

# THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS

JUS SUFFRAGII

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## EVENTS OF THE MONTH.

**The Codification Conference.** The Conference finished its work on April 12th. Its conclusions on the subject of the nationality of married women are embodied, with those on other "anomalies of nationality" in a convention, three protocols and eight recommendations. We hope in our next number to give a detailed account by our legal correspondent of the portions of these documents which are of interest to feminists. In the meantime, we gather that the Conference was not able to adopt any of the existing general policies as regards the nationality of married women. The provisions adopted in the Convention ensure that a woman shall not lose her nationality on marriage with a foreigner unless she acquires that of her husband. In the present state of national laws this condition of "statelessness" may occur in the case of German, British, Italian or Czechoslovak women who marry foreigners, or whose husbands change their nationality during marriage. The recommendations include the establishment, in the laws of various States, of the principle of sex equality in nationality.

**Turkish Women's Franchise.** Following on its recent decision to give the municipal franchise to women, the Turkish Government has now announced that from 1931 women will be allowed to elect and be eligible for election to the Grand National Assembly.

The meeting organised by the Union of Turkish Women to celebrate the granting of the franchise was remarkable for the great number of men who were present.

**The Traffic in Women and Children.** The League of Nations Committee on Traffic in Women and Children held its 10th annual session in Geneva last month. The reports of Governments for 1928 were discussed—these are made in the form of replies to a list of questions with regard to the cases of traffic discovered and the steps taken to deal with them. In most cases only a few incidents, sentences, and deportations are recorded, which must constitute but a tiny percentage of the whole traffic. Progress in this matter is appallingly slow; nevertheless, the League has done and is doing good work which has already led to the reform of various national legislations, and the tendency is increasing in every country to afford greater protection to the young.

Alexandria was described by an official of the International Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic as the most dangerous port in the world, and a suggestion was made by a representative of the British Empire that Egypt, although she is not a member of the League, be asked to support the 1921 International Convention aiming at suppressing the traffic.

South American countries still show slackness in regard to this problem,—a sign, if one were needed, that the intervention of women in public affairs there is overdue.

The Committee closed its discussion of the reports on the maintenance of public order and health received from Governments where licensed houses have been abolished with a resolution noting that "in the opinion of the Governments the fear that such abolition would result in an increase of venereal disease has been proved unfounded, also that the danger of international traffic has been diminished by the closing of the houses." In France, twelve municipalities have now abolished licensed houses, and six others are studying the question with a view to following suit.

**The Suffrage in South Africa.** The third reading of General Hertzog's Woman Franchise Bill was carried on April 11th, by a majority of 39—an unexpectedly large figure. There had been great excitement over the Division and it had been expected that there would be a majority of 12 or 15. The Bill has now to pass the Senate, where a certain amount of strenuous opposition is expected, and the experts have stated in their forecasts that the voting will be very close, and the measure be won or lost by one or two votes. But as they were apparently pessimistic or conservative in their estimate of their supporters in the Lower House, we hope that they will be equally pleasantly surprised when the Senate debates the Bill.

In South Africa, the method of obstruction has always been by parliamentary chicanery. It was in 1904 that the first motion for women's franchise was introduced in the Legislative Assembly of the Cape Province. In 1909 the four Provinces were joined in Union, and a petition was introduced asking that women should be voters in a united South Africa. This request was refused, and from that date to this the story of the suffrage movement in South Africa is the story of a patient bombardment by petitions, and a long series of private members' Bills—for the movement never lacked the support of able and enlightened men of all political parties—of a legislative body which did not scruple to apply every known method of callous and cynical obstructionism, and to indulge in the most unworthy political manoeuvres to defeat the hopes of the women. The dangerous factor in the opposition was never overt—the passionate anti-feminist speeches made by some of the more backward members of the community, who retain an Old Testament mentality, meant usually only that an individual vote would not be given in favour, but the parliamentary machine was quietly worked to prevent a fair chance for a woman's Franchise Bill time and again.

## ETHICS AND LAW.

There are many methods of estimating the progress of the human race from a state of primitive barbarism to one of comparative civilization and culture, and the enquiry into man's efforts in this direction has attracted the philosopher, the historian and the scientist at all stages of human history. One of the most significant—though, from certain aspects, one of the most disheartening—of these methods is by the study of the relative approximation, at any particular age and in any one community, of ethical standards and beliefs to legal practice and sanctions.

It is submitted as a premise that the ethical standards animating the public opinion of the civilized communities of 1930 are definitely on a higher plane than those of a century ago. This proposition may be contested, and is, like all such generalizations, open to argument. Broadly speaking, however, it is contended that it will be found to be true that the public conscience is definitely more active to-day than heretofore and that that conscience is actuated by higher and better principles.

Turn now to the expression of that public conscience as revealed in the body of laws at present operating in the civilized communities of the world. It will be found that almost universally the law is, relatively speaking, lagging behind—in some cases a decade or perhaps a generation, in others, where the contrast is more marked, even a century.

It is a truism to say that an inherent characteristic of any legal system is that it is prone to become fixed and crystallized and this, whether the law be enshrined

in a comprehensive written code, as in the case of most communities with a Roman Law system, or whether the law be partly codified and partly contained in an inter-dependent series of decisions of judicial bodies, as in the Anglo-Saxon communities. All legal systems are rooted in the past, their growth and development being organic and gradual, and this very fact, which gives them traditional authority and stability, in itself hampers change and stands in the way of progressive reform.

The characteristic feature of this discrepancy between ethical standard and legal practice in the twentieth century is the disproportionate regard paid to property and its rights in distinction to human life and its rights.

Some months ago, the English Courts were considering the cases of certain financiers who had perpetrated frauds on an unprecedented scale upon the business community. The Press played its part in informing the public on every detail of the case and both "the City" and public opinion in general condemned the accused men in unmeasured terms. Ultimately the principal offender was sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude (the maximum sentence for his particular offences), and the other accused received substantial sentences. A few weeks after the conclusion of this trial, a drunken labourer in the North of England was brought before a magistrate for ill-treating his wife and child. He had taken his child, aged five, knocked her down and kicked her whilst on the ground and severely injured her. His wife protesting, he had brutally assaulted her, and had not the neighbours fetched the police he would probably have killed both child and wife. This man was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

The object of this comparison is not to reflect in any sense upon the administration of justice in England; the cases were properly conducted and properly heard. Nor is it suggested that the accused financiers did not fully deserve drastic punishment for their offences. What the comparison irresistibly suggests is that it is the state of the law itself which requires overhauling. An attack on property is treated by the law as a more serious offence against public morals than an attack on life, and judges and magistrates being bound by the law, both as to the method of trial and as to the maximum permissible sentence for each offence, the relative scale of values imposed by the law is reflected in their decisions and sentences.

To turn for a moment to a wider aspect of the same situation. In the international sphere, national property and national rights and what are called national "interests" are paramount. Almost the only scale of values in international affairs is one based on material property. Human life is barely considered except in so far as it may enhance the value of such property by furnishing, for example, the means of protecting that property and acquiring other property by force of arms.

There has never been a war in history, the real and basic cause of which has not been "property" in some form. Bismarck, in discussing Near Eastern affairs, declared that "the Eastern Question is not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier." That such a scale of comparative values should exist in the mind of a statesman is only another indication of the disproportionate importance given to property as opposed to life.

Until human life is put before property, not only in personal but in international affairs, and not only as a matter of ethical standard but also as a matter of law, it cannot be said that the organized communities of the world have achieved that state of civilization to attain to which they are professedly

striving. The present position is in effect a survival from the remote past. The Kings of Egypt sacrificed the lives of thousands of slaves in the building of the pyramids as tombs for themselves on a scale commensurate with their material power. The Christian religion, concentrating upon the inherent ethical value of the individual soul, has always championed human life against the conception of power, property and rights, through the feudal and monarchical periods right down to the modern democratic and industrial age. There are signs of a change in public opinion, of an insistence that the balance shall be redressed, that the law shall recognise that life shall take precedence of property.

The emancipation of women from the fetters surviving from an almost feudal period has been so comparatively recent that they are in a sense better qualified than men to influence public opinion in this direction. Women being more intimately concerned with the actual production of life itself must value life more highly than men, and the admission of women into the councils of the nations should do much to hasten the time when a scale of values which has survived from the remote and barbaric past shall be replaced by one more in conformity with the ideas and ideals of the twentieth century.

K. MACRAE MOIR.

## INTERNATIONAL HEALTH.

In spite of many apparent failures and signs to the contrary, there is no doubt that the idea of internationalism is gradually growing. Before the War the idea was held by a few advanced thinkers, condemned usually as impractical idealists; but the War and its resultant chaos, political and economical, and modern facilities for travel have brought home to the man in the street the fact that his country cannot exist in isolation, that the welfare of states is interdependent, and that each state has certain obligations to the world as a whole. The Covenant of the League of Nations is the outcome of this trend of thought, and in no direction have its achievements been more successful than in that of International Health.

The Health Organisation of the League of Nations has, like the League itself, evolved gradually; growing as the need for its activities in various directions became obvious.

Article 23 of the Covenant of the League of Nations says that the Members of the League shall "take steps in matters of international concern for the prevention and control of disease," and at the second meeting of the League Council in February, 1920, an International Conference of Health Experts was summoned to draw up a draft constitution for the Health Organisation. Owing to differences of opinion as to its exact form, it was not until May, 1923, that a draft was completed which was then adopted by the Fourth Assembly of the League; but in the interval, a temporary Epidemic Committee and a provisional Health Committee had been formed to deal with urgent matters.

The Health Organisation now consists of:—

(1) **An Advisory Council!** this is a body of government representatives which meets twice a year to discuss and propose international conventions and to deal with any matter submitted to it by the Health Committee.

(2) **A Health Committee,** which advises the Council and Assembly on all Health matters, and directs the Health work of the League, carrying out enquiries and investigations which are then submitted to the Advisory Council. The Committee is composed of 16 members,—a chairman, nine members chosen by the committee, and six members chosen by the Council of the League, who may also appoint four extra health assessors who count as members; all are appointed for

three years. Germany and America have been represented on the Committee since its beginning.

(3) **A Health Section**; the executive of the Health Organisation, which is part of the Secretariat-General of the League.

