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LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NATIONALITY AND STATUS OF WOMEN

**STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS**

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NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

On January 14th, 1935, the Council approved a proposal of the Secretary-General to the effect that, in view of the fact that the questions of the nationality and of the status of women had been placed on the agenda of the Assembly, the Secretariat should be authorised to circulate to the Assembly " statements from the women's international organisations, or any committee of representatives of those organisations, setting out their views and desiderata on either of the above subjects ".

In view of the number and length of the statements received, the Secretary-General has felt unable to reproduce in the present document separate statements from organisations whose views are also expressed in the joint statement presented by the " Women's Consultative Committee on Nationality ". Such separate statements were received from the Equal Rights International and the International Council of Women. They have been filed in the archives of the Secretariat.

The Secretary-General has also felt himself precluded by the terms of the Council's resolution and the practice of the League from including statements from national associations. Such a statement, opposing as ineffective and dangerous to the real interests of women a treaty by which States would bind themselves to accord " equal rights " to men and women, and in general any attempt to deal with the status of women by a single general legislative formula, and asking for preliminary enquiry into so-called discriminations between the sexes, was received from the National League of Women Voters of the United States of America. The National Consumers' League (U.S.A.) has submitted a statement opposing the so-called " equal rights " treaty, on the ground that it endangers protective labour legislation for women.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FOR SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

NATIONALITY OF WOMEN.

PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE LAW OF THE NATIONALITY OF WOMEN SHOULD BE BASED.

The International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship is composed of national auxiliaries in thirty-nine countries and numbers among its members millions of women who belong to all races, classes, creeds and political parties. Since 1917, it has been working systematically and continuously, both internationally and through its national auxiliaries, to secure for the married woman under the laws of every state her own independent nationality and the same right as a man to retain or to change her nationality.

The following are the principles on which the law of the nationality of women should be based :

A. *Independent Nationality of the Married Woman.*

In matters of nationality, the married woman should not be treated as dependent on her husband, but should be recognised as an independent person, and to this end legislation should be based on the following principles :

(a) That the nationality of a woman should not be changed by reason only of marriage, or a change during marriage in the nationality of her husband ;

(b) That the right of a woman to retain her nationality or to change it by naturalisation, denationalisation or denaturalisation shall not be denied or abridged because she is a married woman, and

(c) That the nationality of a married woman shall not be changed without her consent, except under conditions which would cause a change in the nationality of a man without his consent.

Under legislation based on these principles, a husband and wife would, in some cases, be of different nationalities and, in others, of the same nationality. But in no case would they be compelled to be of the same nationality, since each would have an independent nationality in his or her own person.

B. *Special Facilities for One Spouse to acquire the Nationality of the Other.*

It often happens that a man who marries a wife of a nationality different from his own wishes to and does take by naturalisation the nationality of his wife, and many States give him facilities for doing so. And where a woman has a similar choice, as she already has in some States, she may take her husband's nationality by naturalisation. In this connection, it is desirable in national laws :

(d) That special facilities should be given for one spouse to take the nationality of the other.



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C. *Derivation of Nationality equally from Both Parents.*

Nationality at birth is in general derived from the place of birth (*jus soli*) and/or from the father, or, in a few cases, from the mother (*jus sanguinis*). It is not desirable that the nationality of the father should be treated as of greater importance than that of the mother. National laws should provide :

(e) That the nationality of the mother should be transmitted to a child under the same conditions as that of the father.

Under such a provision, the child of parents of two different nationalities derives at birth, under *jus sanguinis*, both the nationality of its father and that of its mother. It has double nationality with its advantages and disadvantages, just as does a child which at birth takes both its father's nationality and that of the place where it is born.

D. *Equal Nationality Conditions for Both Sexes.*

Already the universal rule is (there are no exceptions, so far as we are aware) that the unmarried woman has independent nationality in her own person on the same terms as a man. But a complete statement of the principles essential in legislation for the woman, both married and unmarried, must include :

(f) That there shall be no distinction based on sex.

PRESENT POSITION, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL.

A. *Present National Position: Reforms adopted between 1917 and 1935.*

(a) *The Married Woman's Personal Independent Nationality.* — In 1917, apart from some of the South-American Republics, the nationality of a married woman as a general rule followed that of her husband. It had not always been so. These South-American Republics had retained an old rule that a woman kept her own nationality after marriage with a foreigner. This old rule had formerly been in force in a number of countries of Europe and of European civilisation, but they had changed it during the nineteenth or in the beginning of the twentieth century.

The nineteen years between 1917 and 1935 have seen a revolution in the application of the rule that the nationality of a married woman follows that of her husband. And, in 1935, this rule can no longer be properly described as general. To-day States comprising almost half the population of the world permit a woman national with a foreign husband to retain her own nationality after marriage : in some cases, she does so automatically, in others, subject to her making an application to retain it or a declaration of her intention to retain it. These States include the Argentine, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Uruguay, Belgium, Colombia, Guatemala, Irish Free State, Panama, Ecuador, Luxemburg, Albania, China, Cuba, Estonia, Liberia, Roumania, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia. The first fourteen of these States go further in the direction of recognising the independent personal nationality of the married woman in that none of them confers its nationality on a foreign woman who marries one of its nationals, except with her consent. China does not confer its nationality on the foreign woman who marries a Chinese national unless she loses her own nationality by such marriage. The first seven of these States put the married woman in the same position as a man as regards her nationality. Then too, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden do not deprive a woman national of her nationality when she marries a foreigner when she continues to reside or is domiciled in her own country. A French woman keeps her nationality on marriage with a foreigner unless either on her own initiative she acquires her husband's or if her first matrimonial domicile is outside France and her husband's State automatically confers his nationality upon her. French nationality is not conferred upon a foreign woman who marries a Frenchman unless she has either (a) lost her own nationality or (b) applies for naturalisation.

(b) *Special Facilities for One Spouse to acquire the Nationality of the Other.* — The desirability of giving facilities to a husband to acquire the nationality of his wife has been recognised in some countries where the law is equal between husband and wife, such as the Argentine ; in some where the married woman's independent nationality is partly recognised, as in China and France, and, in some in which the wife's nationality follows that of her husband, such as Italy and Japan. These five countries reduce the number of years required for naturalisation of a foreign man who marries a woman national.

The most significant change in the direction of giving special facilities for one spouse to acquire the nationality of the other was made in the United States of America in 1934, when the law was made equal as between husband and wife. The United States Act provides

(a) that, except in time of war, a man or woman citizen on marriage with a foreigner may renounce his or her citizenship, and (b) that the time of residence in the United States before naturalisation is reduced from five years to three in the case of a foreign man or woman married to a United States citizen.

(c) *Derivation of Nationality from Father and Mother on the Same Terms.* — In cases where nationality is dependent on the place of birth (*jus soli*), the question of equality of derivation of nationality from father and mother does not arise. And in States in which nationality is derived both from the place of birth and from a parent, the question of equality arises only in the case of children born outside the country. States which to-day provide in their law for transmission of nationality on the same terms from a mother as from a father include the Argentine, Chile, Paraguay, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America and Uruguay.

(d) *Equality of Conditions as between Men and Women together with the Independent Nationality of the Married Woman.* — The countries where the married woman has independent nationality and where there is no distinction based on sex, either with respect to her nationality or the derivation of nationality from a parent, include the Argentine, Chile, Paraguay, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America and Uruguay.

