end of the year it is hoped that the membership will number ten thousand. A Public Health Section has already been formed, and several authorities have been written to on the question of low salaries.

## THE YOUNG WOMEN OVERBOARD.

On Thursday, April 22nd, the Grand Committee which was considering the Labour Party's Bill to extend the franchise to women on the same terms as men, held its last meeting.\* At a previous meeting it had adjourned in order that the Chairman might consider Colonel Archer-Shee's contention that the whole Bill was out of order, as involving an additional expenditure of public money. Readers will recognise here the same point of order which spiked Mr. Tyson Wilson's unborn Bill for conferring pensions on civilian widows. In the case of the present franchise measure, however, the point was not upheld. The Chairman gave his ruling against Colonel Archer-Shee, and for the moment all went well.

The next assault came from Sir Frederick Banbury, in the form of an amendment limiting the age of women voters to twenty-five. As we read his name, it seems, like that of Colonel Archer-Shee, to conjure up echoes of the past. Looking backward, we are conscious that both have been in Parliament a very long time, learning nothing and forgetting nothing. Looking forward, we can visualise in our mind's eye two dignified Victorian tombstones, each bearing the inscription, "He kept things back a little."

On this occasion, however, the efforts of both were vain. Sir Frederick's amendment, like Colonel Archer-Shee's point of order, failed to stop the progress of the Bill, and fifteen votes to six cleared it out of the way.

But, as readers of fairy tales know, the third attempt is always successful. Sir Frederick followed this by an amendment, seconded by Sir George Younger, that the Committee should adjourn *sine die*. It was, he said, sheer waste of time to proceed with the matter. Everybody knew that the Bill could not possibly pass during the present session; what, therefore, was the use of wasting valuable time by discussing it in committee? With all this Sir George heartily agreed. So did Sir Kingsley Wood, apologist-in-chief for the Government. In the view of the Government such a franchise Bill should be introduced as a Government measure, and followed up by a General Election. The present move was premature, and the action of the Government in failing to grant facilities for the passage of the Labour Party's Bill was not, as a member of that Party had suggested, an obstructive one. Eventually, they carried their point, and the Committee committed suicide by a majority of fourteen to nine. Its death was followed by brief obsequies in the House of Commons. Was the Leader of the House aware, asked Mr. Clynes, that the Committee on the Labour Party's Franchise Bill had adjourned *sine die* on the ground that there was no chance of passing the Bill this session? Mr. Bonar Law replied that the Committee had acted quite constitutionally, and that there was indeed no chance of the Government adopting the measure this year. So ends the story of the second attempt to release women under thirty from the intolerable stigma of disfranchisement.

A number of daily papers omitted to record the incident; for all the information which they deigned to give the public, the Grand Committee in question might still be merrily at work, enlivened by the continually cracking chestnuts of Sir Frederick Banbury and Colonel Archer-Shee. Both inside and outside the House it seems to be generally accepted that the political status of these same women under thirty is a matter of no great importance. Clearly, there is no time for them. Matters of practical urgency loom large over this country and over the war-worn Continent of which it is an integral part. When we allow that fraction of our national mind which concerns itself with public affairs to wander from the distribution and taxation of wealth, we do so only that it may become immersed in the marching armies, and shifting boundaries, and crumbling finances of European States, for whose settlement we and our allies are responsible. And if the Parliamentary Labour Party, the parent of the late Franchise Bill, should gracefully accept the inevitable and acquiesce in its murder, may not these same overwhelming preoccupations be urged as an excuse?

To such questions our reply, to use parliamentary language, is in the negative. To use unparliamentary language, we feel that the women under thirty have been treated with a mixture of stupidity and dishonesty only paralleled by the pre-war suffrage record of Mr. Asquith's Government. If parliamentary time is to be regarded as a determining factor in the fate of these women we are tempted to ask whether it was good time-economy to scrap the Women's Emancipation Bill after its triumphant passage through the House of Commons, in order to introduce a brand new measure, in the shape of the Sex Disqualification

(Removal) Bill, embodying a narrower application of the same principle. It is quite clear, of course, that time is not the determining factor. The root of the matter is that the Government has no intention whatever of enfranchising women under thirty if it can possibly help it—and for obvious reasons. It is difficult enough to have to grapple with the problems of turbulent and enfranchised industrial men; it would be still more difficult at the present juncture to have to grapple with an awkward cross-current of turbulent and enfranchised industrial women. Meanwhile, there is the "black coated" female proletariat. There are reasons for believing that as things stand to-day, an enfranchised female Civil Service would prove an embarrassment rather than a strength to the Government in power. And no doubt there are other reasons, all of which we, who know something of the difficulties and compromises of political life, might feel called upon to respect even while strenuously opposing, were it not for one fact—the Government's election pledge to women. ("It will be the duty of the new Government to remove all existing inequalities of law as between men and women.") This is why we regard the present provarication as dishonest. This is why we regard the shelving of the Women's Emancipation Bill as dishonest.

It is not, however, why we regard the Government's course of action as stupid. It is stupid because it is exceedingly exasperating to quite a considerable section of the community. At the present moment we have dire need of all the goodwill which it is possible to generate in our political life; and disfranchisement is not conducive to goodwill. It is stupid because the disfranchisement of a particular section of the community tends to warp the judgment of legislature and executive in their dealings with that section. Political inequality helps to foster other kinds of inequality, and inequality is morally and economically wasteful. But it is stupid for broader reasons than these.

In Europe, as we know it to-day, three forms of government are struggling for mastery: military autocracy, representative democracy, and what we are accustomed vaguely to call "Bolshevism." Exactly what Bolshevism is, we do not pretend to know; but a recent perusal of Lenin's "State and Revolution" convinces us that it is something very different from representative democracy. At any rate, it is something which involves, in the words of its greatest living exponent, "the withering away of the State." As a non-party organ we feel that we are treading on dangerous ground, but at the risk of offending our autocratic and Bolshevist subscribers we must confess that we do not wish to entrust the future of the world to military autocracies, even though such autocracies involve the dictatorship of militant empresses. Nor do we consider that Europe, in its present condition, is ripe for "the withering away of the State." We believe rather that its political salvation lies in the triumph of representative democracy, in the real application of that machinery to whose perfection suffragists have given years of effort. Only by the world triumph of representative democracy can we avoid repeating the European tragedy of peoples who failed in their responsibility for governments. And yet we ourselves are failing in that very responsibility because our machinery for realising it is still imperfect. An important section of the community is still arbitrarily excluded from the electorate. The Mother of Parliaments is ignominiously over-riden by a Government which has been defeated in a division. The essential tie between representatives and voters is loosened by the evasion of election pledges. The critics of representative democracy as a form of government are supplied with grounds for their criticism at every turn. That is why we add stupidity to dishonesty in our indictment of the Government's treatment of the women under thirty.

But thank goodness there are plenty of women over thirty, and thank goodness the women under thirty will grow up. And so, no doubt, we shall live to see our ideal representative democracy in all its perfection. The Labour Party, which cares as much about the matter as we do, has made two valiant attempts—it will make a third; and, as readers of fairy tales know, the third attempt is always successful.

\*[As we go to press we learn that the Chairman of the Standing Committee has summoned the Committee to meet again to-day, April 28th, to proceed with the consideration of the Representation of the People Bill, the decision to adjourn *sine die* owing to the protest of the Labour members having been ruled out of order.—Ed. "W.L."]

## LABOUR WOMEN IN CONFERENCE.

By A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

The Conference of women in the Labour Party held at the Farringdon Street Memorial Hall on April 21st and 22nd was an impressive spectacle, from the point of view both of those who take an interest in the progress of women in politics and of those who take an interest in the progress of the Labour Party. It was far the most important conference of Labour women that has yet been held in this country. The four hundred and ten delegates over whom Miss Mary Macarthur presided included ninety representatives of trade unions, thirty-four representatives of national societies affiliated to the Labour Party, and two hundred and eighty-six representatives of women's sections of local Labour Parties. It was, therefore, extremely representative. But it was not only representative, it was also vocal. Some of us at previous Labour meetings and conferences where men and women have been present have wondered how long it would take before the rank and file of women in the Labour Party began to be articulate. The time has come now. Working mothers who have personal experience of what present conditions mean for women in the slums of Barking and Poplar, or the still worse slums of Glasgow, or in the mining districts of the North and of Wales are no longer content to leave what they have to say to be expressed for them by their men fellow-workers or their women leaders. This Conference has proved it. It was announced at the beginning of the proceedings that there would be little speaking from the platform. This resolution was faithfully adhered to, and the body of the hall certainly played up. The quality of the speaking was astonishing. It appeared to me to be considerably higher than is usual in conferences of middle-class women, even when those conferences are held by Suffragists or others who have had special training in political questions. These working women know exactly what to say, and say it with force and point, and a great deal of homely illustration. It is true that in that portion of political work which lies between speaking and "direct action" they have still some way to make up in their education. For most of them there appears to be but one step between saying what one thinks about a thing and going and doing something about it oneself. Few of them have yet grasped the fact that in social and political questions you can as a rule only do things on a large scale by making other people take action, and that in order to accomplish this you have to think out very carefully not merely the general principles of what you want done, nor even some general principles combined with a few very practical details, but a whole complicated chain of action, every link in which must be firmly forged. It was rather a shock to a frequent attendee at Suffrage councils to hear the resolutions carried just as they stood, or sometimes with amendments accepted by the proposer, but never really modified as a result of discussion. This was partly the result of the system on which the Conference was organised; but it was fairly plain that that system was the right one for the stage which the delegates had reached, and that any other would, at this moment, only have produced confusion. One cannot help looking forward to the time when the resolutions passed will represent not only the *thought* of those who frame them, and the *assent* of those who vote for them, but the co-operative mental effort of all those who take part in any given conference.

### VOTES FOR WOMEN UNDER THIRTY.

That the rank and file of the Labour women care for the emancipation of their sex, and look forward to an equal share in the political effort of what those present at the Conference agreed in calling "the first party in the State," was shown by the debate on the Women's Suffrage Bill, which, to the shame of those who should have supported it, has now been finally shelved by a Committee of the House of Commons. That betrayal had not taken place when the Conference passed, with immense enthusiasm, a resolution congratulating the Labour Party on its efforts to secure equality of political rights for men and women, and urging "that every effort should be made in this session of Parliament to compel the Government to give the necessary support to the Representation of the People Bill to secure its passage into law." Miss Manicom, the young Labour organiser to whom the victory of the Pearl Assurance workers was so largely due, received the greatest ovation of the meeting for the admirable speech in which she asserted the rights of women under thirty. She said that she had herself been an organiser for the Labour Party since she was twenty-one. Miss Jessie Stevens, who seconded her, and several other eloquent young speakers vehemently asserted the indisputable claim of

those who have been forced to earn their own living from the time they were eighteen or sixteen, or even fourteen years of age, to share in determining the political and social conditions of their own lives. "Young women are not more frivolous than young men," they said; and looking at the earnest and too often rather worn faces of these youthful enthusiasts it seemed almost lamentably impossible to associate any kind of frivolity with them. A careless House of Commons has again suffered their just rights to be withheld from them; but they will be thirty in time, and it is not very likely that the treatment now accorded to them will have modified their views. Reactionary politicians are only putting off their doom.

### ARE NON-PARTY ASSOCIATIONS DANGEROUS?

The most controversial resolution of the Conference was that which attempted to define and limit the political work of Labour women. Dr. Marion Phillips moved the resolution: "That this Conference of working women recognises that the time is now come for a great effort to secure full political power for Labour, and therefore urges all women in industrial organisations to become members of the political Labour movement, and to avoid dissipating their energies in non-party political organisations." The discussion that followed made it plain that this resolution might be diversely interpreted. The mover herself said that it should not be held to apply to temporary associations, formed for any one special object. This description would cover a multitude of political bodies, such as, for instance, Women's Suffrage Associations, Temperance Leagues, the League of Nations Union—in fact it might really apply to almost all political organisations, which, after all, are all temporary in the sense that they exist only until their object is attained. During the debate it was pointed out that the Chairman herself does not confine her efforts within the strictest party limits, for has she not taken part in League of Nations meetings, and has she not written a foreword to a book of Lady Astor's? When asked to give a ruling as to whether the resolution meant that no Labour woman should take part in any political movement outside her own party, or merely that she should not do so in such a manner as to let her energies run to waste, Miss Macarthur refused to give a ruling. "The resolution," she said, "gives a strong hint; you may interpret it as you like." This perhaps reassured the delegates, who had been roused to the danger of too narrow restrictions by the eloquent speeches of Mrs. Swanwick and Mrs. Annett Robinson; and although a good deal of opposition to the resolution was manifest, it was finally passed by a very large majority.

### MOTHERS PITY MOTHERS.

Some of us have feared that women, and especially working women, might be too pressed upon by the immediate incidents of their own lives to go beyond domestic questions into the wider realm of international affairs. The speeches at recent by-elections have not been reassuring, and we have wondered whether candidates of all parties were right in supposing that women are so much more interested in their own weekly bills than in the world agony outside their homes. It was, therefore, a great encouragement to see the passionate interest of the Conference in the resolution on the economic conditions of Europe, moved by Miss Madeleine Symons, and seconded by Mrs. Anderson Fenn, in two singularly eloquent and impressive speeches. It was true that the delegates could not be got to take much interest in economic complexities, and that by no means a full discussion was given to the pros and cons of an international loan, or to the part which co-operation might take in re-establishing the ruined countries of Europe. But this was probably inevitable. It could not be expected that the delegates should include any large proportion of international experts. The fact that was plain, was the passionate pity felt by the mothers there present for those other mothers who are watching the agony of their children, and for the desolate and oppressed all over the world.

### THE EXPERTS OF THE HOME.

Having dealt with these questions, and with that of Ireland, for whom self-determination was demanded in an urgency resolution passed with only one dissentient, the delegates turned to the questions on which they are experts—babies' milk, bread, coal, and housing. The first of these subjects had indeed already engaged the Conference at the very beginning of the meeting, when Miss Margaret Bondfield fresh from her gallant fight at Northampton described the work of the Washington Conference

## NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER.

BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.

The great outstanding event of the Parliamentary week as regards women's concerns is the remarkable action of the Standing Committee on the Franchise Bill in trying to kill legislation to which the House had given general approval, and which it was appointed to consider. The action of the Committee in adjourning *sine die* was, of course, out of order. This was pointed out by the Labour members of it in a letter to the Chairman, Mr. William Nicholson, and he has accordingly overruled the decision and summoned the Committee to meet again. The constitutional aspects of the incident are nevertheless very interesting, and we cannot refrain from calling attention to some of them.

It will be remembered that about a year ago the Government introduced new rules of procedure into the House of Commons, by which most Bills could be committed to special Committees, and would not be considered by the whole House sitting as a Committee, as used formerly to be the general course.