Also the Health Organisation co-operates with other League bodies, such as the Opium, Mandates, Transit, and Economic Committees, and with the Red Cross, the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, the International Labour Office, and the International Institutes of Agriculture and Statistics. It receives an annual grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, thus ensuring co-operation with this body. Russia contributes to the Epidemiological Intelligence Service and in many ways shares in the benefits and activities of the Health Organisation.

The aims of this organisation are, broadly, to advise the League of Nations on all health problems; to promote co-operation between the health services of different countries; to collect information on, and to facilitate the taking of international action in, matters of public health.

Its method of procedure is something like this: the delegation of a certain country may, in the Assembly of the League, ask the Council for information on some matter relating to public health, or suggest a desirable line of enquiry. The Council, if it considers that the matter is of international importance, then requests the Health Organisation to collect information on the subject. A commission of experts will then be formed by the Health Organisation, who collect all available information, comparing national experiences and statistics; where necessary, experts are sent to study local conditions; and when all the facts are assembled, a report is compiled, embodying any conclusions arrived at, or recommendations thought necessary. This is submitted to the Health Committee, and from there to the Advisory Council, who then submit it to the Assembly of the League so that the requisite action may be taken.

The Health Organisation itself also initiates investigations on matters of great importance; it will call an International Conference of experts on the subject, in which every aspect of the problem is discussed, the findings are analysed, and further lines of research are indicated. Courses of study may be arranged at various universities on behalf of the Health Organisation, and reports are issued for the guidance of Health Authorities. Where necessary, a permanent commission may be established, working under the direction of the Health Organisation, and reporting to it at intervals. There are several of these commissions in being now:

(1) **The Commission on the Standardisation of Sera, serological reactions and biological products.** This Commission is doing very important work in securing international agreement on the methods of measuring the anti-toxic value of sera, which formerly varied very considerably, not only in different countries, but in different brands in the same country. Scientific specialists meet in conference and, where possible, reach an agreement on the standard to be employed and the methods of comparison with that standard; then representatives of the various governments meet to accept the recommended standard for international use. Standard specimens are kept at various centres, and are always available for comparison. In this way, international units for anti-diphtheritic, anti-tetanic, and anti-dysenteric sera have been established and attempts are being made to standardise other sera. Similarly physical products such as digitalis, insulin, etc., and chemical products such as salvarsan, have been standardised; and this of course makes it very much easier to compare the results of treatment in different countries.

(2) **The Commission on Cancer.** This Commission studies statistics from all over the world on the incidence and distribution of this disease, and its relation to occupation; it keeps track of all enquiries into the causation, and collects and analyses results of different forms of treatment.

(3) **The Commission on Smallpox and Vaccination** collects data on the incidence and character on smallpox in the various countries, and the methods of dealing with outbreaks; it issues recommendations of the origin, preparation and use of vaccine lymph, and is enquiring into the cause and incidence of post-vaccinal encephalitis.

(4) **The Opium Commission** estimates the amount of opium and other dangerous drugs needed for medical and scientific use in each country, and decides which drugs shall be placed on the list of dangerous drugs. It co-operates with the Opium Committee of the League in the attempt to stop the traffic in these prohibited drugs.

(5) **The Commission on the Fumigation of Ships.** This compares the various methods of fumigation, and the results obtained; it investigates the effects of fumigation on food cargoes, organises study tours to various ports for medical and port officers, and makes numerous experiments with different kinds of ships and different chemicals.

(6) **The Commission on Leprosy** collects information as to the prevalence of the disease in different countries, and the methods of prevention in use. Enquiries are made into the way the disease is communicated, and its treatment.

(7) **The Commission of experts for the study of the relationship between Public Health Services and Health Insurance Organisations;** this seeks to encourage the development of the preventive aspect of medicine, particularly in the training of medical students, and to this end tours are organised for the study of methods used in different countries. The main matters being considered by this Commission at present are preventive measures against Tuberculosis, the study of Maternal Welfare, and the care of the child from birth to school age.

(8) **The Commission on Education in Hygiene and Preventive Medicine** promotes co-operation between schools of hygiene in different countries, and advises them as to methods of training students of public health. In connection with this is the system of interchanges of public health personnel, by which medical officers of health, to the number of about 100 a year, are enabled to study for a period in other countries than their own, engaging both in theoretical and practical work. Fellowships are also given to research workers in the field of public health. Numerous countries, including U.S.A., Russia and Turkey, have taken part in these interchanges.

Another very large part of the work of the Health Organisation is that comprised in its Service of Epidemiological Intelligence, which is occupied with the whole subject of epidemics, their world-distribution, incidence in particular countries, and periodicity. Facts relating to epidemic diseases are collected and analysed, information is exchanged, and reports distributed, and advice given on methods of combating epidemics.

A Weekly Record and a Monthly Epidemiological Report are issued to port and health authorities. The Service receives postal and telegraphic reports regularly from various areas, by which it is at once notified of any infected port or serious outbreak of disease, and in its turn it distributes this information by post, by cable or by broadcasting, to ships and distant ports. In 1925, the Epidemiological service established at Singapore a Far-Eastern Bureau, and this distributes

information amongst, and relating to, 143 ports in the Far East, by means of a weekly bulletin, which is broadcast or telegraphed where distance makes this necessary.

A sub-division of the Epidemiological Service is that of Public Health Statistics; at present the compiling of world or international Statistics is a most difficult matter, since there is no common starting point, the method of compilation and standards differing in different countries. The Statistics Service is endeavouring to obtain a uniform nomenclature of diseases for statistical purposes, an international list of causes of death, leading to the adoption of a standard international death certificate and a uniform definition of dead-birth and its causes. In addition, as the name suggests, it compiles, compares and analyses all statistics of public health matters.

It is impossible in the space of a short article to give more than an indication of certain of the activities of the Health Organisation, but some idea has been given of its importance to the world, and the scope of its work, which is extending more and more to include Extra-European countries.

In 1926, the International Pacific Conference asked the Health Organisation to enquire into the health conditions of New-Guinea, New Caledonia, the New Hebrides and the Solomon and Fiji Islands. This has been done, and a policy put forward for the preservation of the races in these countries. Bolivia has requested the help of the Health Organisation in constructing a public health service, and an expert has been sent to study the local conditions; when his report is finished, a specialist will be appointed as adviser to the Bolivian government until the service is working efficiently. There are proposals to establish an International School of Public Health at Rio de Janeiro, and an International Infant Welfare centre at Buenos Ayres, both to be under the auspices of the Health Organisation.

China also, in 1929, applied for assistance in building up a public health administration, requesting the appointment of a commission to study conditions on the spot.

These instances, together with the Organisation's splendid record of work in Europe,—during the epidemics in Eastern Europe in 1920, and again, after the Russian famine, in 1921 and 1922; dealing with the vast flood of refugees entering Greece from Asia Minor in 1922; the assistance and advice given at the request of the Greek government in re-organising the Health service of that country,—all serve to show the world's growing confidence in the Health Organisation, and the great and increasing need for its work.

D. M. ANNING, M.B.

### WOMEN'S PEACE CRUSADE.

Conference on World Disarmament.

Caxton Hall, Westminster, May 12th, 2-30 p.m., and May 13th, 10-30 a.m. and 2-30 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING, QUEEN'S HALL, May 13th, at 8 p.m.

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### NEWS FROM WOMEN M.P.'S.

#### Number Two: The Netherlands.

Opportunity of working together is not often afforded to the women Members of Parliament in the Netherlands, as they belong to different political parties.

Still, however slowly, the women are gaining ground; one by one small concessions are made to them, even without opposition from male members who are labelled as outspoken anti-feminists.

For instance, during the last legislative period, before the elections in 1929, some changes have occurred in favour of women.

The law concerning voting has been amended so that a person can authorise another to record his vote; the consequence is, that a wife may now vote for both herself and her husband when the latter is abroad. This authorization to record a vote may also be given to others besides relations. Before this change, a wife was forced to live with her husband if she wanted to vote, even when he was domiciled for some time in another town or in a foreign country. If she did not, the wife had not the right to vote, nor could she be elected to Parliament. As a result of the connection with the Dutch-Indies many women live with the children in Holland to superintend their education, while the husband remains in the Indies for some years. As a great number of women live under these circumstances in Holland, it is of considerable importance that this ruling has been altered and that the wife has now her own domicile.

Again there was the ridiculous provision that a woman could not appear as a witness when a new-born baby was registered, or at a wedding formality, or at the execution of a deed before a notary. This is not a matter of great importance, but the removal of the provision implies that a woman is now no longer considered to be a mere child.

Further, a new career has been opened to women by a change in the Provincial Law, which makes them eligible for appointment as registrars of the "Provincial States" (County Councils).

Opinions varied a great deal among the women of the different political parties when the National Health Insurance Bill was discussed.

The Liberals could not accept the proposal to treat illness and pregnancy in the same way, because in their opinion the parents must accept the entire responsibility of the birth of a child and the employer should have no responsibility in the case.

They feared too, that if the women were to receive money for several weeks after childbirth, this would involve too great a burden on the provident fund and that the result would be that they would not be kept on in the factories and workshops.

This idea, which was embodied in an amendment, was rejected by the Lower Chamber.

This does not mean that the Liberals would leave the pregnant women without any help, but they would have preferred general measures applicable not only to women workers but to all women in the same circumstances in need of help; not by giving money, but help in the form of food, clothes, and cheap or free medical assistance.

Another great difference in opinion manifested itself on the subject of helping or not helping the unmarried woman. The clerical parties declined to include the unmarried mother in the Insurance Act, contending that charity must do for her what is needful, but that the State must respect the institution of marriage and should not protect the unmarried mother in the same law as the married one. Accordingly, an amendment moved by the Catholic party was accepted which rejects the granting of premium and benefit to the unmarried mother and her child.

The same law contains an important gain for the married woman; she has obtained the right to dispose of the money which she would receive in the case of childbirth and to use it for the household, in the same way as she is entitled to dispose of her wages under the law concerning the labour contract for women.

Several parties joined in trying to obtain this same right for the married woman in a bill passed by the Chamber in November, 1929, concerning those employed by the Government (Civil Servants Act). By that law married women will have the right to receive salary and pension without authorization from their husbands; but the Minister of Justice did not want to go any further. We shall have to wait for a change in the marriage laws before the married woman obtains the right of free disposal of salary and pension earned by herself.

As regards the laws concerning the nationality of married women, you have heard enough I think. In this respect the Dutch Government is not so advanced as the Republic of Chili.