B. *Present International Position: Three International Conventions open for Ratification.*

Any international consideration of the question of the nationality of women involves the consideration of whether it is or is not desirable for States to ratify one or more of the three international Conventions dealing with the matter, or whether a new convention is needed. These three international Conventions which are now open for ratification either by all States or by the American Republics included in the Pan-American Union are : (1) the Hague Nationality Convention 1930, (2) the Nationality Convention adopted at Montevideo in 1933 and (3) the Nationality of Women Convention adopted at Montevideo in 1933.

(a) *The Hague Convention 1930.* — The Hague Nationality Convention of 1930 contains four articles (8, 9, 10 and 11) specially dealing with the married woman.

Under Article 8, many women are enabled to retain their own nationality on marriage with a foreigner. But the article is designed, not to recognise the right of the woman to her own nationality, but to prevent statelessness. While it prevents a woman from losing her nationality on marriage with a foreigner when she does not acquire her husband's nationality, it does not give her the right to retain her nationality on marriage with a foreigner whose nationality she thereby acquires. It makes her nationality depend, not on herself, but on her husband's nationality or the law of his country.

It is only Article 10 that recognises the independent nationality of the married woman and only in the particular case of a husband who changes his nationality during marriage.

Articles 8, 9 and 11 are applicable as between two States, one of which in general deprives a woman national of her nationality when she marries a foreigner and the other of which imposes its nationality automatically on a foreign woman who marries one of its nationals. A State which ratifies the Convention therefore recognises the dependence of a woman's nationality on her husband's as an accepted principle of the law of nationality.

The first chapter of the Convention deals with general principles. By Article 1, each State is allowed to determine who are its own nationals, and other States are to recognise this so far as is consistent with "the principles of law generally recognised with regard to nationality", one of which is the principle of the dependence of the wife's nationality on her husband's. Then, by Article 4, a State may not afford diplomatic protection to one of its nationals against a State whose nationality such person also possesses, and, by Article 5, within a third State, a person with double nationality may in certain cases be treated by that third State as of either of these nationalities. The woman who has kept her own nationality and also had her husband's imposed upon her has double nationality. If her own State has ratified the Convention, it has waived its right to give her protection as its national against her husband's State, and in certain cases even against a third State. Only in very rare cases does marriage give a man double nationality, so that men are not affected by ratification of the Convention in the same way as women.

A woman to whom the Convention applies who has kept her own nationality and also by marriage automatically acquired her husband's may find herself when abroad in her husband's country, or even in a third country, deprived of the privileges belonging to her own nationality and without redress, because her own State, by ratifying the Convention, has waived its right to protect her in some particular difficulty in which she may find herself. Ratification of this Convention is therefore against the interests of women.

(b) *The Montevideo Nationality Convention, 1933.* — Two separate Conventions dealing with women were adopted by the States represented at the Pan-American Conference at Montevideo in 1933. The Nationality Convention also dealt with other aspects of nationality, but contained the following article :

“ *Article VI.* — Neither matrimony nor its dissolution affects the nationality of the husband, or wife or of their children.”

The Convention therefore lays down one of the essential principles—namely, that the married woman shall have independent nationality in her own person unaffected by her marriage. The fact that this Article VI appears in one of the Conventions signed by the States present at the Montevideo Conference is important as indicating that these States are in favour of recognising the independent personal nationality of the married woman.

(c) *The Montevideo Nationality of Women Convention 1933.* — The second Convention dealing with the nationality of women adopted at Montevideo is that referred to in the agenda of the Assembly. In addition to the formal articles about ratification, etc., it contains one effective article as follows :

“ There will be no distinction based on sex as regards nationality in their legislation or in their practice.”

This article so far as it applies to the nationality of the married woman lays down only one of the two essential principles. It provides that there shall be equality between the sexes, but it fails to provide that that equality shall be on the basis of the independent nationality of the married woman. It does not provide as does the other Montevideo Nationality Convention of 1933 that matrimony shall not affect nationality. It is possible for a State under this Convention to base its law on both these principles of equality and independent nationality for husband and wife, but it is not required to do so. This has been done, for example, by Chile and the United States of America, which have both ratified. But it is also possible under the Convention to leave the married woman without her own independent nationality. For example, if, in a State in which the domicile of the married woman follows that of her husband, nationality were made to depend on domicile, this would be legal equality, but, in fact, the woman's nationality would follow her husband's : equality *de jure* but not equality *de facto*. To take another example in which under the Convention there would be equality but not independent nationality for either husband or wife : under its legislation might make it compulsory for husband and wife to take the same nationality, that of either the husband or the wife, to be agreed upon at marriage. Such a law is equal for both but denies independent nationality to both. It does not give to either a real choice of nationality. For one, at least, it is a choice between nationality and marriage. The ratification of this Convention, therefore, is not a step in the right direction, for it does not ensure improvement in the position of the married woman.

C. *Summary of the Indications of a Growing Acceptance of the Principle of the Independent Nationality of the Married Woman, 1917-1935.*

We have given above ¹ a list of States (which may not be complete) which have recognised to a greater or less extent the independent nationality of the married woman. Some of the South-American States there named had never made marriage the deciding factor in a married woman's nationality. The other States there named, between 1917 and 1935, have adopted legislation to make the nationality of the married woman wholly or partly independent of marriage. These are the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Belgium, Irish Free State, Luxemburg, Albania, China, Cuba, Estonia, Liberia, Roumania, Spain, Turkey, Yugoslavia and France, and, subject to conditions as to residence or domicile, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

It is to be noted too that many of these States, including the most populous, not only permit a woman national to keep her own nationality after marriage with a foreigner, but also do not, without her consent, confer their nationality on a foreign woman who marries one of their nationals.

While the Hague Codification Conference in 1930 did not incorporate in its Nationality Convention the principle of the independent nationality of the married woman, it did foreshadow development on the lines of the adoption of this principle in its recommendation VI which reads :

“ The Conference recommends to States the study of the question whether it would not be possible :

“ (1) To introduce into their law the principle of the equality of the sexes in matters of nationality, taking particularly into consideration the interests of the children, and,

“ (2) Especially to decide that, in principle, the nationality of the wife shall henceforth not be affected without her consent either by the mere fact of marriage or by any change in the nationality of the husband.”

¹ See page 3.

Another indication of this tendency is the declaration of policy made by the delegate from the United Kingdom in the 1931 Assembly of the League as follows :

“ The United Kingdom Government consider that it is right that all disabilities in matters of nationality should be removed, and that in so far as nationality is concerned, a married woman should be in the same position as a man—married or unmarried—or any single woman.”

Then, too, the fact that the States present at the Pan-American Conference at Montevideo in 1933, including South-American Republics and the United States of America, signed two Conventions dealing with nationality, one of which is based on the principle of the independent nationality of the married woman and the other on the principle of equality between the sexes, is an indication of the support there is for the international acceptance of the principle of the independent nationality of the married woman on the basis of equality between the sexes.

NEW CONVENTION NEEDED.