The practical result of this is that the Committee stage of several Bills can be taken at one time, and the hours can be fixed regardless of the regular sittings of the House, so that a great deal more business can be got through. It was no doubt necessary to reduce the pressure upon the deliberative sessions of Parliament; but the method adopted has several very unfortunate results.

The first of them was that the attendance of Members in the House itself became difficult. No man, even if he be an M.P., can be in two places at once, and with several Committees sitting upstairs and the House in session either one or the other must be neglected. The second result was a very considerable loss of interest in the Committee stage of Bills, a stage which is really the most interesting, and by far the most important of all. The criticisms of the average M.P., which used to be so valuable a feature of legislation, entirely disappear, and only about twenty Members, usually of course those specially interested in the Bill in question, get an opportunity to examine it.

Thirdly, it introduces a new and unfortunate opportunity for the exercise of the power of the Whips. The composition of these special Committees is in the hands of the official Whips of the various parties, and careful numerical proportion being agreed upon it can easily be seen how greatly this power takes away the ordinary Members share in legislation.

Fourthly, public attention is no longer drawn to the proceedings of the Committees. The debates, though reported, are not included in Hansard, and are merely mentioned in the Press, and the consequence is that public opinion has far greater difficulty in influencing the course of events.

All that has been illustrated again and again since this procedure was instituted, and the narrow escape of the Franchise Bill illustrates very well how the action of this machinery is weakening to the authority of Parliament.

We cannot but think in this instance that the composition of the Committee was unduly bad. It might have been fair and right to have put one of the few remaining die-hard antis on to it to represent that all but extinct point of view; but to put there Sir Frederic Banbury, Sir John Rees, and Colonel Archer-Shee is surely too much of a good thing. In the whole House they would be thoroughly swamped; in a small Committee they have nearly been successful, and we have had an unedifying spectacle.

One other thing emerges from this discreditable and regrettable incident, and that is the bad parliamentary technique of the Labour Party. It is easy to understand the why and how of the failure of Labour M.P.'s to be on the spot at Westminster; but they really ought to learn the job and to do it better.

The procession of the blind, to which we referred in an earlier issue, reached London this week, and met with a most sympathetic reception. Dr. Addison on the 26th introduced a Bill, the chief proposal of which is that blind persons between fifty and seventy years of age should be entitled to a State pension.

We most sincerely apologise to Mr. W. Kennedy Jones for calling Sir W. Joynson-Hicks by his name last week. It was, of course, the latter who planted himself in Lady Astor's seat, and who has retained it. The foolishness of some of our legislators is remarkable. We are glad to see that Lady Astor herself has kept aloof from this fray, and by the kindness of Mr. Will Thorne now occupies the seat just on the other side of the gangway.

on International Labour questions, which she and Miss Macarthur had attended earlier in the year. One of the chief decisions of this conference was in favour of a twelve weeks' rest for mothers; six weeks before and six weeks after confinement. The British mothers who commented on Miss Bondfield's report, and on the resolution moved by Miss Tuckwell, not only supported the demand for the twelve weeks' rest, but were strongly of opinion that it should apply not to industrial women only, but to women in the home; and that adequate maintenance should in all cases be provided for the mother and the child. It was regrettable that the programme of the Conference did not admit of a full discussion on the important subject of a general maternity endowment. This is undoubtedly a matter which will occupy the attention of meetings of Labour women in the near future. The delegates were unanimous in demanding that in order that a plentiful supply of clean and cheap milk might be obtained the matter should no longer be left to the chaotic conditions of private enterprise; but should be placed under an extended system of national control, and that local authorities should be not only allowed but compelled to undertake its product and distribution, using for this purpose co-operative and non-profit-making agencies.

On the second afternoon of the Conference Miss Susan Lawrence summarised a very interesting report on "Labour and the Milk Supply,"\* which has recently been issued, and which I commend to readers of this article. The experience of a woman Borough Councillor from Poplar (where, as she proudly said, everybody ought to go and learn, "for perhaps because of our Mayor we have done great things"), of other women from less enviable town districts, of farmers' daughters who know "how the cows live," and of a mother whose own child had suffered from tuberculosis caught from milk, were all eagerly listened to by the delegates, who agreed that women inspectors ought to be employed throughout the country, and that this question of milk was more urgent than many people (not women) had yet realised.

A discussion on coal gave an opportunity for some terrible details from the mining districts. One worn-looking miner's wife described how in some women's houses as many as six men, working in three different shifts, came in clogged and plastered with dirt at different times in the day and night to have their baths prepared for them by the housewife in the one living-room, where all the rest of the family is often unavoidably present. It was closely allied with the discussion on housing, for do not Labour organisers know that there are whole streets of mining villages in which all the houses have but two rooms? It is hard to say whether the conditions are the worst in these often rather remote parts or in our great towns. Some terrible details were given from Glasgow and East London. "Eight in a room is a general thing in the poorer parts of Barking," said a woman Councillor from that borough; "and there aren't many richer parts in Barking." These miseries have, many of them, been going on for years; but what the women are up against is the fact that so many men at the head of affairs seem content that they should go on for years more. In Croydon houses with 3½ inch walls were being built, but, "thanks to the action of women," said a delegate, "this was stopped." Labour women want not only more houses quickly, but better houses. Houses in which a mother can bring up her children in decency and comfort. "We don't want any more baths in the scullery," said many of the delegates, "and we want wash-bowls upstairs." Decent conditions these women are determined to have. The Labour women of Barking (where the poor live eight in a room) have determined that if new grand houses are put up for the rich on the borders of their district they will march there in a body and prevent their owners from occupying them. This plan was received with delight by the delegates from other parts of the country.

This was as near as the Conference got to approving any definite form of "direct action." The words were often used, but it was plain that to these quiet, practical, desperately conscientious women they have a somewhat different meaning from that which is given to them in political declamation. The delegates ended the Conference by singing the "Red Flag." It was very moving; but one felt that if some of the working women of this country lean towards revolution, it is the kind of revolution which will steer clear of force and bloodshed and be for the good of the People, using "People" in the widest sense of that much abused word. Conferences such as this one bring that kind of revolution perceptibly nearer, and put the other kind perceptibly further off.

\* "Labour and the Milk Supply." Published by the Labour Party, 33, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. (Price 3d.)

## THE MENACE OF STATE CONTROL.

By MRS. CECIL CHESTERTON.

My objections to Nationalisation are threefold. I contend: (1) It will enslave Labour by destroying the right of collective bargaining. (2) It will abolish the institution of the family by bringing the children under State control. (3) It will destroy individual liberty, with the consequent disappearance of all initiative. Mr. Brace, M.P. for Monmouthshire, has made it quite plain that the Nationalisation of the Coal Mines would abolish the right to strike, and leave the miner unable to negotiate with his employer. In his speech in the House of Commons on the Labour amendment to the Address, the President of the South Wales Miners' Federation stated that under the scheme approved by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain: "The contract of employment of workmen shall embody an undertaking to be framed by the district mining council to the effect that no workman will, in consequence of any dispute affecting a district, join in giving any notice to determine his contract, nor will he combine to cease work, unless and until the question has been before the district mining council and the national mining council, and these councils have failed to settle the dispute."

This, in effect, is slavery, for the logical outcome of such a provision would be that in no circumstances could the colliers down tools without the consent of the committee, of which only four out of fourteen would represent the men. Not only would the rights of the men be jeopardised under such a scheme, but the interests of the consumer would be utterly neglected. These latter, represented by four members, would be over-riden by the remaining six officials, who, acting for the State, would over-ride and ignore the ordinary citizen. State ownership, State control, is based on the obliteration of the individual point of view. A, B., or C. has no voice in the administration, no control in the expenditure in any of the ministries which, during the last five years, have come into existence. The Coal Controller has achieved nothing but dissatisfaction with men, consumers, and owners. How then can it be claimed that an extension of the system of control would settle the whole question on a just and equitable basis?

### FIVE YEARS OF WASTE AND INEFFICIENCY.

A very cursory examination of State control during the last five years reveals a condition of waste and inefficiency only possible in a Government Department. Waste, for which the people of England pay. Let me take a specific instance. The Ministry of Pensions sent a woman of my acquaintance six duplicate forms every day for three months, each form asking why she had not filled up the original, which had been despatched within an hour of its receipt. During the three months, despite repeated applications, the woman was unable to obtain her pension of £1 a week as widow of a soldier, each letter producing a further shower of forms. Finally, an emphatic protest took effect, and she was then asked to give (a) the names of her maternal grandparents, (b) paternal grandparents, with the nationality and copies of their marriage certificates. Not until she applied for relief from this postal persecution to the Minister of Pensions direct was the matter adjusted. It is fair to suppose that this case is typical of many others compelled to suffer through inefficiency, with a waste of time and paper far from inconsiderable. In another case, where a widow applied for a pension, she was told that failing proof of her husband's death she was not eligible. She produced the War Office announcement of his decease, but, as no confirmation in the records was available, she received nothing for a year, when without any explanation she was granted a pension.

We are continually being told that under a system of State control, children would receive the best of medical attention. That they would be well fed, well shod, assured State holidays and State uniforms! How do the facts work out? Under Nationalisation it is obvious that the particular trade or pro-

fession for which a boy or girl should be trained would no longer be a matter for the parents' decision. Regularised employment would necessitate the scheduling of so many apprentices to each trade. Thus Tom, who ardently desires to become an engineer, would find there was only a vacancy in the meat trade or the grocery business, while John, who had ambitions as a bricklayer, might be forced to be a shop assistant. Moreover, to avoid local congestion, these unhappy youths would find themselves sent to a locality miles from their own district. The right of parents and children mutually to decide on a future calling being abrogated, it will follow that the motive of sacrifice, the mainspring of family life, will disappear. If a parent cannot benefit his children by giving them opportunities of better education, increased facilities for making a good living, all reason for the existence of the home is destroyed. State school, State training, State supervision, ends all necessity for parental unselfishness. The abolition of the home is the logical sequence, and with it the disappearance of the institution of marriage as it at present exists, for if children are to be removed from their parents' care there will be no need for a young couple to start housekeeping, they will merely enjoy fugitive week-ends.

### INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE *versus* STATE CONTROL.

That individual enterprise can achieve better results than State control has been emphatically demonstrated in relation to the housing problem. The Ministry of Health, in spite of Dr. Addison's statement that the supply of dwellings would shortly meet the demand, has done practically nothing since it assumed the functions of the Local Government Board. Meanwhile, in Manchester, at Newbury, and other parts of the country, tired out with waiting, a number of citizens have formed Building Guilds and have erected houses more spacious, better equipped, and at a less cost than those which the Ministry proposed to build. Here, again, is another point which shows the fundamental weakness of State control. The Ministry of Health, we are told, is going to make a C3 population into an A1 nation; it is going to demolish the slums and provide airy and sanitary homes for the working class. Note what follows: It was laid down by Mr. Hayes Fisher, that a living room in an artisan's house should not measure less than 180 square feet. The Minister of Health has decided otherwise—the size is reduced to 160 square feet, the minimum height of the ceiling is to be lowered, and emphasis is placed on the necessity of using as little material as possible in the construction of working class dwellings.

As with housing, so with meat and other necessities under Government control. For the last five years people have been compelled to eat inferior meat at extortionate prices, and at the very time when an artificial scarcity was proclaimed, the cold storage at the docks was filled to overflowing. Moreover, in many cases local butchers were compelled to buy inferior foreign meat, being told that until that particular brand was out of the way the Government would not allow fresh meat to be sold. State control means the denial of individual liberty. Its objective, according to the words of a speaker at the British Medical Association is to supervise every man and woman "from before their birth till after their death." Before the child comes into the world it is suggested that its parents should be legally compelled to furnish particulars as to how much tobacco the father smokes, and if he drinks, with the size of his collar and the number of his shirts, while the mother's taste in food, the size of her bed, the condition of her teeth, and general habits are to be specifically stated. The above list of requirements, I may mention, are taken from a list furnished by the Ministry of Health to their local officials with instructions to obtain the answers from expectant mothers in the district. Even after death control does not cease, for in certain cases the corpse could not be buried until its sugar card was returned.

## FOR POOR BRIDES.

By ALICE MEYNELL.

A form of beneficence much practised in Latin countries and in former times was the dowering of girls whose fathers were too poor or too thriftless to "give away" not the bride only but a little money with her. It has never been a general act of English philanthropy. It was the dignity of the English bride that her bridegroom desired and received her, and nothing but her; it was, and is, the dignity of the Italian bride and the French that she bore her part in the livelihood of her wedded home, and was not "beholden." One way of feeling denotes English poetry, the other denotes Latin prose. In all the many classes of the Italian social world it is hardly possible for a woman to marry without some dowry. Let me cite one instance. The Roman Catholic Church does not favour the marriage of cousins, for consanguineous unions may be dangerous when they are frequent, but the risk is negligible when they are very infrequent. Therefore, they are allowed by "dispensation" if and when a good reason is given. In the case I knew of the dowerlessness of the bride was held a sufficient reason by the tribunal of Cardinals in Rome. It was a case of intimate family finances. None but her cousin would marry her. (This, by the way, is a case in which perfect ignorance and perfect ill-will and false witness would presume a "dispensation" for a fee. There was, of course, no suggestion of a fee.) The lady who knelt to present the petition was amused, being English, at the admiration, almost amazement, with which their Eminences heard of the magnanimity of the young man. "Senza dote!" they repeated, with deep respect.

Forty years ago, the Lord Bute of that day made a trial of the old and, generally, alien form of charity—the portioning of poor maids for their marriage. It was a form of *largesse* that provoked the easily-burlesquing mind to quote a chorus of happy peasants; as though peasantry, happiness, and choruses were ridiculous in a century like ours, admirably anxious and too dismal for song. But is it time that the finances of brides in the class of labour should be a question revived and considered?

The practice of giving dowry was held to be a social duty of the rich, a public-spirited manner of "contributing." It recognised the fact that dowerlessness prevented marriages, and that such prevention by outer circumstances was a tyranny; those Middle Ages, and even those Dark, being indignant about tyrannies that our centuries endure as a matter of course. The honestly sentimental in our day are honest and even poetical, but they are not kind. For it is the girl who has to bear the charges of their sentiment. They would have her to be married for her own personal value alone, but the young man may not possess this fine feeling to the full, and the girl, perhaps, does not marry. It would be more simple for us to confess this much—that the lack of dower must often put marriage out of reach. Even those who like to deny that a dowry makes the way straight ought to acknowledge that the lack of it may often make it too narrow for passage. And in this respect the mystery that is made in the English family as to the possessions or expectations of daughters serves much the same deterrent purpose. Of the very rich maids it is known that they have much, of the very poor that they have nothing. But in a middle class all is secrecy. A kind of unwritten etiquette leaves an important question unanswered—nay, unasked. Really, that middle class, rather than any other, has, at heart, the romance or poetry already named.