As you will see, we cannot be yet quite satisfied, and the societies working for the complete freedom of married women and for equal citizenship have still plenty of work ahead of them, but however slowly, every year we make progress.

JOH. WESTERMAN, M.P.

(This is the second article in our international series on Women in Parliament. The first, Great Britain, appeared in the March number.—Ed.)

## REVIEWS.

### "KRIEGSSCHULDFRAGE"

"Recent revelations of European Diplomacy." Dr. G. P. Gooch (Longmans, Green and Co., 7/6 net).

"The outbreak of the Great War . . . is the condemnation not only of the performers who strutted for a brief hour across the stage, but above all of the international anarchy which they inherited and which they did little to abate."

The closing sentence of Dr Gooch's book quoted above not only provides the key to the whole work, but epitomises in one phrase the considered opinion of a scholar and an historian in relation to the international question which has come generally to be known by its German appellation of "Kriegsschuldfrage."

The principal sources of and grounds for this opinion are quoted and examined in this book, which is written in that strain of scholarly impartiality which one would expect from its author.

No student of international affairs, no one interested in the examination of the bases and repercussions of that "international anarchy," can afford to ignore this book. Whether the question be studied from the purely historical angle, or with a more practical object—as a preparation for the evolution of such an international system as will make a recurrence of the catastrophe of 1914 impossible—this book will be found invaluable.

Dr. Gooch quotes from Hegel the great dictum, "Tragedy is the conflict not of right with wrong, but of right with right."

During the decade which has passed the fierce fires of international passion have in some measure burnt themselves out. The critical and judicial spirit of books like this one will do much to promote such an attitude of mind to the questions summed up in the word "Kriegsschuldfrage" as will make it clear that the attempt to find a categorical answer to such questions not only impossible but futile.

K.M.M.

## EDUCATION BY WIRELESS.

Points of View. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 4/6.)

This book is a collection of the addresses given on the Wireless by G. Lowes Dickinson, Dean Inge, H. G. Wells, J. B. S. Haldane, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Sir Walford Davies.

Lowes Dickinson has written an explanatory introduction and a summing up to it, and Sir Oliver Lodge a supplementary letter.

The addresses were given as an experiment in popular education and cover a wide field in their subject-matter. What the speakers have attempted is most easily described in Mr. Wells' words—"it means telling what I think I am, why I exist, what I think I am for, what of life, what I think of the world about me." Democracy, Immortality, Biology, Art, are discussed, and opinions differ very widely. But they are all more than usually interesting, as might be expected from such a gathering of speakers, and they must have made very diverse impressions on their audiences.

Dean Inge is the most provocative, but not quite so skilful in his illustrations as I should have expected. For instance, supporting the necessity for private gain against the views of Lowes Dickinson he says—"If you destroy the chief motives which induce people to work hard, namely, the desire to improve their own position, and still more to give their children a good start in the world, a few people will work as hard as they do now (I hope I should, but I doubt it), the majority will work badly, and a considerable number will refuse to work at all unless someone stands over them with a whip. The output of commodities will, without question, be economically reduced; and the country will be very poor." But is this beyond question? If it is, one wonders how research work is done in any profession, or how any country puts a volunteer army into the field. Is the Dean even consistent, since later he quotes the story of Christ being asked to arbitrate on a question of disputed property and replying "Beware of covetousness"? These two views seem incompatible, and it is not very clear which of them is really held by the Dean. But readers must decide this and other knotty points for themselves.

I found Mr. Haldane's the most inspiring address because of its extreme clarity, and perhaps also because I agree most nearly with him. But most people will be able to find somewhere in these addresses some point of view which appeals to them strongly and also a host of new ideas for their consideration. Having read these points of view, you may find that you have to reconsider your own.

F.R.H.

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### A NORWEGIAN NOVEL.

Kristin Lavransdatter. By Sigrid Undset. (Knopp. 8/6.)

Time is shorter than it used to be, and books also are inevitably shorter. Some people still exist who rejoice in a long book, drawing from it an illusion and strength and deliberation in a madly accelerated world, but to most of us the idea of a three-volume novel is appalling. Unopened, Kristin Lavransdatter is appalling. Yet, curiously enough, once opened, it soothes the most impatient into serenity. It draws us submissively into contact with large issues.

Kristin Lavransdatter is the daughter of a Norwegian nobleman of the fourteenth century. The book is her life-story, with its far-reaching ramifications, from the cradle to the grave. It is a mass of characters, *gestes*, customs and colour of the time. It is not, however, a historical novel. It is an epic; for it sets out not to illuminate a period of history, but to construct a theme in an antique setting and identify it with the modern and so with the universal theme. The book is 900 pages long. It is in every way a colossal undertaking, and it is triumphantly "brought off."

The epic, by reason of its almost biblical objectivity, is slow and somewhat unnatural reading. Kristin Lavransdatter is easy and natural reading because in it the subjective and objective methods are combined. As Mrs. Naomi Mitchison does on a smaller scale, in her reconstructions of life in Ancient Greece and Rome, Sigrid Undset allows her characters in their antique setting a modern cast of thought. Her characters beget their sons and daughters incessantly, as it were, but articulately.

The central thread of the book is Kristin's love for

Erlend Nicholanson, whom she chooses for herself against her father's will, to whom she gives herself, and who afterwards becomes her husband. Sigrid Undset actually succeeds in the task, almost always left unattempted by novelists, of describing their love. Novels deal largely with people in love, but mostly the fact is related, not revealed. We are told that two people are in love, and we believe it, but not for any other reason than because we are told. Kristin and Erlend behave before our eyes in the manner appropriate to their state. The description of their early meetings and their progress into love has the true living and melting quality. And in their progress through all the complicated relationships that follow love, the living quality still continues. The development of this relation is the core of the book. It is, as in life itself, a development and a non-development. In the moment of love the voluntary and the involuntary are for the instant blended. Marriage, parenthood and responsibilities follow involuntarily. There is a vast development, but it is external. At the heart of all this growth remains the person, wondering, reluctant, acquiescent all at once. Sigrid Undset describes this development with pathos and with power. We watch Kristin and Erlend pass through marriage, parenthood, misunderstandings, the press of events, through the innumerable vicissitudes of common life, and all the time we have the haunting sense of there being their young selves in suspense, of them watching their older selves in bewilderment and pain as they change and harden even in the life that was of their own choosing. We are conscious as we read that the theme of the book is the theme of life itself.

It used to be alleged against women that they could not produce works of art. It is alleged now, as a last stand, that they cannot produce powerful, sustained works of art. It would be difficult to deny those two epithets to Kristin Lavransdatter. The whole vast project is carried through with a magnificent sweep and ease. It would be an achievement on the grand scale for whoever produced it. Perhaps the fact that a woman has produced it may do something towards undermining the last stand.

A.H.

### TWO INSTRUCTIVE BOOKS.

Honorary Secretaryship, by Wm. Benson Thorne. (Pitman. 2s. 6d.)

A sub-title might well have been used to indicate the wide scope of the book, for it goes further than the expressed aim of the author, which is to provide a handy and inexpensive guide for the embryo secretary; it is also an interesting exposition of the working of an organised society and may be recommended to all intelligent readers for its general interest—especially as Parliament itself is only a Special Society, which, like the Church Council, has grown out of a larger organisation.

Much honorary work is, unfortunately, performed in an unbusiness like way. Mr. Thorne points out that a society needs well-defined standing orders for the guidance of the executive and as the charter by which the work of the society will be judged. He deals efficiently with all the essentials of organising and running a society, and, as there are many who have not time to undertake secretarial duties, but who are called upon to assist in organising meetings or to take the Chair, Mr. Thorne's comments on these subjects are also well worth reading.

Many people, in joining a society, are apt to think of it too much as a spare-time interest for themselves and too little as a serious responsibility—such people

regard the reading of the Minutes as a somewhat boring process designed to refresh their memories, but, as Mr. Thorne points out, as the reading of the Minutes is, in fact, the important ratification of the society's proceedings. The management of correspondence and finance is given particular attention.

**Everyday English for Foreign Students, by Simone Potter, M.A.** (Pitman. 3s. 6d.)

This useful little book is intended to help the foreign student to an appreciation of English literature as well as to a facility in English speech, for, as Professor Craigie says, in his introduction to it, a foreign literature cannot be properly understood without an intimate knowledge of the language of everyday life. Professor Craigie's system of diacritical marks is used throughout to solve the difficulties of spelling and pronunciation and a clear explanation of the system is given.

Each chapter deals with some phase of everyday life, and the subjects treated of include the house, books and reading, sports and pastimes, occupations, travel, voting and government. The illustrations are excellent. G.M.P.

#### A 17th CENTURY EXPERIMENT IN FEMALE EDUCATION.

Well-educated women in France were rarer in the 17th than in the 16th Century, and there may be something significant in the fact that those whom we know to have been accomplished, such as Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Lafayette, had finished their education long before 1672, the year of Molière's *Femmes Savantes*. "Since that time," writes Madame de Lambert, "as much shame has been attached to the possession of learning in a woman as to the practice of the most strictly forbidden vices," and indeed, we find as the inevitable corollary to praise of any woman's intellectual powers that she was as modest as those who knew nothing, that she scrupulously hid her gifts from the public eye, and so on. For Molière had killed the *Précieuses*, already grown decadent and tiresome, with one blow. Affected as they were, and irritating, as are all cliques and groups and sets, especially literary ones, to those outside them, their influence on French civilisation had really been beneficent. Their spiritual successors are found in the 18th Century, the great ladies of the Salons, and in Voltaire's mathematical mistress, Mme. du Chatelet. But in the 17th Century the standard of women's education was very low. The majority of women in the upper classes, if they could write, could certainly not spell; their letters show a purely phonetic reproduction of speech. The Ursulines who had been established in Paris as a teaching Order for women in 1610 soon declined in efficiency. The ordinary governess in the great houses was a peasant whose chief business was to keep the children clean and out of mischief.

Fénélon was the pioneer of systematic female education in France. His treatise *De l'Education des Filles*, written for the Duchesse de Beauvilliers, who had eight daughters, appeared in 1687. It has two great merits—a solid psychological basis and a practical object. Fénélon never loses sight of the fact that education should be a preparation for life, not for examination. But this very virtue in him is to some extent a vice, because it is soon obvious that as a Churchman and a man of his time he is mainly concerned with the negative object of keeping women out of mischief by means of employment, and that he has no ghost of a conception of any contribution being made to the sum of knowledge by educated women. They are to learn domestic economy, reading, writing

and the four simple rules of arithmetic (in order to be able to cope with the household accounts) and to attain to an elementary knowledge of law—enough to know the nature of a contract and the difference between a will and a donation. Greek, Latin and French history are prescribed, but not the study of Italian or Spanish, as these literatures contain many undesirable books. If they must learn a language, let it be Latin, the language of the Church.