In order to promote the universal adoption, nationally and internationally, of both these essential principles in regard to nationality, the Alliance, in accordance with the resolution adopted at its twelfth congress, held in Istanbul in April 1935, asks for the adoption of an international convention to provide in matters of nationality :

“ That husband and wife should each enjoy independently their own personal nationality ; that a woman whether married or unmarried should have the same right as a man to retain or to change her nationality, and that, in every respect, there should be equality of the sexes and such as to include the following :

“ I. *Retention of Nationality.*

“ 1. A woman shall not lose her nationality by reason

“ (a) That she married a foreigner, or,

“ (b) That, during her marriage, her husband loses his nationality by naturalisation in another country or otherwise.

“ 2. Where, before the coming into force of legislation based on this Convention, a woman has lost her nationality by reason of the fact that she married a foreigner or that her husband had lost his nationality by naturalisation or otherwise, she shall, on her own application, reacquire her nationality.

“ II. *Acquisition of Nationality.*

“ 1. A foreign woman shall not, by reason of marriage, acquire the nationality of her husband.

“ 2. Naturalisation of the husband during marriage shall not involve naturalisation of the wife.

“ 3. A married woman shall be naturalised under the same conditions as a man.

“ 4. Special facilities shall be given for one spouse to acquire the nationality of the other.

“ 5. Where, before the coming into force of legislation based on this Convention, a woman by marriage or by the naturalisation of her husband acquires his nationality, she shall retain it unless she makes a formal declaration of alienage.

“ III. With respect to derivation of nationality from a parent, the nationality of one parent shall be given no preference over that of the other.”

STATUS OF WOMEN.

Other international women's organisations with more specialised programmes will doubtless be submitting memoranda to the League on specific points. The main object of the Alliance is the attainment of “ a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women ” (Article II of its Constitution). We have therefore dealt mainly with the question of equal political rights for men and women, as underlying all other forms of equality, with only a brief reference to other questions.

POLITICAL RIGHTS.

Until recently, the trend of political evolution was towards a system of government based on direct representation of the people through delegates elected to some form of Parliament. It would be true to say that in every country which had adopted this principle, the consequence of its application to men was that women demanded the same right of representation. That demand was an inevitable and logical consequence because representative government rests upon a *democratic* basis, and it cannot be denied that women form half of the human race and therefore of the *people* of any country. As far, therefore, as the arguments for democratic government are concerned, it cannot be contested that it is essential for the reality of the system that women should have the same rights as men.

In recent years, the representative form of government has been challenged by other systems, corporative, collective or authoritarian. But whatever system is considered or adopted, whether it be one of these conceptions or the representative form of government, it will not fulfil itself if women, who are otherwise qualified under the system itself, are excluded from participation on the grounds of sex alone.

OTHER ELECTORAL RIGHTS.

There are other less important electoral rights (for various forms of local government) where the same principle applies. If they are less vital in theory, in practice they are often no less important for women than direct participation in the central government. But we do not propose to deal with this question in detail, because the lesser right would surely be included in the larger, and the principle of equal status once adopted, would inevitably apply in such cases.

PRESENT POSITION.

We attach to this Memorandum two documents prepared by Alliance members, which illustrate our thesis :

(a) A summary in tabular form, showing the countries where women enjoy suffrage rights, in varying degrees of completeness, and those where such rights exist for the male citizen but are not extended to women ;

(b) A pamphlet embodying a study of women's rights in the existing Constitutions of modern States, with brief excerpts from those Constitutions. ¹

This latter pamphlet shows that in the Constitutions dealt with in thirty-two States of Europe, five in Africa, four in North America, twenty in Central and South America, and twelve in Asia, there are seven in Europe, two in Africa, one in North America, thirteen in Central and South America and eight in Asia which make no direct reference to women's rights. Moreover, it would not be correct to deduce by a simple process of subtraction that the remaining States in these continents give equal rights to men and women. On the contrary in some States, the rights rest only on laws which are subject to repeal, or are limited by special qualifications as to age, education, good conduct, etc., which are not demanded from male citizens. In others of the States, the clauses of the constitution establishing equality between the sexes are no longer observed. It will be seen therefore that there is a wide field in which women have still to gain political equality.

ELIGIBILITY TO PUBLIC OFFICES.

The right to the franchise is closely bound up with the right to stand for election, and in the above remarks we intend to make no distinction between what is known as the active and passive franchise—*i.e.*, the right to vote and the right to stand for election. It is against the interests of the community that the choice of individuals best qualified to represent different interests and to take a direct and active share in the government of the country should be limited on the grounds of sex alone.

But apart from membership, whether by election or by nomination, of the governing bodies of the State and of the community, there are other functions of equal importance which are filled by nomination or by public examination, as, for instance, posts in the civil and diplomatic services, seats on special commissions, delegation to international meetings, etc. The full and active participation of women in the government of their country fails of attainment so long as they are excluded, by statute or by custom, from such posts or from the necessary preparation for such posts.

VALUE OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE.

We cannot doubt that the real inclusion of women in important posts of administration would be to the good of humanity, always provided that they had first been given full opportunity of preparation for such posts. The removal of an injustice is in itself a good to the State. Moreover, the exclusion of women must often mean the exclusion of a highly gifted and competent *individual* ; it means the exclusion of the direct experience of maternity, with its consequent concern with youth. Much is said about the importance to a nation of its children, but too much weight is laid on the function of the woman in bearing children.

¹ This document has been filed in the archives of the Secretariat.

It is essential to utilise her experience in planning for the child's life, which enables her to see how the laws of the State may best be adjusted to meet the needs of the new generation. Study of social legislation adopted by countries where women vote and sit in Parliament will afford ample proof of the value of this experience.

It is a commonplace that the woman who takes an enlightened interest in public affairs is a factor for peace, but she can only be an important factor when she exercises a direct influence.

Lastly, the practical knowledge of women in the economics of daily life cannot be disregarded, since economic questions vitally affect national and international well-being. Women as a sex cannot be consulted as a specialised trade, industrial or professional organisation is consulted. The sum of their experience can only be available through their normal and natural status as citizens on identical terms with their fellow-men.

INEQUALITIES IN OTHER SPHERES.

We would very briefly point out that most legal systems discriminate against women in regard to their position in the family, in regard to their earnings and property and in regard to their nationality. On the latter point, the League of Nations possesses a mass of documentation in support of this statement.

In the domain of morals, inequality is universal. There exists to some extent in every country a class of women, the prostitute, who is subject to special laws which make her more or less of an outcast. We appreciate very highly the action taken by the last Assembly in adopting the resolutions presented by the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children pointing out the injustice and uselessness of the system of regulation of prostitution. That system or other special legislation directed solely against the immorality of women, which cannot exist without the corresponding immorality of men, still, alas, continues.

In the economic sphere, equality is still further to seek. We constantly see attacks made on the fundamental right of every woman of freedom to earn a livelihood by her own labour. All other workers are helped, not hindered, by their Governments; women alone are restricted and hampered, and refused free access to fields of labour, not on the grounds of incapacity, but on those of sex alone. We are aware that consideration of these questions in the international sphere comes within the scope of the International Labour Office; but in national legislation there is no hard and fast line to be drawn, and Governments, when considering the question of equal status between men and women, cannot ignore this vital question.