To return to the labouring family, the subject of the old *largesse*. An English judge lately made his act of disapproval of the labourer's wife's position as a servant in her husband's house. But she holds that place because hers is, in fact, a place of service, and not a place of partnership. Her service is virtually partnership, it may be objected. True, but it has not the

look, nor the spirit, of it. Partnership, to look like itself, has to be represented by that convenient and obvious token, money. The French wife, who brought in her hand her share towards the expenses, works none the less, but works on equal terms. Is her dignity a right dignity, or, on the contrary, is the Englishwoman's?

An ingenious French author recently explained the greater beauty of humanity in England by the dowerless marriages of English damsels sought for love and admiration of their beauty. Does the physique of our poor justify this flattery?

In France, to-day, and notably in Austria, this dowering of poor brides is one of many good works that the war has crushed. In Vienna, the archduchesses used to give this and many other kinds of alms; the archduchesses are gone, and the newer rich have not taken over their charities. Paris is divided between costly pleasure and costly pain. But from those parts of agricultural France that were not devastated comes the report that the farmer father does still his old duty of putting something by for his daughter's future. His girls eat their own bread in their husband's houses. And in French farce, where there are many other ugly jokes, the joke of the mother-in-law is rare. It has long been rife in English comedy. There is, for instance, an abiding bond, grotesque to none but a vulgar sense of humour, between a husband and his wife's father and mother, through whose thrift and self-denial he is the better able to care for his children. These people do not drift apart. A *dot* in England would be a great relief to the mother of wives. Moreover, the writer of the old jokes would be deprived of the opportunity of his tedious injustice; he would not call the marriage of a daughter by the name of a mother's "catch"; it is not so called in France.

How, then, should we sum up? The question may, in the near future, be reopened by the increased control, limiting, governing of the liquor traffic. The English working man has had little to save. Is it uncharitable to guess at the cause of this? Drinking moderate beer in this generation, drinking less, if any, in a generation not trained to alcohol (a generation we may hopefully expect), he may become thrifty enough to lay up a provision for his daughters. It would be a great change in our national manners. It would be the sacrifice of a certain chivalry of our own. "I will work for myself and a woman" was a Kipling proclamation of national honour. But the labourer's woman works, here and there, for herself and a man. The summing-up must, perforce, in days so hard as these, be left to time.

## THE CHALLENGE.

By E. B. C. JONES.

Sunset is an assault on every sense  
(Sharpened odours, shadows like blue stains,  
The surprise of westward-smitten window panes),  
And dusk brings languor, dreams, indifference.

Not till the night, not till full night has come  
Are senses and spirit fused into a sum  
Of apprehension poised so perfectly,  
It flowers in ecstasy.  
Then a man is a vessel of awe and pride and pain,  
Asking with lifted face, in silence and in vain,  
Why? Why? Why?  
—Reading in starry words upon the sky  
The challenge he shall test his courage by.

## THE POSITION OF WOMEN UNDER GUILD SOCIALISM.

By H. M. SWANWICK.

When the Insurance Act was being debated, this paper drew attention to the fact that the measure left out of all account the millions of working women who worked at least as hard as men, were as necessary to the national life as men, and suffered at least as much as men from illness and incapacity arising out of illness. Many really liberally minded men listened helplessly to the criticism and said with puzzled, corrugated brows: "Taking wage-earnings as a basis, women are treated equally with men." It seemed impossible to make them see that, since a vast amount of woman's most vital work was done for no wage at all, work of national importance if ever there was any, it was incumbent upon legislators who were supposed to be providing for national health to find a "basis" which would not exclude these women. They did not do it then and they have not done it yet. The home-maker, unless she is also a wage-earner, is left entirely out of the national health insurance.

This state of affairs arises from a state of mind—the state revealed in calling women's work in the home (housekeeping, cooking, cleaning, mending, washing) and women's work in bearing and rearing children "unproductive"; the state which allows economists habitually to speak of men as "bread-winners" and women as "consumers." Of course economists know what they mean when they use these terms; none the less they have expressed a very common illusion about women, and they have, in turn, reacted on opinion, especially, I am sometimes inclined to think, on women's opinion of themselves. Women are far too apt to accept these terms in their common application, and they need to learn to hold their heads high and say, "We 'unproductive' mothers are the producers of life; we 'consumers' are the administrators of wealth in the home. Upon us depends the health and strength of the whole nation. We must be heard, and we must be obeyed, or the penalty will be disease and degeneration."

But if the home-makers are to pull their weight in political life, they must think out their problems and they must organise so as to ensure that their important work is given its scope and opportunity.

Immense important developments are taking place, not only in industry but in the machinery of the Government. Employers have been steadily concentrating and amalgamating businesses until in every great industrial country trusts and cartels hold business from the side of Capital. On the side of Labour, unions are also becoming more universal, and "alliances" and "agreements" are welding the wage-earners into one great force. If one turns to the political side, one sees that while industrial questions are becoming more and more the concern of the Government, they are becoming less and less the concern of the geographically elected House of Commons, elected, be it remembered, by women as well as men. The process first carried to great lengths by Mr. Lloyd George when he was piloting the Insurance Bill through its stages is now commonly used for nearly all economic matters. Each "interest" in turn—the doctors, the friendly societies, the workers—was interviewed by Mr. Lloyd George, and concessions were made here and there, to this and that section, and the House was presented with fresh amendments concocted outside the House, and told that the minister would "stand or fall" by his bill. It was, in fact, the germ of government by Soviets, of which the essence is that representation is by function and not by area only. Everyone organised in a body of workers

gets representation; no one outside gets any representation at all. It is amusing to find the man who has done most to substitute this extraneous power for the power of parliament, most vehement in denouncing the completest example yet existing of this form of government.

We are a remarkable people, and we take many years to discover that we are ourselves doing the very things we denounce; but the time will come when we shall have to modify our institutions to bring them more into accordance with our practice. How this modification will take place I am not going to prophesy. But of this I am sure, that if women leave it to men to remember them they will be forgotten; if women will not think out their own peculiar problems they cannot expect men to do so; if industry is reconstructed by the wage-earner and the capitalist only (whether in agreement or in contest) the needs of the mother and the housewife will be again overlooked.

More than once in this paper the point has been made that by "direct action," or the threat of it, the vote for which women worked half a century would be made useless. This is true and needs to be remembered by us all. But there are other ways than direct action of filching from us the fruits of our enfranchisement, and the unacknowledged change of the basis of representation is one.

I believe that the basis has already changed so much that the day of parliamentary reform should be no longer delayed. Of all the various schemes of reform in this country, that suggested by the Guild Socialists is one of the most developed. It is pressed by a body of extremely able young men. It lies behind many of the legislative measures proposed by the Labour Party. It is being shaped and adapted to industrial upheavals and to national needs as they occur. Women have taken remarkably little part in this scheme, whether in construction or in criticism, yet it affects them profoundly. As wage-earners who have not always found men's trade unions helpful; as workers without wage who find that prices seem less important to men than wages; as administrators of the domestic exchequer, who are more interested in production for use than production for profit; as the section of the community which suffers most cruelly from industrial war, women ought to be in at the consideration of any scheme certain to affect their lives in all these ways and departments.

Therefore I hope that the readers of this paper will rally well to the Conference advertised on page 307, and take that opportunity of expressing women's needs in industrial and political reconstruction.

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This is the first great World Congress of the I.W.S.A. since its Meeting in Budapest in 1913. Delegates will attend from the twenty-six affiliated countries in the Alliance. There will also be an Eastern Delegation. We invite you to come as a visitor to this World Congress of Women.  
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## THE PROPOSED TAX ON WAR PROFITS.

By COLONEL C. R. BURN, A.D.C., M.P.

A tax on war-time increases of wealth is certainly a very proper subject for enquiry, and the action of the Government in setting up a Committee of Investigation was undoubtedly well received. There was a general disposition to welcome any scheme for taxing excessive increments of wealth accruing from the war. But there was at no time any general desire to penalise savings and legitimate increases of wealth. The public recently became aware that the Committee in question had practically reached a deadlock—the reason being that, while all its members were whole-heartedly in favour of the principle of taxation, they could see no possibility of devising a workable scheme for putting the principle into operation. Although the Committee is resuming its sittings there seems little hope of the emergence of any practical recommendations, unless the terms of reference are so amended as to allow of the consideration of alternative proposals for the funding of the floating debt.

However, even were the Committee to dissolve immediately, its existence would not have been in vain—seeing that the discussions arising out of its proceedings and the evidence given before it has already done much to educate the public in the salient facts of the situation. It may therefore be useful to summarise the main arguments and statements put forward by persons of judgment and experience in the course of the enquiry, with a view to assessing expert opinion on the subject. Remarkable evidence has been given before the Committee by such distinguished men as Mr. A. J. Hobson, Sir James Martin, and others. Putting their views together, we arrive at the following main objections to the proposed tax:—

1. The assumption of the Board of Inland Revenue that the wealth of the country has increased during the war is unwarranted. On the contrary, national wealth has decreased. Many foreign investments have been sold; new indebtedness to foreign countries has been incurred; shipping losses have been heavy. In point of fact, the only new assets are the new factories and extensions and additional plant in the case of the pre-war factories.

2. Trading profits have already been reduced to an enormous extent by (a) excess profits duty, (b) income tax, and (c) super-tax.

3. Our diminished wealth is far more evenly distributed among the community than it was before the war.

4. The introduction of such a tax would be a violation of the general understanding arrived at for the purpose of raising the great loans required by the war. (It will be remembered that people were urged to raise money in every possible way—even on their life policies.)

5. Whilst ostensibly imposed as a tax on abnormal increases of wealth devised from the war, it must, in fact, operate principally as a general tax upon trade and industry. Capital amassed during the war has not remained idle, but is already actively employed in promoting trade revival.

6. The effect of such a tax would be to:

(a) Drive capital out of the country.

(b) Discourage enterprise.

(c) Create unemployment.

(d) Reduce production, with a resultant curtailment of imports, which would react unfavourably on the foreign exchanges.

7. Firms will need more capital when the present rush for goods ends. Moreover, the replacement and repair of machinery—on which efficient production depends—can only be effected at greatly enhanced prices. This then would be a most unfortunate moment to make demands on capital.

8. The principle of retrospective taxation is objectionable.

9. Large (and expensive) staffs would have to be appointed for the carrying out of any such measure.

10. The suggestions put forward in the Board of Inland Revenue memorandum are open to question on the following grounds:—

(a) Inflated values, which cannot be permanent, and will probably have passed away before the new levy becomes effective—the Board calculates that the enquiry would occupy at least 2½ years—are treated as permanent additions to wealth.

(b) The National Debt is regarded as an asset, instead of as a mortgage on the whole of the wealth of the country.

(c) No allowance is made for the fact that the standard of values on which measurement is made has varied. In other words, in view of the diminished purchasing power of money, no fair comparison is possible between the figures of 1914 and those of 1920. Again, the lessened value of money means that traders need three, four, and five times their pre-war capital to maintain the same volume of trade.

(d) It is admitted that it is impossible to distinguish between wealth obtained by dishonest practices and that arising from exceptional efforts, between unduly large savings and the result of special efforts—e.g., for patriotic purposes.

11. The mere proposal is having a most unsettling effect on industry, and is tending to make people realise their investments, etc. Trade needs to be let alone—to recover from the effects of the war and from bureaucratic control.

The Committee has been impressed by the anxiety of the Treasury to reduce the floating debt, now amounting to over £1,200,000,000. It is therefore not sufficient to criticise the proposals of the Board of Inland Revenue; but it is also necessary to make some alternative suggestions. In this respect the views of the trading community generally are probably well expressed in the following resolution, recently passed by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce:—"This meeting considers (a) that the proposal to levy a tax on increase of wealth during the war is unsound in principle and impracticable in operation; the proposal is disturbing the confidence of traders throughout the country, and checking the expansion of British trade; (b) that, apart from the existing duties and taxes, further revenue which . . . is needed for . . . reduction of the National Debt should be provided gradually by taxation of current profits and current income, and not by confiscation of capital, which is necessary to the maintenance and development of industry." The view is widely held that a tax on income would not produce nearly as much disturbance as a tax on capital.

Special measures have been suggested by Lord Colwyn, who advocated a graduated tax on war-time increases of fortune, after making proper allowances for depreciation of the currency, and with due regard to the savings that could have been honestly and properly made in the period under review.

Mr. Hobson has put forward a scheme for a long-dated issue of Government stock to cover the lifetime of most men of wealth at present alive—the interest (a low rate) to be guaranteed free of income tax and super tax, and the capital to be guaranteed from any future taxation, other than death duties, for which it should be accepted at issue price.

It is worthy of note that the proposed taxation of war fortunes is not regarded altogether favourably even in Labour circles, where it is looked on as an attempt to stave off the introduction of a levy on capital. It certainly has not met with approval in other quarters. The ordinary citizen inclines to the view that the best course is to stimulate trade and commerce, and to gradually pay off our debts through their increased productivity, rather than to cripple them by the adoption of an ill-conceived and ill-considered plan of new taxation. He realises that in income tax and super-tax the Government has at hand machinery for the taxation of current profits, and he knows that the death and succession duties are the proper channels whereby the State may re-absorb, at the death of the owner, any excessive increases of wealth. These grandiose schemes which promise so much good and are capable of doing so much harm are hardly likely to commend themselves to a generation which has seen for itself the failure of similar projects. With the tragic fate of Russia fresh in mind, an adventure which is, in essence, nothing but further State interference with capital is hardly likely to meet with much support.

With the exercise of economy by the Government and the people, with the greatly enhanced production which greater efforts on the part of every citizen can and will ensure, there should be no difficulty in gradually reducing the National Debt out of national income without disturbing national capital. As I have said on many public platforms during the last election campaign, never in the history of our nation was every item of capital more urgently required than it is at the present time, in order to restart our industries, and what is equally important to maintain our capacity for employment.

## REACTIONS.

By ROSE MACAULAY.

Next morning when she got to the library there was the letter waiting for her. It said, if she would entertain the idea of doing an hour's typing for him every evening, say from 6.15 to 7.15, would she come round to his rooms in Davies Street that evening after six and talk it over?

Of course Dorothy went.

Davies Street was quite close to the library, and Dorothy was there by a quarter-past six. Mr. Jayne's rooms were in a block of flats, on the second floor. There was his name on his door—Mr. Laurence Jayne. Dorothy knocked, because a card said "Bell out of order," and Mr. Jayne opened the door himself.

"Good," he said, and shook hands with her, looking pleased. "I was so hoping you'd come. Now sit down, and we'll talk it over."

Dorothy sat down, and thought Mr. Jayne lived in a very remarkable room. She had never seen a room so bright. All the furniture was striped or spotted or zig-zagged or something, in vermilion and yellow and green paint, like parrots, and the pictures made the walls like four flower beds for colour. But the pictures, when you looked close, weren't really like flowers; a great many of them were of poor deformed men and women, and others of houses and towns just going to tumble down. Probably these last were villages Mr. Jayne had seen collapsing under bombardment in France and Flanders, and the people were perhaps Belgian refugees, or Bolsheviks, they looked so queer and ugly and depressed.