Fénélon's treatise may well have been read by Madame de Maintenon, (it was written in 1680), but her idea of a foundation for the education of girls was not dependent on it. She was a born educationalist, and had already experimented on a small scale before she proposed to the King her plan for a more ambitious establishment. Louis XIV was, at first, slightly shocked. "It has never been done before," he said, and indeed the ladies who had earlier found favour in his sight had not been apt to spend his money on anything of that kind. However, he eventually gave his consent, and ended by taking a lively interest in the scheme, stipulating that the institution should not be a Convent, designing additions of lace frills which should soften the severity of the uniform, and having to be restrained by the austere Maintenon when his ideas for the new building began to run in the accustomed lines of splendour and luxury.

The great Mansart built Saint-Cyr, but the site chosen was a bad one, and it is uncomfortable to think of the many pupils who succumbed as a consequence of its fundamental unhealthiness. The ground was practically a marsh, and the cellars were permanently full of water.

The community consisted of thirty-six teachers, who took the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, and of two hundred and fifty young girls of noble birth, and twenty-four servants. For the most part, the pupils were the daughters of impoverished parents, but their education was to prepare them to take their place in society; they were to be brought up as good Christians, but not as prospective nuns.

The two hundred and fifty pupils were divided into four classes which were distinguished by the colour of the ribbons which they wore on their brown dresses. The Reds were the youngest children, aged from seven to ten years. They learnt reading, writing, grammar, a little Church history and the catechism. The Greens, aged from eleven to thirteen, in addition to the subjects pursued by the Reds, began music and learnt a little geography, mythology and history. The Yellows, from fourteen to sixteen years of age, studied the French language, music and religion, drawing and dancing. The Blues, from seventeen to twenty, continued with the French language and music and underwent a great deal of "moral education." The classes were divided into *bandes* or *familles* of eight to ten pupils with a *mère de famille* at the head. Each class had four teachers and five *monitresses*. The latter were drawn from the two older classes and wore black.

Both the curriculum and the organization, with its foreshadowing of the prefect system, seem good, and there were besides outdoor and indoor games—prisoner's base, skittles, chess and draughts, a good deal of manual work (the elder girls made their own dresses and those of the teachers, and did most of the housework), and the acting of plays.

It was this last which caused the great catastrophe. Saint-Cyr was too close to Versailles for its serious character to be maintained without the greatest difficulty. The courtiers treated it as an amusing toy, and the girls' heads were turned by constant visits from troops of these frivolous and charming people. Madame de Maintenon successfully combated an out-

#### TIDYING UP TRAVEL.

The shortcomings of the Railways are a standing dish in the correspondence columns of the General Press, but a contributor to the *Manchester Guardian* attacked from a new angle the other day when he urged the appointment of a woman representative on the Railway Boards. Our responsibilities as a result of enfranchisement increase. Where we were informed, twenty years ago, that women had no business in public affairs we are now being told every day in speeches and newspaper articles that practically everything from Peace downwards is our especial concern, and from the tone of the speakers we gather that if all abuses and inconveniences do not soon disappear they will be said to be existing by our fault. And now it has come to the Railways. And, indeed, no practical woman can suffer from their deficiencies without feeling that it would be a simple matter to put most of them right.

The increase in road traffic and the corresponding decrease in railway traffic is attributed by the railway to the wide difference in the operating costs, but are there not other causes besides the mere difference in mileage cost between train and bus to account for the discrepancy? Any journey starts at the station and the prevailing atmosphere of stations to-day is one peculiar to semi-public companies—an atmosphere of rules and regulations. The traveller is forbidden this and that, warned against manifold disasters, and plainly told that the company will be liable for neither his life nor his goods. In short it is only by peculiar favour that he travels at all.

The general impression is that the journey is like medicine—to be taken and got over lest worse befall. None of this is conducive to pleasant thoughts about travel, and thus speeded the traveller sits and spends his journey in resentful thoughts about the railway.

Technically, British railways may be justly proud, for speed and safety they compare favourably with any on the continent or in America, their faults, it seems, lie on the commercial side—and the greatest of these is their unfortunate idea about advertising. It has been said that posters are the poor man's picture gallery, but a more untidy and ill-grouped collection of so-called art it would be hard to find. The posters are obviously only there to earn revenue, if possible, without thought of the effect they may have on the artistic feelings of the public, which effect is generally to make the traveller feel that advertisers, railways and public, would be very much better without them.

Indifferent though they are, however, these works of art are singularly suited to the buildings that house them. British stations, particularly those of the large towns, are among the world's most depressing places. As long as trains run by steam right into the stations they must be dirty, and filled with the peculiarly pervading smell of train oil. In sharp contrast the two chief stations of New York, Great Central, and Pennsylvania stand out with great clearness. There the steam engine is taken off some distance outside the station, and the train is pulled in by electricity. The result is a perfectly clean station, and not only clean but well proportioned and well built. Both are built in the form of a wide Central Hall with walls and floor of coloured marble; the entrance to the actual platforms is below this level through broad metal gates, and the whole effect is one of great cleanliness and space. Compare this with King's Cross, like a Bastille of sooty bricks, or Paddington with its platforms of sodden and greasy wood.

Without doubt we have much to learn about stations from America, and there is another leaf that might, with advantage, be taken from their book: they have

#### JUS SUFFRAGII.

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And the *sure* way to get a secure grip on that irresistible weapon is through reading.

You should know that you can purchase, on gradual payment terms (*approved by the editorial committee of this paper*) your own selection, large or small, from "the greatest achievement in the making of books since the world began," a collection including such vital books as "Pioneer Work Among Women" (introduced by Mrs. Fawcett), "The Rights of Woman," by Mary Wollstonecraft, and "The State of the Prisons," by John Howard.

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only two classes on their railways, these are the ordinary day coaches and the Pullman cars. The day coaches are the standard level of travel in America and the Pullmans are a separate service as they are here. This would seem to be an excellent method.

If English railways thought in terms of their passengers and not along their original Victorian, snobbish lines, they would realise that it would be very acceptable if they gave up the terms "1st and 3rd" and had two classes, "Standard and Pullman." This would be the more rational now that there is no longer a 2nd class. Also, though the greater part of the post-war population is resigned to 3rd class travel, it is not pleasant to have it rubbed in,—while anyone may be "standard" it is galling to be graded 3rd class by any company, public or private.

And when the classes are sorted out, and re-named, what about accommodation? Neither of them is exactly uncomfortable, but the new Standard Coaches would be decidedly cleaner and pleasanter if their seats could be covered with anything but that peculiarly dust catching and germ harbouring plush now used in the old 3rd class carriages. And if they were less dusty perhaps they would be less airless, and the smell of train oil might cling to them less persistently. It all seems very problematical, but it might be worth a trial. There might also be a supply of ice water. A train is a thirsty place. The tinkle of ice in a tumbler is a pleasant sound, and anything is a better thirst quencher than the tepid water now provided.

But once plunge into such details and there is no end to them. It is better to pass over in silence the dull fish courses served in restaurant cars, the cloudy tumblers, the sudden unfortunate glimpses into the kitchen on the way to dine. If reform were in the air these would tend to be automatically remedied, but at present the outlook is not hopeful.

The obstacles lying in the way of reform are obvious, but the public is less interested in considering the difficulty of the problem than it would be in admiring its solution. What is really needed is people on the Railway Boards, whether men or women, who grasp clearly that they continue to exist through the goodwill of the public, and that the public are not to be regarded as being graciously permitted, by antiquated and autocratic Boards, to travel. Outwardly, steam has made great advances, but mentally Railway Boards still continue to travel in open trucks drawn by that first ingenious engine of Mr. Stevenson's, whose chinks, so history tells us, were stuffed with chewed paper.

FRIEDE HARRIS.

#### NEWS IN ADVERTISEMENTS.

We should like to call the special attention of our readers to the notice of the Conference at the Caxton Hall and the Public Meeting at the Queen's Hall which the Women's Peace Crusade is holding on May 12th and 13th. There will be distinguished speakers from France, the United States, Germany and Italy, as well as those of Great Britain, whose names are famous in connection with work for peace.

The books which are advertised in this number by the Phoenix Book Company for purchase on the instalment system are in the famous Everyman Series which has proved so useful to students of literature, history and sociology who cannot afford to buy the more expensive editions of the classics on their subject. The terms offered by the Phoenix Book Company, into which we have had the interest to inquire, now make it possible to acquire Everyman even more easily and advantageously.

#### ERRATA.

We regret that some surnames occurring in Mrs. Ashby's article, "The Board Meets in Holland," which appeared on p. 98 of the April number were wrongly printed:  
For 'Jonkheer Boeland van Bockaerts' read 'Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland.' For 'Mme. Klekamp' read 'Mme. Kleykamp.' For 'Mme. Chen Tervaert' read 'Mme. Cohen Tervaert.' For 'Mrs. Polack' read 'Mrs. Polak.'

## REPORTS FROM AUXILIARIES.

### BRAZIL.

The Brazilian Federation for the Advancement of Women is holding weekly board meetings preparatory to its yearly programme of work.

At the last meeting Miss Irene Mellor and Miss Ruth Behrendorf visited the Federation and told the board members about their insurance Agency, the first Insurance Office run entirely by women in South America. In two months they have made twenty-five thousand pounds of insurance.

The Federation also received the visit of Miss Elizabeth Steen, an American anthropologist, who told of her projected expedition to virgin territory in the hinterland of Brazil to study an unknown tribe of Indians.

On the 27th of March, Miss Joanidia Sodré, a young woman composer who won the first prize of the National Conservatory of Music three years ago, conducted the Philharmonic Orchestra in Berlin. It is the first time in the history of modern music that a Brazilian woman has conducted a world-renowned orchestra.