In all these matters, for the reasons stated in our introductory paragraphs, we forbear to give details, but ardently desire that they be taken into careful consideration in the light of the full information which we count upon our fellow societies to provide. Every disability tends to make harder for women their share in both home and public life, and those who call them the weaker sex are most ready to add to their disadvantages and handicaps. In a complex civilisation, it is vital that a woman as mother, wife or worker should be allowed to develop freely her talents and capacities and to exercise her full responsibility.

CONCLUSION.

On the grounds thus presented, we respectfully beg the League of Nations to give this question of the status of women the attention which it deserves. We believe that the increasing closeness of international relations, the growing exchange of populations, has made this question ripe for more than national consideration. It is in this belief that the Congress recently held by the Alliance at Istanbul, at which representatives from thirty-one countries were present, adopted the following resolution:

“ The Alliance, considering that the equality of the sexes in all departments of life is the aim towards which all women's efforts should be directed, decides to support by all the means in its power the principle embodied in Article I of the Treaty signed at Montevideo in December 1933, the text of which is as follows:

“ The contracting States agree that, upon the ratification of this Treaty, men and women shall have equal rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions.”

We believe that for the League of Nations to draw up an International Convention which, without in any way infringing on national sovereignty, should ask the contracting States to agree that the participation of their citizens in the affairs of the State shall not depend on sex, would be truly in the interests of international life. It is surely an essential basis for all

international co-operation between States that Governments should speak in the name of their entire peoples, and no Government which refuses to count all its adult inhabitants as citizens can so speak with any degree of reality.

We are aware that the view has been expressed that the status of women is a purely national question which cannot be dealt with internationally without curtailing the sovereign rights of the States. We cannot see that this question differs from many others which have been dealt with by international agreements. Take notably the question of nationality, the very basic right underlying all other rights in the State, since it determines to whom any national rights shall belong. And yet this question has formed the subject of many international agreements.

No international agreement can properly be said to infringe national sovereignty if it merely asks of the States ratifying it that they shall at their discretion accept certain lines of common agreement to be incorporated in their national law.

The true view is, therefore, that each ratifying nation accepts as its own a common standard, recognised as necessary in view of the close interdependence of modern States.

(Signed) Margery I. CORBETT ASHBY,

President.

Annex.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Franchise same as for Men.

1. *Equality.* — South Africa¹ (white population), South West Africa¹ (white population), Germany¹ (suspended for men and women since 1933, except in case of plebiscite), Australia¹, Austria¹ (suspended for men and women), Brazil¹, United Kingdom¹, Canada¹ (except Quebec, provincial vote), Ceylon, China¹, Cuba¹, Czechoslovakia¹, Denmark¹, Danzig¹, Ecuador¹, Estonia¹, Finland¹, Hawaii, Iceland¹, Isle of Man, India² (British India and the majority of the native States), Ireland¹, Kenya, Latvia¹, Liechtenstein¹, Lithuania¹, Luxemburg¹, Memel¹, Netherlands¹, New Zealand¹, Norway¹, Philippines,³ Poland¹, Southern Rhodesia¹ (white population), Union of Soviet Socialist Republics¹, Siam, Spain¹, Sweden¹, Turkey¹, United States of America¹, Uruguay¹.

2. *Partial Equality.* — Belgium⁴, Hungary, Channel Islands, Windward Islands, Leeward Islands⁵, Porto Rico, Portugal, Northern Rhodesia, Newfoundland (suspended for men and women) Trinity and Tobago.

Municipal Franchise only.

1. *Equality.* — Chile, Gold Coast, Cyprus, Monaco, Peru.

2. *Partial Equality.* — Greece, Italy (suspended), Palestine, Roumania.

Neither Right to Vote nor Eligibility (countries having nevertheless an electoral system).

Andorra, Argentine⁶, Bahamas, Barbadoes, Bermuda, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Egypt, Fiji, France, Guatemala, British Guiana, Haiti, Iraq, Netherlands Indies (eastern), Japan, Liberia, Malta (in suspense), Mauritius, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, San Domingo, San Marino, San Salvador, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, Syria and Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, the Vatican, Venezuela, Virgin Islands (U.S.A.), Yugoslavia.

Most striking Suffrage Gains, 1929-1934.

Canada — eligibility for Senate ; Ceylon — equal rights ; South Africa — equal rights for European women ; Spain — equal rights ; Brazil — equal rights ; Uruguay — equal rights ; Turkey — equal rights.

¹ Universal suffrage.

² The draft new federal Constitution proposes special conditions for women.

³ Women's right to vote has never been exercised. It is feared it may be withdrawn under the new Constitution.

⁴ For war victims only : eligibility on equal terms for Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Equal municipal franchise.

⁵ Dominica gives equal rights to men and women.

⁶ The provinces of San Juan and Santa Fé have granted certain rights to women.

WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

STATUS OF WOMEN.

CONCERN OF THE WORLD'S Y.W.C.A. FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN.

The World's Young Women's Christian Association has always been vitally concerned with questions relating to the responsibilities and the contribution of women in every walk of life and to the improvement of their whole status. It therefore welcomes the opportunity provided by the Council of the League of Nations of stating its views on the question of the whole status of women, with special reference to a convention on the subject of equality of rights as between men and women which was signed at Montevideo in December 1933, by Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay.

PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION NOT A SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM.

The Association considers that the adoption of an international draft Convention, drawn in general terms on lines similar to the text of the Equality of Rights Treaty proposed at the Montevideo Conference, is not an adequate method of dealing with so complicated a problem as that of equality of status as between men and women in all departments of life. Such a method cannot take into account the claims of motherhood and of the family nor can it allow for the great variety of social and economic conditions in different countries; nevertheless the status of all the citizens of these countries must depend to a large extent on these conditions and moreover must be greatly influenced by the stage of development in each country.

PROTECTIVE LAWS OVERRIDDEN BY THE DRAFT CONVENTION AS PROPOSED.

Among the members of the Association—who number nearly a million and are drawn from fifty-one countries—there are many young women in industry; it is therefore in close touch with the lives and working conditions of these women. The Association has always stood with women in industry in opposing any movement to deprive them of the protection they have secured by means of special legislation. National bodies of organised industrial women have repeatedly stated that they set a high value on the protection this legislation affords, and the arguments advanced by some non-industrial groups in favour of its abolition have at no time been accepted by the qualified representatives of the women workers concerned.¹ It has been ascertained from experts in international law that an international draft Convention introducing equality as between men and women in general terms, such as Article I of the text of the Equal Rights Treaty proposed to the Montevideo Conference, would override the existing International Labour Conventions applying to women and so deprive women in industry of their protection. This reason alone would make it impossible for the Association to support a draft Convention covering the whole status of women.

THE RIGHT OF WOMEN TO WORK.

At the same time, the Association vigorously opposes the growing tendency to restrain women from entering employment hitherto deemed suitable for them and to prohibit their continuing in employment in which they have already proved their competence.