Mr. Jayne was explaining to her what he wanted.

"An hour's typing from dictation each evening, when I can manage the time, half-an-hour when I can't. I shall dictate straight on to the typewriter." He indicated the typewriter, which stood on a bureau in a corner. "An Oliver—can you use them? Horrid little machines, but the only kind I could afford when I got it. I can work it myself. . . . But I prefer to dictate," he added.

He mentioned terms. Dorothy thought them too high for a man who had so little money. But he stuck to them.

"Now," he said, "I'll tell you what I want to do. Perhaps you've guessed, though?"

"Write a novel," Dorothy suggested.

"That's it. Write a really popular novel. I've got to make some money—as much as I can, in as short a time as possible. So it isn't to be in the least like my other stories—as different as I can make it, in fact. It's to be more like *your* favourite novels. That's where you come in. I want you to criticise as we go along. Don't take down anything you don't like. If you think you can improve a sentence, do. And if I ever say anything you don't understand, tell me, and I'll alter it. This is to be a book you'll like, remember. If you don't like it, it's a failure."

"I wouldn't," said Dorothy, embarrassed though flattered, "go so far as to say that, Mr. Jayne. There's others besides me. I'm not everyone."

But he waved her aside. "For this purpose, you are. You are the public. If I get you, I succeed. If I don't, I fail. So you'll help me, won't you, Miss Leslie. I'm in your hands in this."

Dorothy thought he was the humblest man she had ever known. Young men weren't usually humble at all, and particularly not young men who wrote. These Dorothy privately considered to be the most arrogant of God's creatures. But

Mr. Jayne . . . her heart went out to him, as she met his frank, pleasant eyes.

"I'll do my very best, Mr. Jayne," she told him. "And I'm sure I hope it will be a simply topping book."

"Thank you. I really believe it may be," he answered her, as she rose to go. "Can you begin to-morrow? I've got the idea more or less schemed out, and I could start any moment you were ready."

Dorothy said she would come in to-morrow with pleasure.

She went home to Queen's Road so exalted that she left her umbrella in the 'bus. What did it matter? It would find its way to Scotland Yard as usual, and she was going to help Mr. Jayne with a real book.

She told her mother and sister about it.

Her mother said, "It'll make a long day for you, Dorrie," and her sister, who was a typist in the City, said: "Will he be nice to work with? Men are awfully different when they dictate from what they are just to talk to. They don't half come it over you sometimes—tell you all the commas, some of them will, as if you were half-baked. There's young Mr. Wilkins at the office, he'll cross out a whole letter and make you do it again if you so much as get a word wrong—he'll never let you alter it with the eraser; he says you can see it a mile off when a word's been rubbed out. And when he's made a mistake himself he'll say it was me that typed it wrong. The other girls tell him they had it in their notes that way, but I never do; it only makes him sneer and say, 'So much the worse for your notes.' Oh, he's a caution. Will your Mr. Mary Ann or whatever he calls himself be that sort?"

No, Dorothy was sure he wouldn't be that sort. He was a gentleman. To which her sister Joyce darkly replied that there were many who ought to be that and weren't. Young Mr. Wilkins, now, he'd been highly educated, and travelled all over the Continent before the war, but he wasn't what Joyce considered a gentleman all the same, being rude and inconsiderate. A man's manners to girls always show what he is more than anything.

Dorothy was undisturbed. She felt complete reliance on Mr. Jayne's manners to girls, even when he was dictating.

"He can't," Joyce finally commented, "be much of an author. I never heard of him, nor did anyone else, that I know of."

"No," Dorothy admitted. "He's not been much heard of yet. Not except by a few people—clever people, who write books, too, and know him at home, I expect. Not by ordinary people like us. That's the trouble, you see. But after this next book everyone will have heard of him and be getting him at the libraries. That's what he hopes at least."

Joyce sniffed and said, "He may hope," in her casual, sisterly way, thinking really only about her hands, which she was manicuring.

## IV.

"The rapid African dusk," said Jayne, "was falling with the terrific suddenness usually peculiar to night on the stage. The moon rose with the same rapidity. Pushing his way through the tangled, poisonous growth of the swamp forest, a sudden scream fell on the ears of Dick Stanley. Got that, Miss Leslie? That all right? Now mind, you've got to call out when you don't like it. The last sentence will do, will it? All right, we'll get on, then. Such screams are no rare occurrences in the strange and sinister life led in African forests, indeed they are all too frequent, but this scream seemed to Stanley to have a special horror of its own. Shrill, long-drawn, tense, it cut the

dank air as—no, like—cut the dank air like a knife cuts mildewed cheese. Yes, Miss Leslie?"

"I was only thinking," said Dorothy, tentatively, "shouldn't it be as, not like?"

"Oh, do you think so? Perhaps you're right. I don't want to go too far, of course; if you think like is over the edge we'll have as. Thanks for mentioning it. As a knife cuts mildewed cheese. Stopping for a moment to locate the sound, a second scream startled Stanley, and a third. Horrified he hastened his pace, making in the direction whence the terrible cries came from. It was doubtless, he told himself, only some nameless orgie of the kind indulged in all too often by the coloured denizens of that dark continent, and upon which he had not the slightest desire to wittingly or unwittingly intrude. So he told himself. But deep in his heart throbbed an awful suspicion. Those shrieks had sounded perilously like the shrieks of a white, and of a white woman at that. Impossible, surely! For there were no white women for miles in this fever-cursed jungle swamp, unless it might be some wretched missionary's wife. Like most traders, Stanley disliked missionaries, finding them a tiresome and interfering race, who deserved all they got, which was saying a great deal. Yes?"

Dorothy had paused, doubtful.

"That last sentence . . . I don't like it very much, Mr. Jayne. I don't believe he *would* have felt that way, would he?"

"No, to be sure he wouldn't. Of course not. Too inhumane. Cut it out. Unlike most traders . . . Still troubled, Miss Leslie?"

"It's only," explained Dorothy, "that I didn't somehow think of Dick as a trader. One hears such awful things of traders, doesn't one? I've never heard of the hero of a book being a trader."

"How do you know this chap is the hero? He may be the villain."

"Oh, I see." Dorothy thought this over, then said, frowning a little, "But then he shouldn't be called Dick Stanley. That's a *good* name. Besides, if he's the villain, you oughtn't to get inside him like that. You just *see* the villain doing things, you don't write from inside him."

"Oh, don't you? No, I believe you're right. I must make a note of that. . . . You're an extraordinarily useful critic, you know. . . . Well then, this fellow's the hero all right. But if he's not a trader, what on earth is he playing at in this beastly forest? What's brought him here? I refuse to allow him to be a missionary; I draw the line at that."

"Well, I expect he was accused at home of doing something awful—forgery or something—really it was someone else did it, of course, probably his wicked cousin, and so he went to Africa to live it down. Don't you think so, Mr. Jayne?" Her brown eyes looked eagerly at him, bright with creative interest.

"That's an idea. First-class. . . . Now where are we? Read me the last sentence, will you—the one beginning 'like most traders'?"

Dorothy read it.

"Yes. Cross it out. Put instead, Stanley had an immense respect for missionaries, knowing them for the brave fellows they were, facing well-nigh unthinkable perils in the power of their high purpose. (That's better, isn't it?). Anyhow, missionary's wife or not, he grew more and more sure that those fearful screams were white female screams of some sort, and that was enough for an Englishman of Dick Stanley's breed. Not for nothing had he been called Lion Heart by the officers and men of the company which time after time he had led over the top in France to certain death. The very Huns had caught up the name, and fled in disorder as he charged them with triumphant and terrifying cries. He had fallen at last at Cambrai mortally wounded in the chest (no Stanley had ever, from Crecy onwards, been wounded in the *rear*), to be dragged

at last into the enemy's lines a helpless prisoner, forced into a captivity to which he would never have surrendered himself while in possession of his faculties, for the Stanley motto was 'Death, not surrender!'

("That's lovely," Dorothy breathed. "Do you like it? I think it's not bad, that bit.")

There had followed for Stanley a year of hell—such hell as only the Huns could inflict on the gallant gentlemen they hated and had in their power. He had exchanged that hell, after a brief interlude of rather chequered home life, for this other hell, hardly in some ways less terrible. The reasons why he endured it will be explained later; for the moment it must suffice to say that he had excellent reasons, but reasons reflecting in no way discreditably upon himself.

Various explanations of those strange screams which still echoed in his ears occurred to him as he pushed through the malarial growth of rank trees. The white woman who had screamed was perhaps being persecuted by a German trader of evil repute, whom Stanley knew haunted the district, though he had never met him. If that was so, the Hun should have as short a shrift as any of his unholy breed whom Stanley had met as man to man on the bloody fields of France. Or the woman might have been alarmed by natives, who are indeed terrifying, or by some savage jungle beast. Or she might have been bitten by a snake, or even by one of the fierce mosquitoes of the swamps, who carry fever in their fangs. Women, Stanley knew, will scream at anything or nothing.

So he made his way on through the gathering night, stopping now to fire his pistol at a pair of glittering eyes peering at him through the long grass, now to quietly unwind from his leg the coils of a deadly snake which had twined there. (Dorothy gasped and shuddered.) At last he emerged into a clearing, of the sort that abound in African jungles, and there he saw in the moonlight, which now poured down with the extraordinary lustre of which the African moon is alone capable, a long, low log hut, roofed with wattles, of the sort lived in by missionaries and traders. But he saw nothing else. All was quiet as the grave, save for the long-drawn cry of the tiger roaming after his prey in the jungle, and the thousand nameless, sinister sounds of animal life in an African night. Striding up to the log hut, the door hung open upon its hinges. The hut was empty (exclamation mark, please). The woman, if indeed it had contained a woman, was gone.

Stanley ground his teeth.

"Too late," he groaned. "What devil's work is this?"

As he spoke the moonlight shot a long shaft of light into the interior of the hut, and he shuddered at what he saw. For on the floor was a great splash of newly-shed blood—the blood (Stanley could make these fine discriminations, for he had once been a medical student) of a young woman. Lying on the rough table he saw another thing—a photograph. Closely he peered into it. It portrayed a face of the most exquisite contours, perfect in feature and more perfect still in the candour and spirituality of its expression. A face to love and worship. To Dick Stanley it was further endeared by having a look of his mother, for whom he had cherished a Freudian passion ever since he had been informed that he did so by the learned professor of that name. ("A what passion?" enquired Dorothy. "Freudian. Professor Freud. He's invented all kinds of passions." "Freud? Oh, good gracious, Mr. Jayne!" Dorothy had a memory of the library. "Wasn't he a dreadful man?" "Dreadful, I should think, so far as one can gather his personality from his writings." "Then Dick *wouldn't*, would he? Feel the way Freud said he was to about his mother, I mean?" "No, you're right, as usual. Besides, Dick would never obey a Hun professor; I'd forgotten that. Leave out all reference to Freud, then.) Endeared by having a look of his mother (even that's rather risky these days, but let it stand). The face of the woman—Stanley somehow knew it—who had screamed; though she looked fearless enough in her portrait.

The face of the woman to whom had belonged that blood (a row of dots, please).

"By God," Stanley hissed, between clenched teeth, "if she is still in the land of the living I shall find and save her!"

But, alas, it seemed only too probable that she was not, that she had been attacked and carried off by some wild beast, four-legged or in human form. More dots, please, and really I think that will have to do for this evening, I'm running dry . . . What do you think of it?"

"Oh, lovely. Yes, really, Mr. Jayne, I mean it. I got simply awfully thrilled. Only, you know, I hoped the girl was going to come in. She ought to come in soon, I think, not stay out of

the story for ages while he looks for her. One expects the girl in early, don't you think?"

"Oh, does one? Yes, I expect one does. Very well; she shall come in to-morrow. Thanks immensely, Miss Leslie, I mustn't keep you any more. Your help and suggestions have been of the greatest use. Think it over, will you, and tell me to-morrow what you think ought to happen next. Good-night."

Dorothy hurried home. She was hot with excitement, and eager to tell Joyce that Mr. Jayne could really write. He was quite splendid; she hadn't known he had it in him.

(To be continued.)

## KITCHEN POLITICS.

Parliament is bound to give a great deal of its attention to the kitchen, but the kitchen is not giving nearly enough of its attention to Parliament.

While kitchen politics are to the fore the opinion of the kitchen expert, the woman in the home, has a special value.

But this opinion must be based on knowledge and consideration, not on rumour and popular catch-words.

For the next few weeks therefore "The Woman's Leader" will contain introductory articles on different aspects of kitchen politics. These are intended to call the attention of the woman in the home to problems particularly demanding her careful scrutiny, and to touch on points of difficulty she must study.

## THE PROS AND CONS OF SUBSIDIES.

Food Control, as we saw last week, may be used in more senses than one, and indeed usually is in our careless, everyday conversation, to the great confusion of the simple-souled home-keeper. Already we have traced out three distinct policies that are all casually referred to as "Food Control." There is the policy that is Food Control in its strictest sense, the policy of fixing prices by law and regulation, which we can view apart from any considerations of management or profit. There is a second policy whereby prices are fixed indirectly by the Government, which becomes itself a great wholesale dealer, buying up huge quantities of food and selling at its own fixed charge. There is yet a third policy, the policy of subsidising, when the Government pays down a lump sum to the manufacturers in order to keep the price of a particular food below the level to which it would otherwise rise. Of each of these policies we must consider the pros and cons; we must make up our mind for or against each; for only so shall we be able to arrive at a considered opinion on Food Control, and only a considered opinion is worth the having.

The policy of subsidy is probably the least criticised of Food Control policies, for its good effects are very obvious, and it does not lay the Government open to accusations of mismanagement or profiteering. As everyone knows the policy of subsidy has been applied to bread since, roughly speaking, the middle of the war. Bread being one of our staple foods in this country, and a particularly important food item to the poor, it was very necessary that its price should be kept down. The Government therefore paid to the bakers a sufficient sum of money yearly to enable them to sell their bread more cheaply than they could have done had they been obliged to charge for the materials needed for break-making and their labour and also to make a fair profit.

The bread subsidy still continues. The Government pays to the bakers some forty-five million pounds a year in order that the country may have a shilling loaf. If the subsidy were removed the price of the loaf would rise at once to one-and-sixpence or more. Nobody wants a one-and-sixpenny loaf. We all feel a shilling somewhat stiff! Therefore when we are criticising Control we remain discreetly silent on the subject of the bread subsidy.

But there are points to be considered against the policy of subsidising even so necessary an article of diet as bread. Where does the money come from that pays for the subsidy? Out of

the State funds, of course; but where do they come from? The Government is not master of the golden touch. The money that it spends must be raised by taxation and comes from the nation. So that in the long run it is the nation that must pay the bread subsidy. It is true that in this way it may perhaps be arranged that the burden shall fall where it can best be borne. The rich may be taxed to pay the subsidy which will cheapen the loaf for the poor. Still, in considering the policy of subsidising, we have this to remember—that the advantage which the nation as a whole is reaping, the nation or part of the nation must ultimately pay for. And there is the point of view that it might be better to allow the price of the loaf to rise and the taxes to fall.