Mrs. Alzira Teixeira Soriano, the first woman Mayor of Latin America, presented the report of her first year of administration of the municipality of Lages, in the States of Rio Grande do Norte. Mrs. Soriano has done very well; she put the finances in order, paid off debts of her male predecessor, budgeted income and expenditure, built schools, a market, a prison, enlarged the cemetery, reformed the town cleaning system and built roads. Mrs. Soriano declared in her report that she had to do well, to show that women are capable of administering and to give support to the feminist movement. She also said that she wished to show her gratitude to the State President, Dr. Juvenal Lamartine, who instituted woman suffrage, thus making her election possible, and who is the first South American statesman to give the woman's movement his full support.

### CANADA.

#### Maiden Speech by the First Woman Senator the Hon. C. Wilson, February 25th, 1930.

Honourable gentlemen, it was my wish to enter this Upper House as unobtrusively as possible, but this privilege has unfortunately been denied me. Women have come so recently into public life that promotion has been almost too rapid. In my own case, I feel the lack of preliminary training, but hope during this coming Session to show you that I am at least able to listen and, I trust, to learn.

In the first place, I should like to thank the Government for the honour conferred upon me as the representative of the women of Canada in this House, and to thank the honourable Senators for the cordiality of their reception. It has always seemed to me that I might find written above the door a variation of Tennyson's line, "Let no man enter in on pain of death." I owe my appointment to the five pioneer women from the Province of Alberta who took the plea for the admission of women to the Senate to the highest Court, His Majesty's Privy Council: they are, Judge Emily F. Murphy, Mesdames Nellie F. McClung, Louise McKinney, Henrietta Muir Edwards and Irene Parlby. To them I tender my thanks.

In criticising the entry of women into public life people are apt to forget that four thousand years ago Deborah judged Israel; and although women have made great strides since then, not one of us aspires to such a position. Born and brought up in the old Province of Quebec, and since my marriage a resident of Ontario,

## JUS CARTOONS: NUMBER IV.



Godmother Peace: Well, my dear, you are not a very large child, but considering the difficulties which attended your birth, I suppose we must say you are a credit.

I feel that I may possibly have a better understanding of the view-points of the two provinces than those who have lived in only one. Since my childhood I have always been interested in public affairs, and cannot remember the time when I did not regard the name of Gladstone with veneration.

While women's work is essential to civilisation, it does not give much opportunity for the study of political development, but with the vote our responsibilities have increased. It is now our duty to familiarise ourselves with public questions and to use the vote to the best of our ability. Long custom has caused men to regard many abuses as necessary, but women come with fresh minds and are eager to redress existing evils. The education of the children has already been left largely in the mother's hands from the days of Solomon to our own. Did not the author of Proverbs say, "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish one is the heaviness of his mother?" The ideal method would be for the man to spare some time from his public and other activities to devote to the upbringing of his sons. Women will, we hope, always be a strong influence towards peace, for she who suffers to bring children into the world has a deeper appreciation of the horrors of war.

The various items in the Speech from the Throne to which the honourable Senator from Prince Edward (Mr. Horsey) has alluded will be discussed separately and I shall not attempt to recapitulate them. But before resuming my seat I should like to thank the honourable gentleman for the very flattering terms in which he has referred to my appointment.

#### CEYLON.

The Second Annual Report of the Women's Franchise Union of Ceylon shows a record of achievement of which its members may well be proud. The following account is taken from the official organ of the Association, *Prabuddha Sri*:-

"At the very outset we feel we must congratulate ourselves and the women of Ceylon in general on the attainment of our first object—'To ensure Franchise for women in all civic elections.'

We should like to mention briefly the events leading up to this achievement. Following on the appearance of our deputation before the Special Commission on Reforms in January, 1928, when we asked for the grant of a limited franchise to the women of Ceylon, the Donoughmore Report recommended franchise for all women of thirty and over. Emboldened by this success, we appealed to our Legislative Councillors to abolish the special age restriction imposed on women, for the following reasons:

(1) The Report of the Special Commission on the Constitution recognises the principle of equality of Franchise for men and women and expressly states that the franchise is limited to women of thirty years of age and over on grounds of expediency alone.

(2) There is likely to be considerable loss of interest in and service to the country if women between the ages of twenty-one and thirty are denied the exercise of political rights at the present time. The average level of education to-day is higher amongst the younger women than amongst women over thirty, the former are as keenly interested in public questions and are likely to make as good use of the power of the franchise as the latter.

(3) A large proportion of the 715,000 women engaged as wage-earners in professions and trades are under thirty and their interests need special consideration and protection. They should therefore have a voice in framing the laws relating to labour and employment.

(4) The Commissioners admit the force of the argu-

ment that the women of Ceylon are at least as competent to exercise the vote as the women of India, and there the age of enfranchisement is 21.

Our Legislative Councillors recommended franchise for women on equal terms with men, but introduced a literacy qualification for all voters. His Excellency the Governor, commenting on these recommendations in his despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, said:

'Local opinion appears to be generally in accord with the proposal to admit women to be franchised. It is not very palatable to many of our Muslims, and some of our Tamils are dubious, but otherwise nothing which could be described as collective opposition has come to my notice. With a view to limiting the expansion of the Voters' Roll the Commissioners suggested that the age of qualification, which for men is 21 years, should be fixed at 30 years for women. The Legislative Council, however, adopted without a division a motion that the qualifications for the franchise and for membership of the State Council as well as of local bodies should be the same for women as for men. This, I think, was intended to define a principle which should be applicable under any conditions of qualification. On the whole, it seems to me hardly worth while to create a sense of grievance for the sake of avoiding such an increase in the prospective electorate as would be involved in the acceptance of the Council's Resolution, and I give the Resolution my support.'

As our members already know, Lord Passfield, the present Secretary of State for the Colonies, in his despatch on the reforms, recommended the abolition of the literacy qualification and the grant to women of adult suffrage on equal terms with men.

After the members were given sufficient time to consider the Reform proposals, a special general meeting of the Union was held on Thursday, November 28th, 1929, at which the following motion was put forward:

'That in the opinion of our Union the New Constitution recommended by the Donoughmore Commission should be accepted, subject to the modifications suggested by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.'

After a lively discussion, the motion was carried by a majority of two-thirds of those present. The Secretaries were directed to send copies of the resolution to all Legislative Councillors, together with a covering letter explaining that in deciding in favour of the proposed Reforms, the Union of Ceylon stood to gain by their adoption. After careful consideration of the pros and cons, the Union had come to the conclusion that the adoption of the Reforms was in the best interests of the people of Ceylon as a whole.

As our fate rested finally in the hands of our Legislative Councillors, there was island-wide interest in the result of the debate on the Reforms, which commenced on December 5th last, and a number of our members were present at the Legislative Council throughout the deliberations. The voting took place on Thursday, December 12th, and resulted in the acceptance of the Reforms by a majority of two. For the first time in history, therefore, the women of Ceylon have the right to vote and, at the next elections, if they so desire, to contest seats in the newly-formed State Council. It is interesting to note that Ceylon is the first country in the East to be granted adult franchise.

We should like to record our deep gratitude to all those responsible for our victory, for the sympathy and courtesy with which they have considered our claims. And, while we congratulate ourselves on the speedy achievement of one of our objects, we acknowledge our great indebtedness to the pioneer women of other countries, who broke down barriers and proved women's ability to take an intelligent and useful part in public affairs. We realise that without their example our victory could not have been either so easy or so swift.

## GERMANY.

The Deutscher Staatsbürgerinnen-Verband E. V. announces that after July 1st their telegraphic address of *Staatsbürgerin Berlin* will no longer be available.

A widely representative Committee has been formed to collect subscriptions for a testimonial to Hedwig Heyl who will celebrate her eightieth birthday on May 5th. Frau Heyl is known for her valuable pioneer work in many directions, notably in connection with domestic economy and education. Women students owe to her initiative more than one hostel in Berlin.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

## NATIONAL UNION OF SOCIETIES FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

## Women in the Administration of Poor Relief.

On April 1st the old system by which Poor Relief had been administered in this country came to an end, and the functions hitherto exercised by Boards of Guardians were taken over by County and County Borough Councils. It is a matter of grave concern to women's organisations that whereas some 2,300 women were serving on the Boards of Guardians, the number of women now concerned in the administration of relief is comparatively small. Since the passage of the Act making this re-organisation, many women's organisations have been undertaking active work to secure the return of more women to Local Government bodies and their co-option to the newly formed Committees, and in the future a careful watch will be kept to ensure that the services of the women who undertook valuable work as Guardians, are not lost to the country.

## Women and Canal Boats.

The concern and indignation of the National Union and many other women's organisations has recently been aroused by what threatens to be a serious interference with the liberty of adult women. While a bill whose main object was to ensure the better education of children of men in charge of canal boats was being considered by a standing committee of the House of Commons, a provision was inserted against the wishes of the promoters of the bill, prohibiting women, as well as children, from living on those canal boats which carry refuse. The N.U.S.E.C. is endeavouring to secure support for an amendment removing this provision when the Bill is again before Parliament, so that the women concerned may choose whether they should or not accompany their husbands.

## Housing Bill.

Another Bill at present before Parliament is of particular interest to the National Union. This is the promised Government measure for housing and slum clearance. The N.U.S.E.C. is anxious to see incorporated in this measure provision for rent rebates according to the number of children and other dependants, as it recognises that one of the chief obstacles to the abolition of the slums and overcrowding in this country is the inability of workers with dependent children to afford the rents of the houses hitherto provided by public authorities.

## Woman Alderman.

This month has seen the election of Miss Fletcher as Liverpool's first woman Alderman—an honour which she has well deserved by her work on the Liverpool City Council, as well as by an active career in the feminist movement. Miss Fletcher's connection with the National Union is a long-standing one, and she has played an active part in many of its Council Meetings.

## ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

A Public Protest Meeting, organised by the Alliance, was held in the Kensington Town Hall on April 4th, when a large and determined audience gathered to support the campaign against the exclusion of women—unaccompanied by men—from certain restaurants and coffee stalls at night. The Chairman, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, said that the ban of women was an anachronism at this date, and a symptom of an unhealthy attitude of mind. The meeting was not called to injure hotel proprietors, but to protest against a law which made these men exclude all women, unaccompanied by men, to save themselves the unpleasant task of discriminating between their customers.

That the ban on women is unnecessary is proved by the many restaurants which are open to both men and women without restriction, and which have no difficulty in keeping order. The following resolution was moved by Miss Gordon, Chairman of St. Joan's Alliance, and seconded by Mrs. Ayrton Gould, of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations:

"This meeting calls upon the Government to repeal the special clauses with regard to prostitutes in the various Licensing and Police Acts so that no vendor of refreshments need draw invidious distinctions between his customers, whether men or women, so long as these behave in an orderly manner.