In particular, it desires to record its concern in regard to restrictive legislative measures passed and applied within the last two years (in seven European countries and one Australian State) limiting the careers to which women have access, excluding women from admission to posts for which their training had fitted them or compelling them to resign posts which they were actually occupying when the legislation in question was introduced. These measures exclude married intellectual workers (such as teachers, public servants and medical women) from employment or severely curtail their opportunities of employment; some countries restrict their salaries. In one leading industrial

¹ See annexed quotations from pamphlets issued.

country, ¹ discrimination may be legally exercised against all women in industry ; in another, ² the Government has asked that wherever possible women shall be replaced by men. In a number of other countries, including the United States of America, where special legislation has not yet been introduced to restrict the right of women to work, there is a noticeable tendency to resort to discrimination ; this is being directed against all women in some cases ; in others, against married women only. The Association views the adoption of this policy with great and increasing anxiety, and, since the principle of equality of treatment as between men and women is to be examined, it would urge that a tendency so gravely endangering the position of women should not escape attention.

A TRUE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY.

The World's Y.W.C.A. holds that women have a special contribution to make to the solution of the problems of to-day, recognising that, on occasion, this may call for joint action by women on some point which particularly concerns them. The Association strongly supports the principle that in political and civil life a *true equality of opportunity* should be open to men and women, and works for the realisation of this principle through educational programmes. But the Association firmly believes that while it is to the general interest that the field of women's activities should be enlarged, it is by working in close co-operation that men and women alike can best serve the common good.

NEED OF AN ENQUIRY INTO THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

The Association is of opinion that the only logical method of approach to so large a question would be to explore the ground nationally, so as to determine more fully than has yet been done incontrovertible facts, *both in law and practice*, in regard to the status of women in each country. It must be remembered that "equality before the law", or even suffrage, does not necessarily imply equal opportunities for training, or for entry into occupations, professions or civil services. It must therefore be ascertained what special difficulties need to be overcome in order to effect a real improvement in the status of women. The character and degree of these difficulties are bound to differ widely from one country to another, but, whether they are social, civil, political or economic, it would seem that definite national action might best be stimulated by preliminary work undertaken within the country.

The Association suggests that Governments should undertake to enquire into the actual status and position of women in their countries and that this enquiry should be placed under the authority of an International Commission.

Such work would facilitate the preparation of a comparative study on the status of women, and it is the view of the Association that if the results of such a study were brought together they would provide a basis for eventual international action in the matter of the status of women in the various departments of their present or future activities. Recommendations on specific points could then be made with much greater confidence.

When the proposal for a draft international Convention was taking shape, the Association at once put forward this view and has maintained it throughout the discussions of the women's organisations.

CONCLUSION.

The World's Y.W.C.A. desires to record its satisfaction that this question has been brought forward. The Association once more impresses upon the Assembly the urgent need for the improvement of the status of women and reiterates its conviction that such improvement can best be achieved by specific international agreements based upon careful comparative study.

When such a study is undertaken, the Association will be ready to co-operate in any possible way.

¹ Belgium : Decree (December 8th, 1934) authorising the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to fix by quota the percentage of women (married or single) in each branch of industry in order to secure that posts exceeding this quota shall be filled by men.

² Netherlands.

Annex 1.

OPINION OF THE STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE OF INDUSTRIAL WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS (UNITED KINGDOM).

(Pamphlet published in October 1927 by the Labour Party.)

Women and Night-Work.

The experience in munition factories during the war brought once more into evidence the half-forgotten facts of unregulated nightwork—deterioration in health caused by the difficulty of securing sufficient rest by day; disturbance of home life with its injurious effects upon the children, and diminished value of work done (Report on Women's Employment by the Health of Munition Workers Committee).

If women could be relieved of domestic duties, it may be that their resistance to industrial fatigue would approximate more nearly to that of men, but legislation has to deal with things *as they are*.

Women and Lead-Poisoning.

The restrictions, for example, of women employed in certain painting processes where lead is used are due, not to fear of the women, but to the definite medical belief that women are more subject to lead-poisoning than men.

The greater susceptibility of women to lead-poisoning has been the subject of very careful examination in the Potteries. The evidence of Dr. T. M. Legge, Medical Inspector of Factories, given before the Departmental Committee in 1908 was conclusively borne out by the figures of the greater incidence of lead-poisoning amongst women. His opinion is the opinion of the organised workers in the trade represented by the National Society of Pottery Workers, of whom the majority are women.

Effects of Special Regulations.

In our opinion, the position of women in the industrial world during the last hundred years has been strengthened by every regulation for their protection which has been adopted.

The worker who cannot be exploited at the employers' will because the law does not permit it, gains a stronger and not a weaker position in the industrial world. Legislation has had to step in to give women a chance of achieving a more equal footing with men. Without such protection, it is not equality that the man achieves but far greater inequality.

Annex 2.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT PRESENTED BY THE DELEGATES OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY TO THE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE OF THE LABOUR AND SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL AT ITS MEETING ON JANUARY 11TH AND 12TH, 1930.

Working women's demands for equality are tempered with a knowledge of the facts of industry, and while now and again they may agree in some demand for equality they cannot too strongly condemn the reactionary and disastrous theory that all protective legislation should be swept away unless men and women can be included in it on the same terms.

The Office of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations of Great Britain stated, on May 31st, 1935, that, in regard to protective legislation, their "opinion is quite unchanged".

Annex 3.

OPINION OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE OF AMERICA.

This organisation has a direct and affiliated membership of over a million persons. It is a federation of trade unions with women members, and with a membership of persons who endorse its principles and accept its platform. Many national and international unions and state federations of labour are linked to the League by affiliation and help to further its aims, and by financial assistance, to accomplish its purpose. It is endorsed by the American Federation of Labour. The fundamental principle upon which the National Women's Trade Union League of America bases its work is the organisation of women wage-workers into trade unions. Throughout the thirty-one years of its existence, it has been the spokesman of the women wage-earners in the United States and the interpreter of their problems, which have grown in complexity with mass production, modern speed, mechanisation and the depression, and which should not be further complicated by the equal rights issue.

WHY THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE OF AMERICA OPPOSES BOTH A CONVENTION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN BY THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE EQUAL RIGHTS TREATY.

The National Women's Trade Union League of America which has always opposed in its own country the very debatable issue of "equal rights between women and men" through a proposed amendment to the Federal Constitution of the United States, wishes to file with the League of Nations this special protest against an international movement of this sort, considering such procedure even more complicated and more undesirable than national action on this subject.

International Blanket Action on Equal Rights for Women is full of Pitfalls.

Such a blanket attempt to give women a status equal to that of men would be fraught with difficulties and conducive to confusion since conditions and needs of women vary greatly from country to country. Such an effort to cover at one fell stroke conditions in various and varied fields, aiming as it does to give women equality in all rights under the law—in the economic field, in labour legislation, in political rights, in educational opportunities, in civil rights, in nationality rights—seems impracticable and detrimental to the real interests of women. The pitfalls of any such general programme are not all easily perceptible before it is put into effect. Where legal injustices obviously exist for women as compared with men, a much safer remedial course would be to conduct special campaigns or drives to adjust specific injustices or inequalities.

Equal Rights Movement aims to abolish Special Labour Laws for Women.

One avowed purpose of this international movement is to abolish special labour legislation for women enacted in various countries over a long period of years, because of definite need of such laws. The National Women's Trade Union League of America is thoroughly familiar with this field, has made a special study of the disastrous effects that would result from the achievement of such purpose, and is therefore deeply concerned about this whole matter.

Status of Women Convention would lead to Abolition of Special Conventions for Women of the International Labour Organisation.