Another point also to be seriously considered is the effect of the bread subsidy on our thriftiness. During the war the constant warnings which were given us and the constant fear of greater scarcity in which we lived taught us many ingenuities in the way of economy. Of nothing were we more careful than of bread. We made use of strange substitutes. It was an offence to throw away a crust. But with the end of the war came the end of our economies. We never think now of such unpalatable things as bread substitutes. We have no bread ration, so we regard bread as plentiful and grumble at the price. We are careless and wasteful in our use of bread, and so go the best way to work to keep the price up. In fact it might be to the nation's interest, all things considered, to allow the price of bread to find its normal level even if this were so high a figure as one-and-six a loaf, in order that the nation might learn economy and by careful usage cheapen the loaf again naturally, where now the bread subsidy is cheapening it artificially.

In considering the question of continuing the policy of subsidy, we must necessarily study the particular foodstuff affected in the light of its relation to other foodstuffs. The bread subsidy may have been fully justified during the war and yet its continuance now may not be justified, not because bread has become less scarce, but because other foods have become more plentiful, and therefore it is not so essential that bread should be cheap. And it is on the continuance of subsidy that practical politics demands from the woman in the home an expression of opinion to-day.

Well, here are a few of the pros and cons of this first aspect of Food Control. To study them is easy, to make up one's mind upon them is more difficult. Yet this complex task remains for each of us to do, and do quickly.

INEZ M. FERGUSON.

## AFTER SEVEN YEARS—THE WOMAN'S CONGRESS.

By CICELY HAMILTON.

After an interval of seven years the International Alliance for Woman Suffrage will meet at Geneva in June.

The above brief and business-like announcement stands for more than might appear at first sight; the years that have passed since the last Congress met in the capital of Hungary have seen State after State grant the long-delayed vote to its women. On that fact, no doubt, the Geneva Congress will congratulate itself—very heartily, if without exultation.

It is not only the memory of years of war, not only the present shadow of want, that forbids undue exultation. The responsibility of the woman citizen is greater by far than she counted on; and we are faced with the fact that woman has attained to political power at a moment when its use is fraught with infinite difficulty, when its misuse means infinite disaster. The duties, the dangers, the outlook of the citizen are not what they were in the June of 1914—thus the vote that we have is not the same vote we demanded. Those who strove for Woman Suffrage in pre-war days were claiming their share in the management of a going concern, of a State in being, on lines that were definite and familiar; what they have obtained is right of citizenship in a world awry, a world in the process of rebuilding. A world part ruined and wholly distracted; struggling with difficulties undreamed of a decade ago. Government in these days is no longer a matter of ins and outs and theories; and the woman citizen has come into her own at a time that will test her to the utmost. For it is one thing to take a hand in a going concern and another—quite another—to evolve new systems, political or social, or raise fallen States from their ruins.

Much of what we once called the civilised world now lies in actual ruin, shattered as to industry, without stable system of government; and even those States which are apparently more fortunate are faced with the necessity of radical change in their institutions, of testing the very foundations on which they stand. And in the process of testing and change—a process critical beyond all others—the woman citizen will be called on to take her part. . . . The Geneva Conference will be well worth watching, if only as an indication of the attitude of thinking women in the face of the need for reconstruction.

If the cause of enfranchisement has been successful to a degree that hardly seemed possible seven years ago, its victory is not yet complete; the Latin countries notably are still reluctant to admit their women to citizenship. France, during wartime, owed her food very largely to the women who toiled in her fields; hence her refusal cannot be based on the argument that women's work is a private and family matter. Be that as it may, the furthering of women's enfranchisement in countries where it does not yet exist will still remain as the first consideration of the Conference; and one may conclude that the Swiss Association for Woman Suffrage will make full use of the Geneva meeting to advance its cause in Switzerland. The mere presence of delegates from so many enfranchised countries—not to speak of women Members of Parliament—should do something to dissipate the prejudice which has hitherto hampered the efforts of the Swiss Suffragist. She is making a steady and sturdy fight of it; and, for her sake alone, one would wish all success to the Congress.

There will be—there must be—a certain dramatic element about this Geneva meeting; where delegates from nations which lately were at war will come face to face with each other. Reminded, it may be, by the mere sound of each other's speech of men who have died in their youth. . . . Whom they may not forget, and should not; since only by remembering—by always remembering—may they hope to save other generations from the agony their own has endured! And some there, it may be, will look back to Buda-Pesth, with its hopes and its plans and its happy blindness to the future. . . . These things may not be much spoken of, but of a certainty they will be felt.

## WHERE ARE THOSE HOUSES?

By COUNCILLOR MRS. ALDERTON (COLCHESTER).

A few weeks before the General Election of 1918, Mr. Lloyd George, in Manchester, made this statement:—"The housing problem in this country is the most urgent that awaits solution." The Coalition Government was returned to power partly on account of the promises given then, that this problem should receive immediate attention, and that "homes fit for heroes to live in" should be provided without loss of time.

After six months in office, the Government produced a Housing Bill, and it became law in July, 1919. This Act of Parliament is pregnant with possibilities, but so badly was it framed that another Housing Bill had to be passed five months later. Both these Acts are now on the Statute book, but so far they have only resulted in the building of a few hundred complete houses.

We shall better be able to realise the extreme gravity of the situation if we recall to our minds the facts which the Land Enquiry Committee reported in 1914. They found that there was at that time a shortage of houses in half the towns in England, and a shortage of at least 120,000 houses in the rural districts, and, moreover, that some millions of persons were living in slums and in an overcrowded condition. Now, things are infinitely worse to-day than they were then, for whereas the average number of working class houses built per year between 1904 and 1914 was 75,000, very few houses were built during the war, and only a few hundreds since the war ended.

The appalling shortage of houses to-day spells tragedy to millions of people. In countless cases two or three or more families are living crowded together under the same narrow roof. Physically, it is impossible for men, women, and children, herded together in this way, to be healthy. Morally, it is almost equally dangerous. And things are daily getting worse. Homeless families are still crowding into already overcrowded dwellings—slum areas cannot be cleared away—and the medically condemned houses must still remain inhabited. It is on account of conditions such as these that we are breeding industrial and social unrest, that our babies die, and that sickness, immorality, and crime are so rife among us.

But who is to blame for this state of things, and what is the remedy? The Government blame the local authorities for the delay in the provision of the houses, but I speak as a member of a Town Council which has done its utmost to supply the houses, and I say deliberately that councils have been hampered and hindered by the Government Department concerned at every point in their efforts to speed up the work. Local authorities have not been given a dog's chance from the beginning.

First, there was the deplorable delay on the part of the officials at the Ministry of Health in accepting the plans sent up by the Municipalities. In hundreds of cases plans of houses have been sent back time after time for trivial alterations, and finally accepted—after months of delay—in a form very little different from that in which they were first sent up. The Government never has appeared to realise the tragedy these months of delay mean to the homeless.

Then there has been the financial difficulty that the local authorities have had to contend against. It is true that a guarantee has been given that the ultimate loss to the locality shall not exceed the yield of a penny rate, but nothing has been done to help the Municipalities to raise the money required for the capital expenditure. The Government has suggested that the local authorities should finance their scheme by issuing Local Housing Bonds, but, in the smaller towns, it is impossible for the Councils to borrow the huge sums of money required, and indeed only the very largest towns can borrow the money on as favourable terms as the Government could borrow it. A Government Housing Loan, utilising the nation's credit, seems to be the most satisfactory way out of the difficulty.

Then we are faced with the steadily rising prices of material and labour. I cannot help thinking that "rings" and "trusts" among those who supply building material to our builders are taking advantage of the extremity of the nation's need to reap a rich harvest for themselves. The cost of the houses will be enormous, and the cost will have to be reflected in the rents charged.

The Government should have a strict enquiry made into the terribly high cost of building material, and use its powers to prevent undue profits.

But notwithstanding all the difficulties the broad fact remains that we must have the houses. The attendant evils of the house shortage have become such a national menace that the difficulties of paying the price disappear before the impossibility of going on as we are any longer. If the present Government cannot deliver the goods, let them make way for a Government which can.



## "THE WOMAN'S LEADER" IN LITERATURE.

### BOOKS AT RANDOM.

For the first time since the outbreak of what has come to be affectionately known as the "Late-Great" I have been able from various different dumps and caches to reorganise my scattered library and set it to fullest advantage in a single gigantic book cupboard. Tempted at first by the same childish instinct that once earned me a beating in my father's library, to group the books by their colours, I resisted the impulse and soberly wrote out my labels—*Poetry, Fiction, French, Reference, Scientific, Juvenile*, and several more. At the end of a hard morning the books are assembled and very fine they look; my only trouble has been one empty top shelf, where thirty odd volumes for which no other accommodation seemed to offer must perforce doss down together and make the best of it—I wrote for them a last label, *Curious*, then paused, remembering that *Curious* is a book-ship euphemism for *Improper*, tore it up again and provisionally wrote *Miscellaneous*; finally opened book after book in search for some Highest Common Factor that should give me a title to cover the lot.

Besides two or three books of theology not numerous enough to be allowed a shelf of their own, there were juvenilia impossible for any child's reading; poems that would be miserably unhappy on the poetry shelf; novels of a marvellous extravagance; reference books to which no sane man would ever refer, and curious unclassified waifs plaintively knocking at the door of this new Barnado's Home. Up went theology on the shelf; a Welsh testament given me in France by a Congregation pastor from the Welsh Colony in Patagonia, where the book was printed; then Mr. Gladstone's impregnable rock of holy scripture, which I keep not so much for the conviction of its arguments as for its *fin-de-siècle* paper covers, showing on the observe a portrait of the stern statesman-theologian himself, wearing the well-known collars; and on the reverse (not, as one might expect, a slightly cynical Disraeli but) a grinning advertisement of Monkey Brand Soap; which has the effect of the gargoyle on a cathedral gutter.

There was also a prophetic book by a pastor named Tiarks with lugubrious astrological diagrams foretelling the end of the world in 1910; a devotional manual entitled "The Gates Ajar"; and finally, "The Book of Mormon," strange revelation, for whose sake a whole congregation tramped out into the unknown Salt Lake desert, built a new Jerusalem, made the wilderness blossom like a rose, and when molested by the hosts of Midian in the form of a United States militia regiment, laid an ambush and cut the soldiers to ribbons with knives and hatchets. I believe that this book is sufficiently uncommon on conventional English bookshelves to excuse a short account here. Its fuller title is:—

#### THE BOOK OF MORMON:

An account written by

THE HAND OF MORMON

upon

Plates taken from the Plates of Nephi, &c.

Translated by Joseph Smith, Jun.

The testimony of three witnesses is given "with words of soberness that an angel of God came down from heaven and he brought and laid before our eyes that we beheld and saw the plates and the engravings," and of eight further witnesses that

"Smith has shown unto us for we have seen and hefted . . . the plates which have the appearance of gold; we also saw the engravings thereon all of which have the appearance of ancient work and of curious workmanship." The book is written in pseudo-biblical language, and printed and bound like a bible: it contains several subsidiary books including those of Alma, Mosiah, Enos, Ether, and Jacob. Let us glance at the index.

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Let us read, and wonder no more at Mr. Vale-Owen's spiritualistic revelations in the *Weekly Dispatch*. It is curious how the human mind, when strung to such a pitch that it fancies itself in direct communication with the Incomprehensible, can often only record its impressions of the encounter in the terms of the most dreary materialism amounting at times to complete fatuity: even the prophecies of William Blake, for all their rugged grandeur, leave an unsatisfactory feeling behind them, that perhaps like all other prophecies they are destined to "vanish away," in spite of their literary connexion with certain immortal songs of innocence. But have I now almost filled the allotted page and only put up half a dozen volumes on the shelf, and these all theological? Theology, when I come to consider it, is a forbidden subject for discussion—cry pardon, ladies and gentlemen, for my breach of good manners. In the age of Faith there would have been no need for apology: to talk of theological curiosities in this casual way would have been once accepted not as a sign of unbelief in religious essentials but contrariwise of a belief so secure that it could afford to jest unconcernedly around Truth and pull no long faces.

From our correspondence columns I note that this luper-calian spirit is long out of fashion; recently, on the struggle of women for admittance to Holy Orders, I wrote, as Horatio might, "Watch Maude Royden!" A lady at once detects a sneer. Not Miss Royden herself, mark you, but a champion. If it were Miss Royden I should be mightily ashamed of myself, because if there is one woman of action above all others whom I admire with all my heart it is she. But I know her well enough to say that Miss Royden wastes no time looking for chance insults in the Press. She has a finer spirit than that. I find also that I have to eat dirt for my "lies" about women's degrees at Oxford; I eat it cheerfully in the knowledge that I was misinformed by one of the highest available authorities, and that out of my misinformation Truth has sprouted in the correspondence column. What did the great doctor plead when he was asked, by a lady, why he had defined PASTERNA as the "knee of a horse"? "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance."

Fuze promises in future to try and verify his statements, and in a continuation of the bookshelf theme to be a little less controversial. But original ignorance he cannot help.

FUZE.

## "THE WOMAN'S LEADER" IN DRAMA. "As You Like It" at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

There is little doubt that in this play Shakespeare set out to write a pot-boiler, to fill his own pockets and tickle the fancy of his audience. He knew exactly how to do this—none better. So he arranged, invented, adapted all to this end, and labelled his play, "As You Like It."

The audience of Southwark then, liked it very much as they like it now. They liked plenty of action and bustle on the stage, and were not averse to coincidences, disguises and hair-breadth escapes. They liked the course of true love to run hard for a while—then smooth. They liked the hero to be prodigiously handsome and brave, and the heroine young, beautiful, and in distress. They liked a few really bad characters whom they could dislike. They liked the good characters to be readily rewarded, and the wicked to be heavily punished, or, failing that, reformed. Also, all the young people must be married off before the end of the play. The Elizabethans had one taste which has not survived—a passion for shepherds and shepherdesses. These pretty figures, who were for the most part ladies and gentlemen of fashion, armed with crooks and pet lambs, were imported from Greece, *via* Italy and France, and by Elizabeth's fashion.

Shakespeare, complying with this pretty fashion, turns the whole Court out into the Forest of Arden to live under the Greenwood Tree, killing the food they eat—content with what they got. He introduces some real shepherds to contrast with the courtier shepherd. For the rest, he gave them all they wanted and more—pressed down and running over. Orlando was so strong that he could knock out the champion heavyweight in one round. He could fight with wild beasts and only receive a scratch on the shoulder. Shakespeare also gave them two really bad villains, who both suffer severely for their villainy. He rewarded all the good, and converted all the wicked characters—while as for coincidences, mistaken identities and disguises—! And in the end, Hymen is surrounded by four couples whom he has joined at the last moment in spite of tremendous opposition from Fate.