"It further calls the attention of keepers of refreshment houses to the annoyances, inconvenience and hardships suffered by women as a result of the rules which they have made to exclude women from their premises unless attended by men."

Miss Alison Neilans, of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, gave reasons for the alteration of the law, saying that no women or men should be refused refreshment provided they were acting in an orderly manner. The resolution was also supported by Mrs. Cecil Chesterton, and Mrs. Abbott, of the Open Door Council, who pleaded eloquently for justice, saying that prostitution could not be remedied by persecution.

The meeting was supported by seventeen Women's Societies, including the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

## INDIA.

## All-India Women's Conference.

The Standing Committee of the Conference requested the Constituent Areas to hold a Women's Conference Day on the 1st of March, at which reports of the Bombay Conference should be given to the public. News is not to hand about the whole of India, but in many places the Day produced great enthusiasm. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu sent out a message for the Day, calling on the women to consolidate all communities in peace and unity.

The Conference this year gave particular attention to the way in which women can work locally to give practical expression to the ideals of education they have formulated. The scheme to induce speculative builders and moneyed people to invest their money in erecting modern school buildings which they will rent to the Municipal Councils and educational authorities is sound business and is likely to spread from Sind.

Another plan for the coming year is the campaign for the spread of compulsory primary education to every girl and boy in the country by trying to secure it within a definite number of years.

## All-Asian Conference.

We are glad to learn that the response to the proposal for an All-Asian Women's Conference which we discussed in our last number has met with such enthusiastic

response, both from women's associations in India and the Press, as well as prominent individuals such as Mr. Natarajan, of 'The Indian Social Reformer.' The only unfavourable comment was from 'The Times of India,' which made fun of the idea of a lot of women travelling from distant parts to do a lot of talking together—a rather silly criticism, as it might equally well be said of any conference of either sex.

It is proposed to hold the conference at Lahore, Punjab, in January, 1931. The general subjects to be discussed by the delegates will be the qualities and defects of Oriental Civilization with regard to Motherhood; the Child; the Joint Family; Education; Labour Conditions; Arts and Crafts; the Spiritual Life.

Suggestions and offers of co-operation may be referred to Mrs. Cousins, Pantheon Gardens, Egmole, Madras, who is acting as organiser of the preliminary stages of the proposal.

## IRELAND.

## Visit of the Princess Radziwill.

The lecture tour undertaken by Princess Radziwill in April has been a great success. The tour was arranged by the League of Nations Union, and meetings were also arranged by the Cork Branch of the National Council of Women, the Irish Women Citizens' Association, and the Belfast Women Citizens' Union. All the meetings and receptions were most successful, and the Press reports were especially satisfactory. It is the first time that Ireland has had a visit from a member of the Secretariat of the League and great interest was felt in the tour. The kindness of Princess Radziwill in giving so much of her time was greatly appreciated and all the different organisations who co-operated in the arrangements for the tour feel they owe her a debt of gratitude.

There are two very important gains from such meetings as those addressed by the Princess, apart from the obvious value of the enthusiasm for the cause of the League which such a charming and effective speaker rouses. In the first place, the fact that the speaker is actually a member of the League Secretariat gives a reality and vividness to her words which must be lacking in other cases. This is of special importance in the case of a country such as Ireland, where for many a visit to Geneva is impossible, and the whole story of work at Geneva becomes sadly lacking in reality. It becomes another matter when the speaker is one actually engaged in the work which she describes. Another great point is the co-operation which is brought about by such a tour and all that it involves. The visit of the Princess has brought Irishwomen of differing politics nearer together, a result which must be for good in all directions.

## The I.C.W. Congress.

The National Council of Women of Ireland met on April 16th and approved the final arrangements for Vienna. A large delegation will go from Ireland, consisting of Doctor Alice Barry, Mrs. Belsha, Miss Buchanan, Doctor Florence Dillon, Miss Leslie, Mrs. Fegan Redmond, Doctor Angela Russell, Mrs. E. M. Smith, Miss L. Thompson and Mrs. J. Power.

## NEW ZEALAND.

The Annual Medical Conference which was held this year in Christchurch in February showed signs for the first time of the influence of women doctors on its deliberations. A national campaign against cancer was launched this year, and the gynaecological aspect of the disease was dealt with by Dr. Jessie Scott, who did service in Serbia during the war. Still more marked was feminine influence in the second great campaign of the Conference—the raising of £25,000

by subscription to secure the services of a first-rate Professor to deal with the evil of maternal mortality, which, though not so serious in this country as in some others, is still in marked contrast to the splendid showing of our small infant death-rate. The New Zealand Government last session voted £50,000 to endow a Chair of Obstetrics at the Dominion Medical School. This grant, and the proposal to raise the supplementary sum is the result of the activities of the new obstetrical Society which was formed in 1928. The imprimatur of the Conference was given to the campaign, whose organisation was largely entrusted to the Secretary of the Obstetrical Society, Dr. Doris Gordon, of Stratford. She had already toured the country to launch the appeal and at the close of the session she addressed a large meeting of Christchurch women, called by the Mayoress. A special message of sympathy from Queen Mary was read. Such a successful inauguration promises well for the scheme, in spite of the present economic depression, and we hope that we shall soon have the power to bring every appliance of modern skill to combat not only maternal mortality but also all diseases peculiar to women. The Conference raised, for the first time, the question of Birth Control. It was only the tentative preliminary discussion of a problem which civilisation has to face. The main feeling seemed to be against the unrestricted sale of contraceptives. Dr. Riley, the Lecturer on Obstetrics, treated the subject from the medical view alone. It was agreed that information be gathered for a fuller study at the next meeting of the Conference.

A difficult question has been raised by the latest news from Samoa, where disaffection has been known to exist for some time. A crisis has been reached by the passing of a sentence of three months' imprisonment and the imposition of a substantial fine on a barrister who acted for a number of Samoan women of standing who alleged grievances against the police. His offence is alleged defamation of the Administration in letters and addresses to the Administrator, the Premier of New Zealand, on behalf of his clients. No comment is possible until the correspondence is published and the allegations tested, but leaders of New Zealand women feel their responsibility towards the women of Samoa and are inquiring into the matter.

JESSIE MACKAY.

## SPAIN.

The Marquise del Ter, member of the Executive Committee of the Alliance, and President of one of our affiliated societies, has sent us the following copy of a letter from General Berenguer, President of the Council of Ministers in Madrid, in answer to one addressed to him by the Marquise in which she asked that Spanish women should be allowed to retain such political rights as they already possess, and that they be granted the full franchise.

The Government will certainly attach, as did the late Government, an extraordinary importance to the entrance of women into the political life of the country, and, although at the present moment, because of the changes which have taken place in the provincial deputations and the mayoralties, women have not been able to play their part, be assured that we shall take up the question, and that women will have the vote in future elections, being both electors and eligible.

(On the other hand, we note with dismay a paragraph in 'The Times,' dated Madrid, April 24th, where it is announced that the Cabinet has decided not to take into account the electoral lists revised in 1924 and 1928 by the Dictatorship, but to make an entirely new list for the coming elections, in which women will not be allowed to vote.—ED.)



## SECTION FRANCAISE.

## NOUVELLES INTERNATIONALES.

## AFRIQUE AUSTRALE.

Le Bill accordant le droit de suffrage aux femmes de race blanche, à l'âge de 21 ans et sans conditions fut le sujet d'une belle bataille parlementaire le 11 avril dernier entre les représentants de l'Union des territoires de l'Afrique du Sud. Il fut emporté par 39 voix de majorité, divisant les partis entre eux, combattu par Mr. Grobler (un petit-fils du président Kruger), par le Général Kemp, tandis que le Général Smuts s'en déclarait partisan, en dépit des anomalies qu'il renferme. Les députés du Cap en effet votèrent contre le Bill parce que la législation du Cap exige de l'homme certaines conditions pour l'exercice du suffrage, et le nouveau Bill n'en propose aucune pour la femme.

## BRÉSIL.

## La Fédération Brésilienne pour le Progrès Féminin a recommencé ses travaux après les vacances.

Pendant la dernière réunion du Bureau, Mesdemoiselles Irene Mellor et Ruth Behrendorf annoncèrent la fondation de leur Agence de Sûreté, la première agence féminine de l'Amérique du Sud. Elles ont déjà fait des affaires d'une valeur de 25,000 livres sterling.

Mademoiselle Joanidia Sodrè, une jeune musicienne compositeur brésilienne, eut l'occasion de conduire à Berlin l'Orchestre Philharmonique. C'est la première fois qu'une sud-américaine a cet honneur.

Madame Alzira Teixeira Soriano, la première femme maire de ville de l'Amérique du Sud, a publié le rapport de sa première année d'administration. Elle a réorganisé les finances de Lages, fait un budget, construit des écoles, un marché, une prison, agrandi le cimetière, réformé le système de nettoyage de la ville et fait des routes. Madame Soriano a déclaré dans son rapport qu'elle tenait à démontrer la capacité de la femme. Elle dit aussi qu'elle tenait à déclarer sa reconnaissance au Président de l'Etat de Rio Grande do Norte, Dr. Juvenal Lamartine, qui introduisit le suffrage féminin et qui est le premier homme d'état sud-américain qui donna son appui décidé à la campagne féministe.

## CANADA.

## Discours de Madame Cairine Wilson, la première femme sénateur au Canada.

L'honorable Cairine Wilson: Honorables messieurs, je ne suis pas ici de par ma volonté. J'ai plutôt l'impression d'être au milieu de vous en service commandé. Inutile de dire que je n'ai pas recherché ce grand honneur de représenter la femme canadienne à la Chambre Haute. Au Gouvernement qui m'y appelle, je dis un sincère merci. Au nom des femmes canadiennes, il convient également de lui exprimer ma profonde gratitude pour leur en avoir facilité l'accès en soumettant leur droit d'en faire partie à la décision des tribunaux.

Je ne saurais oublier l'action de celles-là qui ont vaillamment porté notre cause jusqu'au Conseil privé de Sa Majesté. Les Canadiennes sont redevables de leur succès à ces femmes de volonté qui intervinrent si heureusement dans le débat et dont je m'honore de citer les noms: Mesdames juge Emily F. Murphy, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney et Irene Parlby.