If the League of Nations were to adopt the proposed Convention on the status of women it would apparently lead to the abolition of the following Conventions adopted by the International Labour Conference in its effort to build up international standards along such lines :

1. *The Child-birth Convention* adopted in 1919 in an effort to establish international standards to safeguard women at the most crucial time of their lives—the maternity period—in the interests, not only of women, but also of the race. This type of legislation obviously can apply only to women, but the whole issue is a broader one than that of women's rights. Even from the viewpoint of the woman as an individual worker, this Convention tends, not only to protect her health and that of her children but also to guarantee her a job and income during the maternity period instead of permitting her to be deprived of such by the actions of individual employers.

2. *The Night-work Convention* adopted in 1919 to safeguard women against night employment, which authorities definitely agree is an abnormal activity with harmful physiological, psychological and social effects for all workers, but particularly detrimental to women, so many of whom are home makers and mothers and who tend to perform household and family duties by day instead of getting as much rest as men night-workers do. (This Convention, as revised in 1934, exempts women holding responsible positions of management who are not ordinarily engaged in manual work.)

3. *The clause which is contained in the White-lead Convention (regulating the use of white lead by all persons and adopted in 1921) and which prohibits the employment of women at industrial painting involving the use of white lead.* It is particularly imperative to protect women against lead poisoning because of the detrimental effects of this disease on women's reproduction functions.

Equal Rights Treaty would abolish National Labour Laws for Women.

Furthermore, one purpose of the Equal Rights Treaty, upon which the proposed Convention on the status of women would be founded, is to try to bring about the abolition of special labour legislation for women in every country which might ratify this Treaty. Therefore, the National Women's Trade Union League of America fears that, if the League of Nations were to adopt the above-mentioned Convention, this would stimulate an interest in the Equal Rights Treaty on the part of individual countries and encourage them to ratify the Treaty.

The Situation in the United States of America would be particularly serious.

Ratification of the Treaty by the United States, for example, would be particularly serious. It is feared that such a step would not only prevent the enactment of any special labour laws for women in the future, but would almost inevitably lead to the abolition of all such laws including the hour and minimum wage legislation for women in industry now on the statute books of various States. Such a result would mean that women in industry in the United States would not be safeguarded by any permanent legal standards—either State or national or international—on such important matters as working hours and minimum wage. Since, according to the Constitution, the power to enact labour legislation rests almost entirely with the States, permanent national laws along these lines for both sexes or ratification of the Conventions of the International Labour Organisation which apply to both men and women are difficult to attain. (The N.R.A. hour and wage provisions covering both sexes in the United States were temporary.)

Moreover, though the proponents of special labour laws agree that, wherever feasible, these should apply to both sexes, it is a well-known fact that, in the United States, general hour and wage standards for men have been considered extremely difficult to establish through legislation in view of the constitutional amendment prohibiting restriction of freedom of contract. Such laws for women have been easier to enact because, in some cases, when tried in the courts as to constitutionality they have been upheld on the basis of the right of the police power of the State to safeguard the health and morals of women workers, in view of the fact that they are different from men, in being the mothers of the race and also the greater victims of excessive exploitation by unscrupulous employers.

Abolition at one fell stroke of the special labour legislation for women in the various States, that has been built up during a century, would work great hardship to women in industry and to their families.

Equal Rights Proponents have Misunderstanding as to Needs of Industrial versus Professional Women.

The proponents of equal-rights legislation have a misunderstanding as to the types of women covered by the laws, and as to the special needs of industrial women. In the United States, special labour legislation applies to industrial women who have declared themselves in favour of it. These laws do not cover women in the professions and in supervisory and executive business positions, yet the sponsors of the Equal Rights Treaty belong to these ranks. On the other hand, important organisations of business and professional women are definitely opposed to the Treaty and in favour of special labour laws.

There are striking differences in the needs and environments of the women in industry on the one hand and the women in business and the professions on the other. The problems of the former are the collective problems of a great mass of women doing similar or identical work, largely routine with practically no opportunity for a career, and no outlook for anything but a monotonous job, and too often a prey to exploitation unless safeguarded. The business or professional woman has an individualised job in most instances, which naturally develops in her an individualistic viewpoint; and her education and acquired experience furnish her with valuable equipment with which to forge ahead and reach a desired goal. She should not try to impose her individualism upon the woman in industry, thereby causing her serious hardships. She should not combat special labour legislation for women in industry, but she can aim rather to have women of her own type specifically exempted from these laws if she wishes.

The women in industry and their allies in favour of the laws are willing to let the business and professional women be the judges of their own needs, and, in return, ask that industrial women be allowed to speak for themselves, without interference from women who oppose the laws though not affected by them.

Equal Rights Proponents have Misunderstanding as to Industrial Conditions.

The proponents of the equal-rights legislation are opposed to special labour laws due to misunderstandings about industrial conditions. They object on the basis that these interfere with women's freedom of contract. Though these laws may limit the workers' freedom of contract they limit the employer's as well, his freedom to exploit women, to work them for overlong hours, at a mere pittance. Moreover, a worker dependent upon earnings has no real freedom of contract beyond the purchasing power of these earnings. Wage-workers must have jobs to live, and their freedom of choice of jobs is determined by the amount of money they possess to buy the wherewithal for living. Freedom of contract under such circumstances does not exist. In fact, workers think so little of this freedom of contract that they voluntarily surrender it and join trade unions.

Equal Rights Proponents have Misunderstanding as to Effects of Special Labour Laws for Women.

The proponents of equal-rights legislation object to the special labour laws on the basis that they cause discrimination against women. Experience and investigation do not substantiate this opinion. A report of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labour on a detailed investigation of the subject conducted several years ago shows that women are necessary to industry, and when the laws are properly and carefully written, women are not barred or dismissed from industrial work because of hour and wage legislation, except perhaps in very rare instances. Although women may be barred from some jobs because of night-work prohibition by law, the social and health benefits of such legislation seem to make it advisable.

The proponents of the equal-rights legislation fail to realise what great benefits women in industry have derived from special labour laws. Wage-earning women are generally less able than men to combat injustices and build up employment standards for themselves, because women are less extensively organised, are assigned more often to unskilled jobs, have in many cases the additional time-consuming burden of home and family duties to perform, and, in general, have a weaker economic status. Women have therefore greater need of legislation to safeguard their interests.

Equality of Rights is an Indefinite Term.

The proponents of equal rights do not realise the uncertainty involved in the term equality between men and women in the matter of labour legislation. This term is really meaningless, there is so much inequality among different groups of wage-earning men in the labour world that there are no definite standards for men on which to base the equality of women with men in the field of industry.

Equal Rights Proponents stress Legal Rights in preference to Human Rights.

Proponents of the equal-rights legislation make the mistake of stressing legal rights in preference to human rights. Experience in the United States has proved that special labour legislation has been a great benefit, not only to women as workers and as human beings but also to their families and to the communities. Legal standards for women workers mean, not only better standards and conditions of employment for women, but often for men also, who in many instances have profited indirectly by requirements to improve standards for women. The legal standards for women's employment make for better standards of living for women and their families.

Legal Equality prevents Industrial Equality.

Proponents of legal equality between men and women in clinging to an abstract principle and refusing to face facts fail to perceive the pitfall—that legal equality does not mean industrial equality. Legal equality of women with men does not achieve, but in reality prevents, industrial equality. Because women in industry have, in view of reasons given above, a weaker economic status than have men, who have gained certain definite standards through organisation, special labour laws establishing for women better employment standards serve to bridge the differences between them and men and to prevent exploitation of women.