Yet all this gaiety—this preposterously happy ending is almost cynical. With all its prettiness, fun, and love-making, "As You Like It" is obviously the work of a man disillusioned and unhappy. It is not surprising that the critics place it in the period immediately preceding the great tragedies. It is clear he had already felt the cold of that cloud which hung over the writer of the sonnets, Lear and Hamlet. Again and again this obscure pain breaks out amid the revelry of the forest recalling the mournful beauty of the sonnets. "Most friendship is feigning—most loving mere folly." "To look at happiness through another man's eyes." But it is so musical, and melts so naturally with the laughter which precedes and follows it, that before we can say "here is Shakespeare" he is gone.

What Shakespeare himself, or any other Elizabethan for that matter, would have thought of the performance at Hammersmith, it is difficult to imagine. The play is given without cuts, which, of course, would have pleased them. The scenes are shifted with such incredible rapidity that the play scarcely takes longer to act than it would have done in Shakespeare's time, with a platform stage where the scenery remained the same throughout. The music, too, was Elizabethan, "arranged entirely from late Elizabethan sources by Arthur Bliss." Much of it was very well played by a string quartet, dressed as Elizabethan pages. The singing of the songs was really beautiful.

But there was nothing Elizabethan about the setting of the play. The costumes and scenery by Mr. Lovat Fraser were

designed on a kind of futurist fifteenth plan. The effect was very bright and attractive, but quite unlike anything which could ever have appeared on an Elizabethan stage. There is much to be said for this. The play was never intended to be like real life, and there seems no reason why its producers should be tied to an exact reproduction of Elizabethan costumes. Provided the scheme is gay, fantastic and harmonious, what more is needed to suit the humour of the play?

The play is acted in a brisk, light-hearted manner, which fits perfectly the colour scheme. Miss Athene Seyler, as Rosalind, seemed to set the pace, and ran through her own part at a rattling speed. Personally, I did not like her. It was not that she went too fast, but Rosalind in her hands seemed to lose all her charm, and become a talkative, fidgetty comedienne. Of course, if Rosalind is spoiled, a great part of the play is spoiled too. Miss Marjory Holman, on the other hand, was delightful as Celia. Mr. Miles Matheson gave an amusing and very characteristic interpretation of the foppish le Beau. He doubled the part with that of William, a country fellow. Here he overstepped the part, and appeared as a congenital idiot. It was grotesque, and made the audience laugh, but was hardly justifiable. Mr. Matheson has no right to take liberties with Shakespeare in order to show off his talent for playing idiots, and Mr. Nigel Playfair was very right in the head as Touchstone. His humour was perhaps a little too solid for the part recalling Sir Toby Belch, but, of course, it was amusing and well done. Mr. Rea, as both Dukes, was ponderous as usual. But Shakespeare does not give his elderly gentlemen so free a hand as Drinkwater and St. John Ervine, and Mr. Rea was unable to dominate the stage with his sanctimonious personality. But he made the most of the "Sermons in stones, books in the running brooks" speech. We should like to see him as Polonius.

The whole play was unusually free from the domination of one or two actors. The high level reached in the smaller parts was conspicuous, especially in the Phoebe of Miss Moyna MacGill, and the Jaques of Mr. Herbert Marshall. Mr. Herbert Marshall was excellent in John Ferguson. But the part of the dour young Welshman seemed to suit him so well that one felt he was simply being himself on the stage. There is no question of this in Jaques. Yet, on his lips, the words which probably everyone of the audience had known by heart since childhood, gained a new power, and held us spellbound, caught away from the futurist colouring and the garrulous Rosalind to the eternal realities of great poetry.

D H.

#### CANNINGTOWN WOMEN'S SETTLEMENT (INCORPORATED)

### A PUBLIC MEETING

will be held at MORLEY HALL (Y.W.C.A.),  
26, George Street, Hanover Square.

ON THURSDAY, MAY 6th, 1920, at 3 p.m.

The MARCHIONESS of ABERDEEN and TEMAIR  
will preside.

#### SPEAKERS

Mrs. Arnold Glover. Mrs. Parker Crane, M.A.  
Dr. Elizabeth Ashby & Hugh Kemsley, Esq.

Tea at 4.30 p.m.

A COLLECTION WILL BE TAKEN

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE WOMEN'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIETY.

MADAM.—The Women's Local Government Society beg that you will place their educational work before the readers of your valuable paper.

The Society has been doing invaluable work since 1888; it still watches all parliamentary legislation dealing with local government measures and has won for them their present status in civic life. It supplies election literature and leaflets, and keeps a register of women elected to local authorities all over Great Britain, and it gives correct information and advice on all technical points.

After war the need is apparent for so many pressing and vital reforms that the Society feels impelled to appeal to the bulk of the women of the country, for though so many women have shown themselves ready for public life and interested in and for the public good, still the majority of women do not seem to be aware of the opportunities and powers for good that lie open to them.

There is scarcely a reform that is not dealt with by the local bodies, whether it is education, maternity, or child welfare, housing, sanitation, theatres, libraries, the care of the poor, the sick and the mentally deficient. Public responsibilities are new to women—women also outnumber men in the population, and for the greater part of the community to take no active interest in the many reforms before the local bodies does not make for better government, either local or parliamentary, for the latter can only be used to the best advantage by studying urgent local needs.

The Special Effort Committee are most desirous of pressing the educational value of the Society's work, as they are confident that if this were fully known and appreciated by the public, there ought to be no difficulty in securing the £15,000 required, and they feel sure the Society's aim will have the approval of your readers, for if each local body was strengthened to perfect its working, the result would be seen in a more efficient and prosperous community. The Committee would be extremely grateful for all offers of help for meetings to make the object known, and entertainments to raise funds. All donations and subscriptions should be crossed to the order of "The Special Effort Committee," and sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Lady Shaw, 10, Moreton Gardens, S.W. 5.

EDITH BUCKMASTER, President.

## TEMPERANCE REFORM.

MADAM.—Miss Alice Scott's fourth question is as follows:—

4. "Was not State Monopoly started in Russia in the hope that it would lessen the drunkenness and the sale of drink, and did it not prove an utter failure in this respect?"

The tail of the question postulates a suggestion which it would be useful to have defined and illustrated by some sort of evidence. It is difficult to discuss a generalisation. The objects of the vodka monopoly in Russia are very clearly set forth in the founder's statements to the Council of State and in his official orders to the Russian excise officials. What he aimed at was to regulate the sale of vodka and to abolish and prevent existing abuses. The method of private licensing had, as he reminded the Council of State, signally failed. Between 1863 and 1893 (the year preceding the establishment of the State monopoly) more than ten "organ laws" had been issued "to regulate the spirit trade, and to protect the people from the unhappy consequences of a free trade by the publicans." None of these had produced the desired results. "The influence of the publicans remained the same. They continued to develop drunkenness among the people, to demoralise and to ruin them. All means appeared good to them. . . . Under a system of private licensing he saw no possibility of reconciling the interests of the State and the interests of private profit. The trade, as then conducted, "has within itself contradictions which it is impossible to reconcile." The public houses were of a deplorable character, the drink sold was badly rectified and shamefully adulterated, while the methods of conducting the trade were scandalous. The peasants were greatly in the power of the publicans who, in many cases, when ready money was not forthcoming to pay for the drink purchased, took the clothes and property of their customers in pledge. Pawning, indeed, as a device for obtaining drink, was well-nigh universal. In many cases the fruits of the harvest were mortgaged to the spirit dealers.

An appraisement of the results of the State monopoly can be made only by those familiar with these facts. A charge of "utter failure" necessarily challenges comparison with them and is by that comparison refuted and condemned. It would not be difficult to indicate defects in the Russian scheme which would be avoided here. As a matter of fact, advocates of State purchase in this country, who hold no brief for the Russian system, were the first to emphasise them. The abolition of all "on" sales (except in a few privileged restaurants) and the allowance of a very low minimum limit of quantity in "off" sales were steps of very doubtful wisdom which ingrained popular habits were certain to exploit. The real weakness of the Russian vodka monopoly however, lay in over-centralisation, and in the absence of local popular safeguards and checks. This defect was inherent in the former Russian scheme of Government. It would be fully safeguarded by the different political conditions which prevail in this country.

Professor Friedman, a keen prohibitionist, and unquestionably the best-informed Russian critic of the vodka monopoly, has answered Miss Scott's question in words which she may like me to quote: "The monopoly system," in his view, is "a more perfect means of attaining fiscal, popular-economic, and social-hygienic aims" than other systems of regulation. The mere abolition of the monopoly, and "transference of the trade in spirituous drinks from State to private ownership," he, as

a prohibitionist, and "on the strength of a close study of the question of the monopoly," would regard as "a great mistake pregnant with sad results." "From the point of view of the struggle with intemperance," he adds, "private ownership is much more dangerous and unsuitable than State ownership."

5. This question is really answered in my reply to Miss Scott's first question. The parts of the liquor trade actually excluded from the Summer proposals are, apart from the wholesale wine trade, relatively small, and in the problematical event of their ultimate inclusion in a Government scheme, the additional cost would not greatly swell the capital liability. In the case of the wholesale wine trade there are, as I have shown, exceptional and probably decisive reasons for non-inclusion.

6. "If the Government owned the drink trade, it is probable that their desire for temperance reform would prove stronger than the temptation to profit by the trade, especially at a time when money is so badly needed to pay off war debts and carry out necessary social reforms?"

This query begs several important questions and is built upon at least three unchallengeable assumptions. It assumes first, an autocratic executive with plenary powers, unsusceptible to public opinion and unchecked by a popularly-elected parliament. It assumes, second, a scheme of State management and control of a completely centralised and bureaucratic character, in which no place would be found for the play of popular opinion, and no room provided for local initiative and control.

It assumes, further, a low level of national intelligence and a negligible force of temperance sentiment in the country. The citation of these assumptions will probably shock your correspondent, but they are all logically involved in the question she asks. If assumptions are to influence judgment, they ought to be of a reasonable kind and in harmony with our political experience. We must assume, for example, that our statesmen will continue to be ordinarily intelligent and rational men, alive to the economic wastefulness of the drink habit, and the essential unremunerativeness of revenue derived from habits which lower efficiency and impoverish and demoralise great numbers of citizens. A Chancellor of the Exchequer who tried (in defiance of public opinion) to foster the drink trade for revenue purposes would be an economic idiot. It is well to tax the trade while it exists. It is folly to forget that the revenue so received is more than wiped out by the direct and indirect cost of the misery, inefficiency, and physical deterioration which result from the abuse of drink. Successive Chancellors of the Exchequer, hitherto, have expressed themselves very plainly on this point. On the other hand, your correspondent has apparently overlooked the clear and substantial financial gain which would accrue to the nation under State purchase from concentration of manufacture and distribution by the suppression of many thousands of redundant breweries and licensed houses.

By your leave, I will answer Miss Scott's last three questions in your next issue.

ARTHUR SHERWELL.

## PENSIONS CLERKS' PROTEST.

MADAM.—With reference to the note in THE WOMAN'S LEADER of the 23rd inst., headed "Pensions Clerks' Protest," may I point out that the account there given of the present situation in the Ministry of Pensions is somewhat misleading in its remarks about the Pension Issue Office?

Regarded solely from the point of view of the Soldiers' Awards Branch the transfers now in process are, no doubt, a change for the worse. I do not possess a sufficiently extensive knowledge of the work of all departments of the Ministry and the efficiency or otherwise with which it is performed to make any sweeping statements as to the comparative "standing" and interest of Awards and Issue. But I do know the Issue work, and the Issue Office staff.

The transfer of women from other branches to administrative and higher grade clerical posts in the Issue Office is not an unmixed blessing to the women at present employed there. For one thing, it closes practically all doors to promotion for some time to come. For another, it is not easy to work under an officer who has necessarily to learn all the practical details of her work. The majority are, however, prepared to realise that it is a step forward to have women as women in these higher posts, especially in the branch of the Ministry which is likely to go on long after "Awards" ceases to exist on any considerable scale.

The attitude, however, apparently taken up by some of the women transferred—that apart from questions of pay and status the transfer to the Issue Office is to be regarded as a grievance because the work there is "beneath" them in an intellectual sense (also the injudicious advertisement of this attitude in the Press)—is hardly likely to increase their own chances of success or to bring about a peaceful state of affairs within the office. Nor is it to the credit of the department generally and of women as Civil Servants.

The work of the Issue Office is not the simple thing it is sometimes represented to be. No work based on a constantly varying and growing body of rules and regulations can ever be purely mechanical. A knowledge of all the Royal Warrants can ever be purely mechanical. A knowledge of a complicated payment to a quite illiterate and probably indignant pensioner is a very fair test both of intelligence and knowledge of the English language. The question of interest is, of course, largely a personal one—but anyone who is a student of human nature can find an abundance of humour and pathos both in the technical and the staff side of the work.

In short, anyone who possesses brains (and commonsense) has as much opportunity of exercising them in the Pension Issue Office as in any other Government Department.

DOROTHEA E. AMSDEN.

## A REPLY TO MR. EMIL DAVIES.

MADAM.—The best answer to Mr. Davies' article on Nationalisation, is that of our own experience during the last few years. We have tried what nationalised railways, nationalised food supply, nationalised coal supply are like, and we can see their faults very clearly. We are now trying a nationalised housing scheme, and I daresay we shall try a few others before we succeed in shaking off the army of bureaucrats who have fastened on the nation.

For this is the real weakness of every scheme of nationalisation. It at once breeds an immense crowd of officials whose whole interest is in keeping their jobs going. The capitalist comes cheaper to the consumer than the Government office, because though he may profiteer himself he is only one, where the Government officials are legion. Not only does State trading mean a great waste of labour, as far more people are always employed in it than is necessary, but it makes it nobody's interest to be economical, so it is very extravagant.

People naturally take the line of least resistance. In private businesses there is always some one checking the expenses. Nominally this is done in Government offices. But the wish to save is weak, the pleasure in spending is strong.

Some Socialists comfort themselves with the idea that they can lead all this extravagance on the shoulders of the rich. In practise, however, it falls upon the poor. Who is now suffering from the inability of the Government to provide houses? Not the rich, but the poor. Who is suffering from the increased price of coal? Not the rich, it is a mere fleabite to them. The poor suffer. So with the expense of travelling, the cost of Food Control. It is the poor who feel the pressure. Governments very seldom play fair. They cannot resist using their strength. Why should we be at this moment forbidden to import butter or currants? If the Government can trade better than the private citizen, why should it fear competition?