Depuis toujours je me suis intéressée à la chose

publique, car j'ai grandi dans un milieu où la politique était l'aliment principal des conversations et la grande préoccupation de tous. En communion d'idées avec Gladstone, Edward Blake et Laurier, j'ai tout naturellement donné mon appui à une cause qui m'était chère, sans toutefois oublier mes devoirs domestiques.

Si je fais cette déclaration, c'est que je veux, dès maintenant, dissiper cette appréhension que la femme ne saurait s'occuper des intérêts de l'Etat sans désertier son foyer et négliger les devoirs que lui impose la maternité. Parfois je me surprends à sourire quand j'entends cet argument sur les lèvres de certains pères de famille qui se désintéressent complètement de l'éducation de leurs fils. Ce devoir sacré qui leur incombe devient alors la charge exclusive de la mère.

L'homme est censé consacrer son temps aux besoins matériels de la famille. Personne ne lui conteste son droit à s'occuper de la chose publique. Par contre, ces travaux le dispensent-il de toute obligation envers ses enfants? Et cependant nous entendons constamment les mères de famille se plaindre de l'indifférence du mari quant à la surveillance et à la direction des fils.

Puisse l'avenir démontrer que, tout en s'occupant de la chose publique, la femme—la mère de famille—grâce à son instinct maternel et à son sens de la responsabilité, restera la fidèle gardienne du foyer.

J'estime que c'est pour moi un noble privilège que de vous adresser la parole en français. C'est la langue de la province où je suis née et où j'ai grandi. Je garde un souvenir attendri de ma province natale, de la vieille province française de Québec, où il fait bon vivre à cause du grand esprit de tolérance dont elle est animée. A ce propos, j'aime à rappeler ici une pensée du leader du Gouvernement dans cette Chambre, pensée qu'il a exprimée à l'Assemblée de la Société des Nations à Genève. Parlant du problème des minorités en Europe, il a demandé qu'elles soient traitées non seulement avec justice, mais avec générosité. Agissons, a-t-il dit, de manière à leur faire oublier qu'elles sont des minorités. Je profite de cette occasion, pour proclamer avec fierté que la minorité anglaise et protestante de Québec n'a jamais eu l'impression qu'elle était, là-bas, une minorité. Je tiens à rendre ce témoignage à ma province natale et à la citer en exemple au Canada tout entier.

Je ne discuterai pas aujourd'hui les diverses questions dont fait mention le discours du trône. Je les examinerai de concert avec mes collègues lorsqu'elles nous seront soumises au cours de la session.

## ESPAGNE.

La Marquise del Ter, membre du Comité Exécutif de l'Alliance et Présidente d'une de nos Sociétés affiliées en Espagne, nous transmet de bonnes nouvelles dans la correspondance qui suit:

Lettre adressée par la Marquise del Ter à S.E. le Général Damsa Berenguer, Président du Conseil des Ministres, Madrid.

Votre Excellence, J'ai l'honneur de vous soumettre très respectueusement une requête. Les journaux annoncent que, désireux de remettre en vigueur la Constitution de 1875, vous allez nécessairement faire procéder à des élections générales à tous les degrés.

Voulez vous me permettre, Monsieur le Président, d'appeler votre attention sur le fait suivant:

Depuis 1875, un grand événement politique et social s'est produit dans le monde, par l'accession de la femme à la vie publique chez la plupart des Etats civilisés. En Espagne, le précédent Gouvernement

avait commencé de s'engager dans cette voie et sans résoudre entièrement le problème, l'avait cependant envisagé et abordé. Un certain nombre de personnes réunissant diverses conditions déterminées, avaient été pourvues de droits municipaux, quelques unes même, de droits politiques. Dans plusieurs cités les femmes siègent au sein des Conseils Municipaux, il en est même qui exercent les fonctions de Maires, vous n'ignorez certainement pas qu'à Madrid notamment quatre femmes figurent parmi les membres du Conseil Communal et que la population toute entière rend justice à leur intelligence et à leur dévouement.

Enfin, lorsque l'Assemblée Nationale a été réunie, si la part faite à l'élément féminin a été peu considérable au moins a-t-on reconnu son droit d'être représenté dans cette Assemblée.

Je viens donc vous demander, Monsieur le Président, de bien vouloir ne pas déposséder les femmes espagnoles des droits qui leur ont été déjà reconnus et surtout de bien vouloir donner à toutes, les droits que tant de pays ont octroyés à leurs sœurs, et qu'ils se félicitent tous à l'envi de leur avoir accordés.

Les femmes espagnoles sont dignes de cette marque de confiance et leur participation à la vie nationale sera pour l'Espagne une heureuse coopération.

Je suis, Votre Excellence, etc., etc. Le Général Berenguer a répondu dans les termes suivants:

Le Gouvernement donnera en effet, ainsi que par le passé, une importance extraordinaire à l'intervention de la femme dans la vie politique du pays, quoiqu'en ce moment, à cause du changement dans les Députations provinciales et les Mairies, elle n'a pas pu intervenir, soyez assurée que nous nous occuperons d'elle et qu'elle aura le vote dans les élections futures étant éligible et éligible.

*En regard de ces protestations du Général Berenguer il est au moins curieux de lire dans le Times du 24 avril les nouvelles suivantes:*

Madrid, 24 Avril.

*"Le Cabinet a décidé de ne pas prendre en considération les listes électorales révisées en 1924 et 1928 par la Dictature du défunt Marquis de Estella; on procédera à de nouvelles listes d'où les femmes seront exclues."*

*On se rappelle que le Marquis de Estella accorda le vote aux femmes dans les élections municipales et provinciales et se proposait d'élargir le droit de suffrage. Il avait aussi alloué quelques sièges à des femmes dans l'Assemblée nationale consultative."*

(Note de la rédaction).

## ALLEMAGNE.

Un Comité représentatif s'est formé dans le but de réunir des souscriptions pour célébrer le 80ème anniversaire de Frau Heyle, bien connue comme pionnière du mouvement pour l'éducation et l'économie domestique.

## GRANDE BRETAGNE.

## Union nationale des sociétés pour l'égalité civique.

Le 1er avril dernier, l'ancien système qui confiait l'administration de l'Assistance publique à des conseils élus dits Boards of Guardians cessa d'exister et les dits Boards of Guardians transmirent leurs fonctions aux Conseils de comté (qui correspondent aux Conseils généraux français). Notre Union voit disparaître avec regret les Guardians qui comptaient parmi leurs membres 2,300 femmes, car il ne reste que peu d'entre elles associées par co-optation au Comité d'assistance du Conseil de Comté.

## Les femmes de marinières.

Une mesure vient d'être prise, et votée par le Parle-

ment en 2ème lecture, interdisant le séjour des enfants d'âge scolaire sur les chalands qui circulent à travers les canaux de Grande Bretagne. C'est là un objet légitime, mais l'addition d'une clause qui obligerait les femmes de marinières à abandonner à leurs seuls maris le séjour des bateaux qui transportent des détritrus est—en dépit du souci d'hygiène qu'il manifeste—une atteinte à la liberté d'une citoyenne adulte. L'Union s'emploie à assurer la radiation de cette clause lorsqu'elle paraîtra, en 3ème lecture, devant le Parlement.

## La loi sur les logements.

L'Union espère faire incorporer dans la dite loi, une clause qui autoriserait des réductions spéciales ou indemnités en proportion du nombre des enfants.

## Une femme Alderman.

Miss Fletcher, une des pionnières de notre mouvement vient d'être nommée Alderman, la première femme de Liverpool à qui échoit cet honneur.

## LES FEMMES AU PARLEMENT EN HOLLANDE.

L'activité des femmes parlementaires n'a pas été très remarquée pendant la dernière législature en Hollande, sans doute à cause du fait que chacune travaille avec son groupe politique plutôt qu'en association avec ses collègues féminines.

Il faut noter cependant quelques améliorations législatives en faveur des femmes—La clause de résidence qui enlevait à la femme le droit de suffrage si elle ne cohabitait pas avec son mari a été rapportée. Cette clause frappait injustement nombre de Hollandaises dont les maris, occupés pendant plusieurs années aux Indes, ne pouvaient résider avec leurs femmes alors que celles-ci devaient demeurer en Hollande pour surveiller l'éducation des enfants.

La femme a désormais le droit d'être témoin légal pour l'enregistrement des naissances, mariages, etc. Elle peut être secrétaire de conseil.

La loi sur l'Assurance nationale contre les Maladies a donné lieu à maintes discussions entre les femmes de différents partis.

Le parti libéral par exemple, s'est opposé vivement à la clause assimilant l'accouchement à une maladie. Partisan d'un secours en nature au lieu d'une compensation monétaire, le parti libéral exprima son opinion par un amendement qui fut rejeté par la Chambre Basse.

L'opposition du parti clérical réussit à éliminer la fille-mère et l'enfant naturel de la clause conférant un secours à la femme en couches et à l'enfant en bas-âge.

Partant de ce principe que l'institution du mariage doit être respectée par la loi, les cléricaux affirment que les secours aux filles-mères demeurent uniquement du ressort de la philanthropie.

La mère a seule le contrôle et l'usage de l'allocation d'accouchement, comme elle a le droit de disposer du salaire—qu'elle gagne par contrat avec un patron. D'autre part, nous avons demandé pour les femmes fonctionnaires mariées le droit de toucher leur traitement et leur pension sans autorisation de leur mari, mais le Ministre de la Justice déclare qu'il serait en contradiction avec le Code si la femme fonctionnaire mariée pouvait disposer à sa guise de son traitement ou de sa pension.

Quant à la question de nationalité elle a été discutée comme l'on sait et traitée amplement à d'autres chapitres.

## NOUVELLE ZELANDE.

Le Congrès annuel du Corps médical qui se réunit à Christ Church en Février dernier a été pour la première fois influencé par l'opinion des femmes docteurs.

Dr. Jessie Scott discuta l'aspect gynécologique du

cancer. On annonça le succès d'une souscription de 25,000 livres pour assurer les services d'un savant Professeur et du personnel nécessaire à l'investigation du problème de la mortalité maternelle dont le coefficient demeure le même ou s'accroît tandis que la mortalité infantile diminue. Le Gouvernement de Nouvelle Zélande a voté 50,000 livres pour la fondation d'une chaire de gynécologie. Dr. Doris Gordon de Stratford entreprit une tournée de propagande pour éveiller l'intérêt du public à ce sujet et termina sa campagne à Christ Church par une réunion féminine présidée par la maîtresse, où on fit lire un message de sympathie envoyé par la reine d'Angleterre.