Laws cannot prevent all Discrimination against Women.

The proponents of the equal rights fail to realise that all discrimination against women cannot be abolished by law. Neither treaty nor a status of women convention could guarantee to put women on an equal basis with men in the field of employment, since there are many discriminations due, not to law, but to prejudice. Though all legislation relating to labour and employment were the same for the two sexes, this would not prevent employers from employing men instead of women for various jobs. Nor could such legislation compel the public, when seeking professional service of various types, to engage women to the same degree as men.

WOMEN'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON NATIONALITY CREATED BY
THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. ¹

I. STATEMENT.

Believing that the pronouncements of the League of Nations and the enactment of world conventions may have far-reaching consequences for women—for greater freedom or greater subjection—various Women's International Organisations have been instrumental in bringing to the attention of the delegates to the League of Nations the Equal Nationality Treaty and the Equal Rights Treaty. These have been placed on the Agenda of the sixteenth Assembly.

The International Organisations of Women forming this Committee ask the Assembly to give its approval to the Equal Nationality Treaty that was signed at Montevideo in December 1933, by nineteen American Republics and has since been ratified and incorporated into the law in the United States, Chile, Mexico, and Honduras, and which in its principle clause reads as follows :

“ There shall be no distinction based on sex as regards nationality, in their legislation or in their practice,”

and to the Equal Rights Treaty, which was signed by representatives of the Governments of Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay, and in its principle clause reads as follows :

“ The contracting States agree that, upon ratification of this Treaty, men and women shall have equal rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions.”

They further ask that these Treaties be submitted to all the Members of the League that are not already signatories.

This Committee wishes to reaffirm the principles set forth in its Reports to the Assembly in September 1931, 1932, 1933 and 1934 in the matter of equality in nationality, and asks the Assembly to delete or amend those articles of the Hague Nationality Convention that are in conflict with the principle of equality embodied in the Montevideo Nationality Treaty, and to ensure that all future codification of international law undertaken under the auspices of the League shall be free from inequalities based on sex (*vide* our report of 1932).

It further wishes to state that it considers the question of nationality as only one phase of the whole issue of equality between men and women and that in its present report it will deal in its arguments, facts and conclusion with the larger problem involved in the Montevideo Equal Rights Treaty.

¹ *Note by the Secretariat.* — The title assumed by this Committee does not indicate that it is a technical advisory committee of the League. It consists of representatives of five of the eight organisations which, in 1931, accepted the League's invitation to set up a committee which was to consist of their representatives and was to formulate on their behalf joint proposals regarding the nationality of women for communication to the Assembly (see introductory note to the communication from the Committee reproduced in the Minutes of the First Committee of the Assembly for the year 1933, page 45). In the Assembly Minutes, the original Committee is described as the “ Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations ”.

II. ARGUMENTS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS.

The world-wide acceptance of the principle of equality embodied in the Equal Rights Treaty is demanded by eleven of the largest and most important International Women's Organisations comprising a membership of over fifty million women.

The world needs the wisdom of women in all departments of life quite as much as it needs that of men. Men and women must go forward together as human beings, as entities, above sex distinctions. Only through the co-operation of men and women as citizens and workers and their united action can world betterment be achieved.

In the past, the liberation of men from serfdom and slavery brought about great advance in civilisation. We declare that the liberation of women from their inferior position, which in some cases even amounts to slavery, will bring about equal advancement for the world.

We appreciate that, in different countries of the world, civilisation is at different stages of development, and we know the League of Nations as a body cannot legislate nationally, it can only lay down fundamental principles through its world conventions and the conventions of its organ, the International Labour Office. But these conventions of the League of Nations become guiding principles for the Member States of the League. Therefore, the need for the League to take a stand for equality is very great, at the present time, when women in many countries are being deprived of their essential human rights.

We endorse the passionate appeal of the Inter-American Commission of Women made in their report to the seventh international Conference of American States at Montevideo, December 1933, where the Equal Rights Treaty was signed by four countries :

“ The Inter-American Commission of Women bases its recommendations of a Treaty guaranteeing to women absolute legal equality with men upon the single principle of liberty. By liberty is understood the opportunity for all individuals to achieve the greatest development of their faculties. We believe that this should be the sacred objective of all politics . . . In the fundamental law of the American nations, it is recognised that, among males, no man possesses the right to rule over other men except by their explicit consent.”

In National Legislation there has been a gradual tendency within the last fifty years all over the world to regard a woman as a citizen, a person capable of independent control of her own life and property, a responsible parent. There have been new laws granting women suffrage, equal educational opportunities, and there have been Sex Disqualification Removal Acts—laws giving married women equal property, guardianship and nationality rights.

There are prominent women in the professions, women bankers, women lawyers, women scientists and women artists. There are a number of women in the National Legislature of various countries, and some have become members of the Government and ambassadors. There are women governors and mayors and women magistrates and judges. The United States to-day has a woman Cabinet Member, a woman Ambassador, a woman Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and a woman Director of the Mint.

Yet in spite of this progress throughout the world, there is a rising tide everywhere of unjust discrimination against women ; discriminations in every department of life, the tendency to exclude them from public office, from the higher civil service posts, from opportunities for higher education enjoyed by men, from the labour markets by replacing women by men, in fact, a universal attempt to force women back into the home.

Henri Fuss, Chief of the Unemployment Section of the International Labour Office, points out that in statistics gathered in thirty-four countries in November 1934, in the autumn of the year about 4,000,000 women were out of employment. He says in an article in the *International Labour Review*, April 1935, Vol. XXXI, No. 4 :

“ In consequence of the economic depression, there has been a growing demand during the last few years for restrictions on the employment of women ; and although sometimes moral and practical reasons based on women's duty in the home are alleged, *the principle aim is to make room for men in vacancies produced by the exclusion of women.* Measures of this kind have in fact been taken recently in certain countries, applying, in the first place, to married women and women in public service.

“ In *Germany*, an Act of June 30th, 1933, provided for the dismissal of married women civil servants whose material support was permanently secured by the income of their family. It also stipulated that no woman could be permanently appointed to a Government service before the age of 35.

“ In *Austria*, a Decree of December 15th, 1933, provided for the dismissal of every married woman engaged as a public official or wage-earning or salaried employee in the service of the State if and when her husband, provided he also was in the service of the State, attained a salary exceeding

a fixed amount. The Decree allowed one exception, however—namely, that any woman with more than three children might keep her post. *This would be curious if the principal object was to enable mothers of families to fulfil their home duties*, but can easily be explained by the need for earning money in large families.

“The restrictions on the employment of married women soon spread from public services to other branches of activity. The first measures adopted in this respect were directed against what are sometimes called multiple earnings—that is to say, the simultaneous employment of several persons belonging to the same household . . .

“The measures for the exclusion of women which aims at giving men preferential rights to employment have not been limited to married women, and, in certain countries, apply to all women whatever their conjugal condition . . .

“In *Italy*, a legislative Decree of November 28th, 1933, authorised Government departments to limit the number of women allowed to compete for posts or to exclude them altogether from competing. These measures were soon extended from public departments to private industry . . .