Dr. Addison is going along the same path when he tries to cheapen the expense of State provided houses by forbidding competition for the labour supply. From the dim glimpses we get of affairs in Russia, we may perhaps guess at the full consequences of these doctrines, logically carried out, in the universal regulation of supply with its necessary corollary, the conscription and direction of labour. This naturally entails the complete loss of liberty, a matter of less moment perhaps to the Russians than it would be to the English. It is not in the least likely that we should go the same lengths, as we are not ruled by logic, but it is just as well to see the "end of the road." Even in the experiments we are making in State socialism the price we have to pay is always some powers of liberty; i.e., under Food Control we had largely to surrender our power of choosing the tradesmen we dealt with.

The condition of the ordinary citizen under a completely socialistic system, would be very like that of a pauper inmate of a workhouse. The State provides him with clothes, food, shelter, medical attendance when he is ill. His labour is apportioned to his strength, but he cannot choose his work. Yet the great majority of men and women infinitely prefer their liberty, even if they are far less well fed and clothed; and only come in to these institutions if they are driven by necessity.

MAUD SELBORNE.

## DR. ELSIE INGLIS MEMORIAL.

MADAM.—Not long ago the writer came across an old copy of THE COMMON CAUSE, for March, 1915, where, under the news from the Headquarters of the Scottish Women's Hospitals, we learnt that Dr. Elsie Inglis was addressing meetings "as indefatigably as ever, and never speaks without reaping a golden harvest of donations," the correspondent added:—

"Not because she was especially gifted with oratorical powers was Dr. Elsie Inglis so successful in her appeals for support, but because she was so desperately sincere and whole-hearted about the upkeep of the hospital units which she had been the chief instigator in sending abroad to help our Allies."

And, to-day, many of her old colleagues, admirers, and friends, are trying to raise a suitable memorial to her. This memorial, is to take the form of a hospital for tuberculosis in Serbia, to be run on modern lines, and the enlargement of the Maternity Home in Edinburgh for Poor Mothers, which Dr. Elsie Inglis founded many years ago. It is an appeal to every patriotic woman, and although it comes at a time when the claims on our resources are many, it is worthy of attention. Readers of THE WOMAN'S LEADER can help by making clothes for the Fair, which is to be held next month, by getting up concerts or bridge parties, or by helping at the headquarters office, 110, Victoria Street, and by telling friends and interesting them in the matter.

Surely we, and more especially the readers of this paper, cannot lose this opportunity of helping to continue some of the work Dr. Elsie Inglis devoted her life to—work which must appeal to all women interested in the welfare of humanity.

The work done by the Scottish Women's Hospitals during the war is well known to most of us, but perhaps only a few can realise the colossal difficulties which Dr. Elsie Inglis and her Committee had to launch, and to keep the different units properly equipped.

Dr. E. Inglis's experiences in Russia leave one aghast at the boundless energy she displayed, when, physically, she was far from well. Much could be written about the thousands of French soldiers who were treated in S.W. Hospitals, and especially at the Abbey de Royaumont, one of the most well known—but the war is fresh enough in our minds, we cannot forget it, save in plans for reconstruction—in the awakening of energies hitherto apathetic—energies, which surely the memory of the life of Dr. Elsie Inglis will stir to action and effort.

C. F. N. M.

## WOMEN AND THE CIVIL SERVICE.

## THE STRENGTH OF THE WOMEN'S POSITION.

MADAM.—In the present discussions on women and the Civil Service I think there is one point that tends to be overlooked and that is the inherent strength of the women's position if they will only hang together. At the present juncture it is far more important that they should keep out of the service than that they should go in on any but satisfactory terms. The pressure of public opinion is now so strong that the Government, particularly in view of the 1918 General Election manifesto, cannot afford to keep all women out.

The Government position is particularly weak in respect of certain Ministries, such as the Ministry of Health, where the services of women are obviously required and are demanded by outside opinion. The Government will have, sooner or later—and sooner rather than later—to appoint a considerable number of women to posts in the Ministry of Health and some to posts of considerable responsibility. During the war, with the nation's call for their services strong in their ears, women were not inclined to stand over-long on the strict letter of equality, but the time has come now when the battle must be fought once for all. Heads of departments realise in connection with leading posts, where a keen appreciation of principles and a capacity to adhere to them firmly are the essential qualifications, that a woman who is weak enough on general principles to be prepared to accept a post on any but satisfactory conditions will not be strong enough to shape and carry through a coherent fully thought out policy. The Treasury needs to be taught the same lesson—and can be taught it by the refusal of able, well-qualified women to take up posts on any but terms of equality. Posts to which the above remarks apply are, of course, comparatively few in number, but viewing the battle-line as a whole, it is there that the strategic point lies. If equality is conceded at the top it will be more than difficult to withhold it lower down, and if it be worn in one department, it becomes enormously easier to compel it in others.

What is true of the Ministry of Health is true of other departments, e.g., the Home Office, Ministry of Labour—if women will stand firm in cases where there must ultimately be strong pressure on the Government to appoint women, the principle of equality will have to be conceded all along the line. There is a big responsibility to-day on all women to stand together.

L. F. NETTLEFOLD.

## VENEREAL DISEASE.

MADAM.—May I be allowed to reply to Mrs. Gilchrist Thompson's letter in your issue of April 16th, which I regret that I have only just seen?

I know that your correspondent is voicing a very widespread (and very often inarticulate) feeling that something can and must be done to check the spread of venereal disease and that the women's societies seem to be always opposing measures with that end in view while not able to suggest better alternatives. It is a very natural feeling and deserves very serious consideration. If I can possibly make the situation clearer I shall be grateful for the opportunity afforded in your columns. As regards the example told to Mrs. Thompson officially as a rescue worker's experience, of an infectious girl taking a situation as "general" in a household with young children in it, the writer seems to be under two confusing misconceptions. In the first place, no clause in the Bill in question, or in any conceivable Bill, will prevent people, to all intents and purposes in ordinary health and strength, from leading their ordinary life and, when circumstances demand it, earning their living. The clause objected to could only be brought to bear in the case of this general servant after it had been proved that she had infected someone in the house. If she infected a child a clause in the Children's Act specifically dealing with such a case is urgently advocated by the Society for Moral and Social Hygiene and by our own Society. There could be no controversy over such a clause and the knowledge of its existence would lead to greater care on the part of infected persons who are obliged also to take charge of children. If this servant married and infected her husband the women's societies say that their unfortunate circumstances should be dealt with in marriage and divorce laws.

If she indulges in "irresponsible and unhygienic conduct" with someone of equal standards with her own, we say that neither person has the moral right to penalise the other; and in such a disputed case it is beyond the wit of lawyer or doctor to prove with certainty which of the two is physically the culprit.

On the ground of utility, as well as the impossibility of justice being secured, we oppose the penalising of the communication of venereal disease in promiscuous intercourse. We do not oppose it in the case of children, or of infection in marriage.

To return to the difficult case of the general servant. It is clear that the proposed law could not prevent her from being in service. But it is surprising to me that the rescue worker should feel that her own work was done. Personal influence with the girl to secure treatment and the utmost care of others (which is possible, for the analogy of venereal disease infection with such diseases as small pox, scarlet fever, etc., is entirely false and mischievously misleading), private talk with the mistress, help to other work if dismissal follows, all these steps, I know, are possible to people who are friends of girls, but who are not rescue workers.

A further confusion occurs in the letter with regard to compulsory notification of venereal disease. But that is another question with which, in this too long letter, I will not attempt to deal. But it would not prevent the general servant being in her situation. And doctors are acutely divided as to its usefulness. We have to face the fact that there are endless unsatisfactory conditions of life which cannot be touched by legislation. Unmoral legislation must be opposed even if there is no possibility of moral legislation in its place. In this "communication of venereal disease" there is moral legislation possible in the two large classes of infection I have already referred to. Of far greater importance is education, propaganda, and the setting of high and equal moral standards.

EDITH BETHUNE-BARFF.



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19 Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

Founded by JOSEPHINE BUTLER in 1870.

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene (the British Branch of the International Abolitionist Federation) was founded to fight State Regulation of Prostitution. Its work is to abolish Regulation throughout the British Empire and in Great Britain to secure the repeal or amendment of all legislative measures based on the double standard of sex morality. It also acts as an unofficial advisory body to all the principal organisations in sympathy with its objects.

Social workers know that the A.M.S.H. will always supply them freely with reliable and accurate data based on careful research on any subject in connection with administrative measures dealing with prostitution and venereal disease all over the world.

The A.M.S.H. has given considerable financial support to Abolitionist work against regulated prostitution in France, Switzerland and other Continental Countries. It has worked unceasingly for better moral and social conditions in the Army and has spent hundreds of pounds to abolish the degrading system of recognised brothels for the British Army in India. It has profoundly influenced public opinion on the venereal problem at home and abroad. It originated the campaign against the *maisons tolérées* for British Troops in France, and also the campaign for the abolition of the unjust and partial laws dealing with "solicitations" in this country.

Owing to a generous bequest the Association has hitherto been able to develop its work in spite of the heavy annual deficit, but owing to the large drafts on capital necessary to make ends meet the Bequest Fund is now coming to an end. The minimum additional sum urgently needed is £500 a year. Old supporters of Josephine Butler's noble work are passing away and their generous donations are lost to the cause she inspired.

To British men and women who value her cause and her principles an appeal is now made for generous support.

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## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

*President:* MISS ELEANOR F. RATHBONE.  
*Parliamentary and Information Bureau Secretary:*  
Miss Rosamond Smith. Mrs. Hubback.  
*General Secretary:* Miss Stack.

*Hon. Secretaries:* Miss Macadam. Miss Rosamond Smith.  
*Hon. Treasurer:* Miss H. C. Deneke.

Offices: Evelyn House, 62, Oxford Street, London, W. 1.  
Telegraphic Address: Voiceless, Westcent, London. Telephone: Museum 2668.

### NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS AND FROM OUR SOCIETIES.

#### NEWPORT (MON.).

We have received an interesting report of current work from Newport (Mon.). Mrs. Darke, 40, Queen's Hill, has been appointed by the Committee to act as correspondent for THE WOMAN'S LEADER, and is about to start an active propaganda to increase subscriptions and sales. Reports of three public meetings held during March have been received.

1. A public lecture on Housing was held in the Town Hall Assembly Room, when Mr. Ewart Culpin, Town Planning Advisor, spoke to a large audience. He remarked that the predominant interest in Housing was that of the woman, while the predominant voice in the matter was that of the man. Houses must be worthy of the name of home; we must scrap the old standards of town planning and estate development, the whole level must be raised, and with it the level of home life and happiness. Beautiful lantern slides illustrated the lecturer's points. Dr. Lloyd Davies, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Education Committee, took the chair.

2. An afternoon meeting was held at St. John's Institute, when about sixty invited guests were received by the Mayoress, Mrs. Peter Wright, the President of the Newport W.C.A. Miss Marshall, of Cardiff, gave an inspiring address on the need of joining the W.C.A. The Chairman of the meeting, Mrs. Summers spoke of the activities of the Newport Association, and the Hon. Treasurer and the Hon. Secretary interested the audience by an account of the case dealt with by the W.C.A. Police Court Rota. Tea was then served, and nineteen new members joined the Association.

3. A debate on Widows' Pensions was held in the Town Hall. Professor Barbara Foxley, in an able speech, proposed the following resolution: "That this meeting of the Newport W.C.A. approves the principle of Widows' Pensions, and considers that this reform should be introduced at the earliest possible date." An equal number of speakers spoke for and against the resolution, and after an animated discussion it was put to the meeting and carried by a large majority.

#### EALING WOMEN CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION.

At a meeting held here on March 25th a discussion was held on "Private Enterprise or State Aid." It was opened by Mrs. J. Reid, who spoke of the evils caused by the undue interference of the State in social matters. The function of the State should be to preserve peace at home and abroad and protect the life and property of the citizens. This necessitates some State aid in matters such as primary education, &c., since an ignorant population is a danger. But beyond such duties interference led to loss of liberty, a lessening of parental responsibility, and was tending to Socialism and Bolshevism.

Miss Barnett, who opposed Mrs. Reid, said that all had a right at the expense of the State to what education they could receive; also that private enterprise had failed by not utilising properly the advances of science, by wasting natural resources (coal, woods, &c.); it degraded the workers and produced nothing—except poverty. Under nationalisation there would be no waste, and capital would be found for industries, such as dyes, formerly neglected.

Both speakers agreed that the really necessary remedy was a deepening of the spiritual sense in all citizens.

Other members joined in the discussion, most of them opposing nationalisation.

#### SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

The Annual Meeting of the Scottish Federation of the N.U.S.E.C. was held at 40, Shandwick Place, on April 17th. Representatives of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Greenock S.E.C., and Falkirk, Kilmarnock, and Inverness W.C.A. were present. The President, Miss F. H. Simson, presided. The Annual Report and Financial Statement were presented and adopted. Glasgow and Edinburgh Societies reported a good amount of work in connection with Parliamentary Bills, registration, and election work. The Federation had taken action with other nationally organised Societies with the regard to the appointment of women on the Scottish Board of Health, and as magistrates and J.P.s. Miss Knight's report showed that three new W.C.A.s had been formed, and there was a growing desire in many places for a non-party women's political society. Miss Macadam, Hon. Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., gave an address on the immediate programme of the N.U.S.E.C., and two resolutions were passed urging the Government to amend the Married Women's Property Acts (Scotland), and to base any Employment scheme upon the type of work and not on the sex of the worker, and to make any such schemes cover all wage earners, both men and women.

#### EDINBURGH S.E.C.

The Annual Meeting of the Edinburgh S.E.C. was held on April 20th, when the Annual Report and Financial Statement were adopted. A great deal of work had been done by the Society during the last year, especially parliamentary in character, in connection with the Bills for the extension of the Franchise, Widows' Pensions, Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill, and a series of meetings had been held on the points in the Equality programme. Work in conjunction with other societies had been undertaken, both at the municipal and parliamentary elections. The Secretary for Scotland opened a very successful Christmas Fair in December, and spoke warmly of the Society's work and programme. The hon. officers elected were President, Miss F. H. Simson; Hon. Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Miller Morison, Miss Chrystal Macmillan; Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Walker, Mrs. James Ivory; Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Robertson; Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Thomson. Miss Macadam gave a splendid address on the programme for 1920, in which she showed that the fight on which we were engaged called forth the best energies of the Societies even more than the effort to obtain the weapon we required.

#### GLASGOW S.E.C.

The Glasgow Society for Equal Citizenship has greatly appreciated a visit from Miss Macadam, Joint Honorary Secretary, N.U.S.E.C., London. On the 21st inst. Miss Macadam spoke on the N.U.S.E.C. programme at a large Drawing-room Meeting given by Miss Mavor, Dowanhill, and in the evening by Mrs. Kerr, Maryhill. On the 22nd inst. Miss Macadam, in the afternoon, spoke at a Drawing-room Meeting given by Mrs. Bell, Cathcart, and in the evening was the speaker at a Public Meeting, when the subject was "Electioneering." Owing to a rearrangement of the Wards of the city, the entire Glasgow Town Council go out in November, and it is hoped that some women may be returned as Councillors. In view of this Miss Macadam's address on various methods of electioneering was of peculiar interest, and she aroused much enthusiasm in the audience by her lucid explanations and fluency. During Miss Macadam's visit new members were got, and interest revived amongst former members. The Executive Committee had an opportunity of meeting Miss Macadam at an At Home given by the Chairman, Miss M. J. Buchanan, on the afternoon of the 23rd.