Le Congrès discuta la question du Contrôle conceptif mais les opinions à ce sujet sont tellement partagées (le point de vue médical étant aussi important que le point de vue économique et social) que le Congrès décida de continuer son enquête, sans formuler de résolution.

Les femmes de Nouvelle Zélande s'intéressent vivement à une litigieuse de Samoa où certaines notabilités féminines soutiennent des plaintes contre les agents de l'Administration néo Zélandaise.

#### HYGIENE INTERNATIONALE.

En dépit de faillites apparentes, l'idée de la Société des Nations fait son chemin, et dans tout pays le plus humble des citoyens se rend compte aujourd'hui de l'interdépendance des peuples et de la nécessité d'établir des accords internationaux. Le Covenant de la Société des Nations est le résultat de cet état d'esprit et son succès est particulièrement manifeste en ce qui concerne l'Hygiène internationale.

L'article 23 du Covenant dit que les membres de la Société "devront prendre des mesures pour la prévention et le contrôle des maladies qui sont un danger international." En 1920 une Conférence d'experts se réunit et après discussions rédigea la constitution qui fut adoptée par la Quatrième assemblée. Dans l'intervalle une Commission d'Epidémie et un Comité Sanitaire étaient organisés.

Désormais le Service comprend :

(1°) Un Conseil supérieur composé des représentants des divers gouvernements qui se réunissent deux fois l'année et propose les conventions internationales.

(2°) Une Commission Sanitaire qui dirige le travail, fait les enquêtes et investigations qui sont alors soumises au Conseil supérieur. Cette commission se compose de 16 membres nommés pour trois ans. L'Allemagne et les Etats Unis d'Amérique y sont représentés.

(3°) Une Section Sanitaire, en réalité le comité exécutif de toute l'organisation, et qui fait partie du Secrétariat Général de la Société.

De plus, l'organisation sanitaire coopère avec les autres groupes de la Société tels que ceux de l'opium, des mandats, du transit. Elle est en rapport avec la Croix Rouge, le Bureau Sanitaire pan américain l'office international du travail, les Instituts d'Agriculture et de Statistique. Elle reçoit un subside de la fondation Rockefeller. La Russie contribue au Service d'Epidémiologie et de plusieurs façons participe à l'activité et aux bénéfices de l'Organisation Sanitaire.

Si les délégués d'un certain pays voient la nécessité d'une enquête sur un cas sanitaire d'une importance internationale, l'Organisation forme alors une commission d'experts qui procèdent à des recherches, comparent les observations, et les statistiques de divers pays, compilent un rapport où ils formulent leurs recommandations. Ce rapport est soumis à la Commission Sanitaire qui le renvoie au Conseil supérieur et de là à l'Assemblée de la Société qui statue en dernier ressort.

L'Organisation Sanitaire a le pouvoir de convoquer une réunion internationale quand une question

d'hygiène paraît d'une importance telle qu'elle doive être discutée et enquêtée dans tous ses détails. Des centres d'études sont alors créés dans diverses universités et des circulaires sont envoyées aux autorités sanitaires. Ou bien des commissions d'étude permanentes sont fondées. Plusieurs d'entre elles sont à l'œuvre. C'est ainsi que :

(1) La Commission pour la normalisation du Sérum, des réactions sérologiques et des produits biologiques a accompli un important travail, essayant d'uniformiser la valeur anti-toxique du sérum qui non seulement varie entre différents pays, mais dans l'intérieur d'un même pays. Des spécimens-type sont conservés dans divers centres et servent de points de comparaison. De cette manière des unités internationales ont été établies pour le sérum anti-diphthérique, aussi bien que pour l'anti-tétanique, ou l'anti-dysentérique. Des produits tels que la digitale, l'insuline ont été normalisés—et la comparaison entre les résultats sanitaires obtenus dans divers pays est ainsi facilitée.

(2) La Commission du Cancer étudie les statistiques et la distribution de cette maladie. Elle collationne les faits qui peuvent servir à expliquer ses causes, sa fréquence et analyse les différentes formes de traitement.

(3) La Commission de la Petite Vérole et de la Vaccination procède aux mêmes enquêtes, en particulier sur la préparation de la lympho-vaccin, et étudie les causes et l'incidence de l'Encéphalite post-vaccinale.

(4) Il y a de même une Commission de l'opium.

(5) Une Commission de la Fumigation des Vaisseaux et de son effet sur les cargaisons.

(6) Une Commission de la Lèpre.

(7) Une Commission d'Experts pour l'étude des relations entre les services sanitaires publics et les Sociétés d'Assurance sur les maladies. Le principal souci de cette commission est à présent l'enquête sur les mesures préventives de la Tuberculose, l'Assistance maternelle, et la surveillance de l'enfant de sa naissance à l'âge scolaire.

(8) Enfin la Commission d'Education pour l'Hygiène et la Médecine préventive, provoque des relations entre les Ecoles d'hygiène de divers pays et suggère de nouvelles méthodes pour la préparation des officiers de la Santé publique. Elle organise des échanges entre les médecins de l'Assistance de divers pays et distribue des bourses.

Un travail des plus importants est accompli par le service épidémiologique qui publie un rapport hebdomadaire de ses observations, de sorte que sitôt qu'une épidémie est connue, elle est localisée et le monde entier en est informé par poste, cablogramme ou sans-fil.

En 1925 le Service Epidémiologique a établi à Singapour un bureau pour l'Extrême Orient qui publie son bulletin hebdomadaire.

Le Service épidémiologique a une subdivision importante dite Statistique de la Santé générale. Cette subdivision s'efforce d'établir une méthode de compilation normale pour toutes les maladies à travers le monde, ce qui nous conduirait à une liste internationale des causes de décès et à un certificat de décès uniforme pour tous les pays. Le service compare et analyse toutes les statistiques fournies par les divers gouvernements.

Ce travail a franchi les limites de l'Europe. En 1926 le Congrès international du Pacifique pria l'Organisation de procéder à une enquête sur l'hygiène de la Nouvelle Guinée, la Nouvelle Calédonie, les Nouvelles Hébrides, les Iles Fiji et Solomon. Le résultat de cette enquête a été l'établissement d'un programme qui préserverait la race de ces territoires. L'Etat de Bolivie a aussi demandé le concours de l'Organisation et

un spécialiste expert va être nommé près le gouvernement bolivien. On se propose d'établir un Institut international d'Hygiène à Rio de Janeiro et un Centre pour l'Hygiène de l'Enfance à Buenos Ayres. L'an passé, en 1929 la Chine a sollicité l'avis et l'aide de l'Organisation pour son projet d'un service d'hygiène publique.

Ces faits prouvent le succès de l'Organisation. N'oublions pas d'ajouter que le Service international d'Hygiène de la Société des Nations a été d'un secours efficace aux provinces russes désolées par la famine en 1921 et 1922; au flot de réfugiés qui, chassés d'Asie mineure accouraient en Grèce—et pendant les épidémies de 1920 en Orient son organisation sanitaire a permis de sauver des milliers de vies humaines.

On ne s'étonnera donc pas de la confiance que le monde entier lui accorde et de la nécessité d'accroître son utilité.

(d'après D. M. ANNING.)

#### LE CODE ET LA MORALE.

Une étude intéressante pour l'historien et le philosophe—et par quoi il peut mesurer les progrès d'une civilisation—est celle des rapports entre les principes de moralité reconnus désirables chez un peuple, et l'application pratique de la loi. Or, en dépit de l'apparente largeur de vues de nos conceptions morales et philosophiques, il se trouve que le Code est en retard souvent d'une décennie, ou d'une génération, parfois même d'un siècle sur les croyances actuelles de la conscience publique. Et cela est vrai non seulement des pays de civilisation latine, dont le Code semble s'être figé à jamais dans le moule romain, mais aussi des pays anglo-saxons où la coutume, modifiable au cours des siècles par les décisions judiciaires, semblerait avoir plus d'élasticité.

La caractéristique de cette disproportion est le fait que la propriété matérielle est plus importante que la vie humaine.

Un exemple nous en est donné par le jugement récent d'une Cour de justice anglaise à propos du procès retentissant d'un financier frauduleux. Celui-ci fut condamné à quatorze ans de prison; la presse entière et le public, unanimes dans leur indignation, approuverent le verdict. Quelques semaines après, dans le Nord de l'Angleterre un ouvrier ivrogne brutalisait son enfant de cinq ans, et sa femme, accourut au secours de l'enfant, de façon telle, que sans l'intervention des voisins il aurait tué l'un et l'autre. Il fut condamné à trois mois de prison.

La procédure dans les deux cas était parfaitement régulière, sans aucune intervention personnelle du juge ou du jury. Sans nul doute la condamnation sévère du financier malhonnête était amplement méritée; il n'en est pas moins vrai que la différence de traitement dans les deux cas, manifeste, qu'au regard de la loi, l'argent importe plus que la vie.

La situation est la même dans le règlement des affaires internationales. Toute échelle de valeurs est fondée sur l'inviolabilité du droit de propriété et la vie humaine n'a d'importance qu'en tant qu'elle accroît la valeur de cette propriété. Lorsque Bismarck disait que la Question de l'Orient ne valait pas les os d'un grenadier poméranien il déclarait implicitement qu'aux yeux d'un homme d'état ces deux termes sont comparables.

Tant que cette échelle de valeurs n'aura pas été modifiée, et la lettre du Code réadaptée à la conscience publique il est superflu de parler de progrès et de civilisation internationale.

La position actuelle est une survivance de l'époque ancestrale où des Pharaons pouvaient sacrifier des milliers d'esclaves à la construction des pyramides, symboles de leur pouvoir matériel. La religion chrétienne nous enseigne une nouvelle éthique: la suprématie du spirituel a brisé les chaînes féodales et monarchiques et préparé la conscience internationale à la révision de la loi.

L'influence des femmes sera immense. Libérées de récente date, elles peuvent mieux que les hommes influencer l'opinion publique. Intimement intéressés à la conservation de la vie, qu'elles créent, c'est par leur effort que les lois seront mises en harmonie avec les idées et l'idéal du 20ème siècle.

(d'après K. Macrae Moir).  
A. M. Rees.

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