WHAT "THE WOMAN'S LEADER" HEARS.

An amusing example of the extreme fallibility of men's preconceived ideas of the modern woman was exhibited quite recently at a lecture delivered under the auspices of a woman's club. The lecturer, a man well versed in psychology, while deploring the tendency of mentally energetic modern woman to go off at a tangent and concentrate rather on "side issues," in order to drive home his point to his audience said he would quote a portion of an otherwise cleverly written literary article that he had recently encountered in one of the leading women's papers. He then proceeded to quote from the offending article at great length, his audience appearing duly interested and impressed. But woe unto the man who proclaims his preconceived ideas of the modern woman so recklessly from the house-tops! For the lecture was followed by discussion and questioning, and judge of the scornful hilarity of the audience when one of the members, who happened to be closely connected with the leading woman's paper in question, rose up and remarked that the lecturer's quotation was a somewhat ill-chosen and unfortunate one, since it happened to be the only article in the paper written by a man, and was in fact the work of one of our well known modern poets.

Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., who has recently made a tour of Egypt and Palestine, gave an interesting lecture to the Browning Settlement Brotherhood. We found his observations on women in Egypt particularly interesting, as lately we have heard so much vague talk about the improvement of the condition and status of Egyptian women. That the improvement is only slight and by no means general, that the men of Egypt considered themselves the Lords of Creation and their women folk their slaves, Mr. Barnes declared was an absolute fact. In many houses he said he never saw a woman, and that the position of the women in Egypt is absolutely one of serfdom and dependence. They spend their lives in miserable hovels; in working in the adjoining fields, or in getting water. They are the serfs of the men, and as much beasts of burden as the donkey and the camel. A people which uses women folk in that way is destined to be a subject race, and does not deserve to govern.

Lady Carlisle's statement regarding women in Parliament which she made at the World's Women's Temperance Convention the other day, is needless to say, hardly one we can endorse. That women's influence outside Parliament in various reforms, such as that of the Drink problem, can be of inestimable value we admit, but it is only by getting women in Parliament that the full weight of women's influence can be brought to bear. Lady Carlisle considers that we must first of all work for reforms from outside before we seek to get into Parliament, where we should only be infinitesimal atoms. Fortunately, our opportunity has now come to work both outside and inside the House. By the way, it would be rather interesting to know whether Lady Astor considers herself, whether her constituency considers her, and whether the House considers her—an infinitesimal atom!

The subject of "Women in the Churches" is one of the most controversial of our time, and no one can say what the near future holds for us in this direction. It is, however, an encouraging sign to see that in not a few districts women are being elected Churchwardens. In this connection, Miss Councillor Morgan, an ex-Mayor of Brecon, has just been unanimously elected People's Churchwarden for St. John's Church, Brecon. Miss Morgan is the first woman Churchwarden in Brecon, and was also the first woman Town Councillor and Mayor elected in Wales. A record to be justly proud of.

We regret to hear that Miss Mary Macarthur, who so recently took the chair at the Labour Women's Conference, has had to cancel all her engagements for some weeks ahead in accordance with doctor's orders. We heard she was looking very tired and over-worked, and hope she will soon regain her health and usual vigour.

At a meeting of the London County Council on April 27th, the resignation of the Duchess of Marlborough, one of the representatives for Southwark, was reported.

Miss Louise Perceval-Clark gave some of her clever dialect monologues the other afternoon at a Concert held in the Aeolian Hall. Perhaps the most amusing of these are "Lizzie and I" and "In a bus." She writes these sketches herself, and we heartily congratulate her on such a unique gift. Others who assisted at the Concert were Miss Megan Foster, whose repertoire included charming modern English and French songs, and Miss Marion Keighley-Snowden, who played five of Poldini's studies and Granados' Spanish Dances with excellent technique.

A precedent will be created on the opening day of the Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, for on that day, Sunday, June 6th, Miss Maude Royden will preach in the Geneva Cathedral and will consequently be the first woman to preach in a Geneva Church.

East as well as West are to be represented at the Congress and we hear that Mrs. Edward Gauntlett, a Japanese lady, has been specially appointed by women's societies in Japan to represent them at Geneva. We hear so much about the political and other activities of Japanese women that we are inclined to wonder if they are not going to outstrip some of their Western sisters in the race for enfranchisement, for progress once embarked upon moves with lightning steps in Japan!

REPORTS.

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT.

Some weeks ago a Joint Committee was set up by the Executives of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland and of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, to arrange a mass meeting in London on "The Need for Women in Parliament." This meeting, which inaugurated a fund for further propaganda to be done by the Committee throughout the country, was held in the Queen's Hall, on February 12th. The Committee is preparing further literature on the subject and is willing to send speakers to any meetings arranged by the branches and affiliated societies of the two bodies, or in response to other invitations. Liverpool W.C.A. is the first affiliated society to arrange a meeting, which will take place on April 30th, and at which Mrs. Corbett Ashby, an adopted candidate, and Miss Eleanor Rathbone will be among the speakers. Other meetings are being arranged and a list of speakers drawn up, including Viscountess Astor, M.P., Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, Miss Rosamond Smith, Miss Helen Fraser, Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. O. Strachey, and others. The Chairman of the Committee is Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, D.Sc., Ph.D., and the Honorary Secretary is Miss Rosamond Smith. The office is at Evelyn House, 62, Oxford Street, W.1, to which inquiries should be sent and where contributions to the fund will be gratefully received by Miss Helen Fraser, Honorary Treasurer.

THE Y.W.C.A. ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting of the London Division of the Y.W.C.A. is in no sense a formal meeting of the usual dull persuasion. It is just a big gathering of friends, and this year, despite a very wet night, the Queen's Hall was once again a sea of girlish faces. The chair was taken by the Hon. Mrs. Charles Stanhope who gave a most inspiring address of welcome. Miss Campbell, president of the London Division, gave a report of the year's work, showing all-round progress. A display, including physical drill, skipping, knot-tying, stretcher and ladder making, and country dancing was given by three of the association's Girl Guide companies. Then Mrs. Belt spoke of association work as she had seen it in Australia, Canada, United States, South America, and Japan. The Blue Triangle in these many countries is evidently just as busy shielding, sheltering, and providing for the souls and bodies of all kinds of girls as it is at home. The closing address was given by the Rev. T. Phillips. The choir of members who entirely filled the orchestra's seats was under the delightful guidance of Mrs. Hick, and the music chosen included the trio "Night Sinks on the Waves," "London Town," the anthem "The Lord Himself is Thy Keeper," and Mrs. Hick's own "Song of Rain," and the evening was so enjoyable that all agreed wholeheartedly with the words of the song—

"It isn't raining rain to me  
It's raining roses down."

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The thirteenth annual conference of the Women's Freedom League was held at Caxton Hall last Saturday and was attended by delegates from our branches in various parts of England, Scotland, and Wales. Mrs. Schofield Coates (of Middlesbrough) presided and said that it was a matter for congratulation that we now had a woman M.P., women J.P.s, and that women were eligible to become lawyers and jurors. She pointed out that during the past year the Women's Freedom League had missed no opportunity of pressing forward women's claims in the interests of the true development of humanity. She insisted that there was still a great need for such an organisation which was quick to take action against injustice to women and which stood outside political parties whilst influencing all, because it had members both inside and outside those parties. Many barriers had yet to be removed before women secured complete emancipation. Unfortunately, men continued to think on the old lines—the Pre-War Practices (Restoration) Act was a concrete example of this way of thinking. Women were being turned out daily from occupations in which they had done excellently in order to satisfy organised men who demanded that men should be privileged in the world of labour. The same bias was shown in the reports of the Commissions on the Civil Service and in the fixing of teachers' salaries. For obvious reasons, this position was not being fought by any of the big political organisations, and the matter was likely to become even more acute in the near future. The Women's Freedom League, therefore, had much strenuous work in prospect before all the artificial barriers restricting women's full development of women's powers and their opportunities were broken down. Mrs. Coates added that the League's prestige and efforts were not confined within the limits of the United Kingdom, but were used on behalf of other women under British rule, and when the International Suffrage Alliance met at Geneva, representatives of the League would be there assisting the movement internationally. Emergency resolutions were passed unanimously by the conference calling upon the Government to bring in immediately a Bill granting the franchise to women on equal terms with men, and to pass it through all its stages into law without delay; welcoming the Bishop of London's Bill which proposed to raise the age of consent, but pledging the Women's Freedom League to resist with all its power any other regulations for sex offences which in operation would be unfair to women as compared with men, and promising uncompromising opposition to those clauses of the Bastardy Bill which proposed to compel the mother to disclose the name of the father of her child, making the child a ward of the Court, thereby connecting it with the Police Courts from its earliest infancy and converting its mother into a guardian on sufferance. This last resolution also urged that the mother and child should come under the care of the Public Health Authority's Maternity and Child Welfare Committee.

COMING EVENTS.

THE MOTHERS' UNION.

In addition to the Lecture programme printed last week, three odd Lectures will be given:—  
MAY 19.  
"The Public House of the Future." By Miss M. Cotterell, O.B.E.  
JUNE 20.  
"The League of Nations." By Mrs. Beatty, C.B.E.  
JULY 7.  
"Storytelling." By Miss Elizabeth Clark. Tickets, 8d.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

MAY 1.  
Primitive Methodist Conference at Berwick.  
Speaker: Rev. J. G. Soulsby (District Synod). 7 p.m.  
At the Vicarage, Wolverton. 3.15 p.m.  
Speaker: F. Whelan, Esq.  
MAY 2.  
In the Baptist Church, South Norwood. 3 p.m.  
Speaker: Canon Otley.  
In the Baptist Church, Brockley. 6.30 p.m.  
Speaker: G. R. Thorne, M.P.  
MAY 3.  
In the Town Hall, Ilkley.  
Speakers: J. H. Seddon, M.P., A. V. Bernard, M.P., Lady Sykes.  
Chair: The Mayor.  
MAY 4.  
Baptist Conference in the Town Hall, Birmingham.  
Speaker: Lord Hugh Cecil. 4.30 p.m.  
In the Central Hall, Westminster.  
Speaker: F. Whelan, Esq.

NATIONAL HEALTH WEEK COMMITTEE.

National Health Week will take place from May 2nd to May 8th.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO SECURE STATE PURCHASE AND CONTROL OF THE LIQUOR TRADE.

MAY 3.  
At St. Philip's Hall, Baker Street, W.  
Speaker: Miss Cotterell, O.B.E.  
Subject: "The Future Public House." 3 p.m.  
MAY 4.  
In the Women's Club Room, West Chislehurst, W.C.A.  
Speaker: Miss B. Picton-Turbervill.  
Subject: "The State Purchase of the Liquor Trade." 8.30 p.m.  
MAY 5.  
At the Forum Club, 8, Grosvenor Place, S.W.  
Debate: "That no Progress can be made in Temperance Reform until the State has taken the Sale of Alcohol out of Private Hands."  
Proposer: Mrs. Boyd Dawson. 8.30 p.m.  
Opposer: Miss Nina Boyle.  
At the Morecombe Women Citizens' Association.  
Speaker: Mr. R. B. Batty. 8 p.m.  
Subject: "The State Purchase of the Liquor Trade."

GUILD OF EDUCATION AS NATIONAL SERVICE.

MAY 4.  
At 11, Tavistock Square, W.C. 1.  
Subject: "Six Years in a Day Continuation School."  
Speaker: Miss Cater (Bourneville).  
Admission Free. Collection to defray expenses.

THE FEMINIST LEAGUE.

MAY 3.  
At 153, Brompton Road, S.W.  
Lecture for Women.  
Speaker: Miss Abadam. 6.30 p.m.  
Subject: "Knowledge."  
For further particulars of this and other courses, and admission to same, apply to F. L. 107, Central Hill, Upper Norwood.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT COMMITTEE.

MAY 5.  
At the Central Hall, Westminster.  
A Meeting will be held, convened by the C.L.S. Committee and the Y.W.C.A.  
Speakers: The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of London, The Rev. Scott Lidgett, D.D., Viscountess Astor, M.P., Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mr. Claude G. Montifiore.  
Chair: Miss E. Picton-Turbervill, O.B.E.  
Admission free. Reserved Seats, 1s. 6d. each. Collection. For all tickets, information, &c., apply the Secretary, C.L.A. Committee (Flat 3), 19, Tothill Street, S.W. 1. 4.45 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB.

MAY 5.  
At 9, Grafton Street, Piccadilly, W. 1.  
Subject: "The League of Nations."  
Speaker: Mr. F. Whelan. 8.15 p.m.  
Chair: Mr. Holford Knight (Barrister-at-Law).

BRITAIN AND INDIA ASSOCIATION.

MAY 6.  
At the Minerva Cafe, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.  
Public Lecture.  
Subject: "An Englishwoman's Observations on the Social and Domestic Side of India."  
Speaker: Mrs. Mayne.  
Chair: Mrs. Josephine Ransom.  
Admission 1s., including Tea, which will be had at 4 p.m. Lecture at 4.30.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

IMPORTANT MEETING IN SUPPORT OF THE BISHOP OF LONDON'S CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

Central Hall, Westminster.

Wednesday, May 5th, 1920, at 4.45 p.m.

Speakers: The Lord Bishop of London; The Rev. Scott Lidgett, D.D.; Viscountess Astor, M.P.; Mrs. Corbett Ashby; Mr. C. G. Montifiore.  
Chair: Miss Picton-Turbervill, O.B.E.

Admission Free; Reserved Seat 1/6.

Tickets and Information from C. L. A. Committee, 19, Tothill Street, S.W. 1.

THE SECOND EXHIBITION and SALE OF COUNTRY PRODUCE, arranged by the National Federation of Women's Institutes will be held at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Vincent Square, for 4 days, opening May 15th, at 12 p.m. Speakers: The Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, M.P., President of the Board of Education, Dame Meriel Talbot, D.B.E., 4.30 p.m. The Master of the Temple on "Village Drama." Full particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Organiser, Miss Alice Williams, National Federation of Women's Institutes, 14, Idlesleigh House, Westminster.

THE PIONEER CLUB, 9, Park-place, St. James's, S.W.1. Subscriptions: Town, £4 4s.; Country, £3 3s.; Professional, £5 3s. The entrance fee is suspended for the time being.  
CLOWNSHIP SERVICES, Kensington Town Hall, Sunday, May 2nd, 3.15 p.m., Dr. Percy Dearmer, "Five-Quarters." 6.30 p.m., Miss Maude Royden, "Christianity and the Bible." Master of Music: Mr. Martin Shaw.

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