“A similar tendency is shown in the *Yugoslav* Order of March 31st, 1934, which limited the number of posts reserved for women in the postal, telegraph and telephone services. The maximum proportion of women in posts requiring a university degree was fixed at 30%, in that of posts requiring a certificate of complete secondary studies 25% and in lower posts for which four years of secondary study is required 10%.

“In the *Netherlands*, a circular of the Minister of the Interior, dated March 19th, 1934, recommended the local authorities, not only to observe strictly the provisions concerning dismissal on marriage, but also as far as possible to replace women by men in posts not specifically requiring female labour.

“In *Luxemburg*, a Grand Ducal Order of April 14th, 1934, . . . provided that a special permit must be obtained from the Director-General of Labour and Social Welfare for the engagement of female office staff, not only in public administrative departments, but also in private undertakings.

“Finally in *Belgium*, Father Rutten, Senator, introduced a Bill on February 13th, 1934, to limit the employment of married women in factories, workshops, workyards and offices. On April 12th, 1934, a circular of the Prime Minister stated that the Government had decided until further notice to reserve for men all available posts in public administrative departments, including shorthand-typists' posts. On top of these there came . . . the Royal Order of December 8th, 1934, which authorises the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare ‘to fix a percentage for the number of married and unmarried women in each branch of industry, with a view to the possible replacement of the surplus by involuntarily unemployed men.’”

M. Henri Fuss gives many other facts which are too lengthy to quote here. But his conclusions are interesting. He says, in part :

“From the economic standpoint, women workers are still indispensable in the overwhelming majority of industries, not only because without them these industries would suffer from a shortage of labour . . . but also because the wages of every woman worker represent purchasing power . . . Contrary to a rather widespread belief, persons who work for remuneration do not deprive some one else of employment, because their own earnings give them the power to purchase goods or services that give employment to other persons. Finally, it may be recalled that many women, single, widowed or divorced, alone or with dependents, are obliged to earn their livelihood . . . According to a detailed enquiry in the Union of South Africa, out of 343 employed women who replied to a questionnaire, 34% belonged to families without a male breadwinner, 6% were the principal breadwinner of the family, 40% helped to support the family and, in addition, over 11% who lived alone nevertheless helped to support certain relatives . . . Even as things are at present it would be a step in the wrong direction to regard openings for employment as a matter of rivalry between men and women. There are already sufficient elements of discord in human society without adding to them in this way.”

Thus, while the International Labour Office has stood for protection of women in certain industries, it does not endorse the policy of restricting women's work or replacing women by men.

Miss Grace Abbott, the Government representative from the United States of America at the recent International Labour Conference, June 1935, says :

“Women work for the same reasons as men . . . They must work to live . . . A very small minority of women who are engaged in gainful employment might live comfortably without working. So could a small minority of men. We do not criticise the young man of independent means who applies himself seriously and effectively to business or the professions . . . The members of this Conference also know, I think, that gainful employment of women is no new development. In the days when subsistence farming was universal, men and women both worked on the home farm . . . Men and women have from necessity and not from choice followed their work from the home to the factory. Forces over which they have no control have compelled them to, and the world has profited . . . If, in our industrial society the opportunity of work is denied them, all that is offered to women, married or unmarried, or at least to many of them, is the alternative of destitution or the pursuit of that ancient but outlawed profession for women.” (Provisional Record of the International Labour Office, June 15th, 1935.)

Answering Miss Abbott's speech, the Director of the International Labour Office, Mr. Butler, said :

“I entirely agree with Miss Abbott that women's work is not only an individual necessity in most cases but that it also has the same economic value as the work of men.” (Provisional Record of the International Labour Office, June 17th, 1935.)

Legal Endorsement of the Treaties.

Both Equality Treaties were endorsed by the Governing Board of the American Institute of International Law at its meeting at Havana, Cuba, October 31st, 1929. They were endorsed a second time by the Governing Board of the American Institute of International Law in Washington, October 31st, 1931. On the latter occasion, the Institute also recommended the adoption of the two Treaties by the seventh Conference of American Republics, to be held at Montevideo in November 1933.

Support by Women's Organisations.

The principle embodied in the Equal Rights Treaty has been endorsed by :

International Women's Organisations :

- (1) The Inter-American Commission of Women (Montevideo meeting, December 1933) ;
- (2) The International Soroptimists Clubs (Paris Congress, July 1934) ;
- (3) Women's Consultative Committee on Nationality created by the Council of the League of Nations (Geneva meeting, July 1934) ;
- (4) World Committee of Women against War and Fascism (Paris Congress, August 1934) ;
- (5) Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Zurich Congress, September 1934) ;
- (6) Equal Rights International (General Meeting, Geneva, September 1934) ;
- (7) All-Asian Conference of Women (Executive Committee Meeting, Karachi, January 2nd, 1935) ;
- (8) International Council of Women at its Board of Officers meeting in Paris, February 1935, and at its Executive Meeting in Brussels, June 1935 ;
- (9) The International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, Istanbul Congress, April 1935 ;
- (10) The International Federation of University Women at a board meeting in London, April 1935 ;
- (11) The International Federation of Women Lawyers at a meeting in London, May 15th, 1935.

National Bodies of Women :

Australia : United Associations, Sydney, New South Wales ;

Austria : Oesterreichische Frauenschaft (in twelve districts in Vienna ; National Council of Austria ; Wiener Call Club ; Zonta Club) ;

Canada : Vancouver, British Columbia Branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ;

Czechoslovakia : Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (three groups, Czechs, Germans and Jews) ;

Egypt : Federation of University Women (Cairo Branch) ;

England : Suffragette Fellowship ; Women's Guild of Empire ; Six-Point Group, United Kingdom ;

Finland : National Council of Women (twenty-two groups) ; Finnish Branch Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ;

Hungary : Feministah Egyesulete ;

Ireland : Irish Women Workers' Union ; Federation of University Women ;

Latvia : Federation of University Women ;

Lithuania : Federation of University Women ; National Council of Women ;

Netherlands : International Suffrage Alliance (Dutch Branch) ; National Union for Women's Work ; Women's League of the Liberal Party ;

Norway : National Council of Women ;

Scotland : Glasgow and West Scotland Branch, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ;

Sweden : Federation of University Women ; Fredrika-Bremer-Union ; Women's Christian Temperance Union, Stockholm ; Swedish Branch, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ;

United States : California Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs ; Business Women's Legislative Council of California ; Illinois Council of Professional and Business Women ; Affiliated Teachers Organisation of Los Angeles ; Board of Directors of California Teachers' Association, representing 35,000 teachers ; Pasadena Branch, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ; Chicago Branch, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ; Business and Professional Women's Club, Wilmington, Delaware ; the National Women's Party (the Delaware County Branch, Pennsylvania ; the Baltimore County Branch ; the Maryland State Branch ; Massachusetts Branch ; the New York City Branch ; Syracuse Branch ; Pennsylvania State Branch, Dayton Ohio Chapter) ; Soroptimists Club of New York City ; Brooklyn Manhattan Transit Women's League ; Women's Legislative Council of Washington ; National Association of College Women, Washington.

National endorsements of the Treaty continue to come in daily.

In view of the foregoing facts, and the many discriminations against women shown in the reports which follow from different countries, which are evidence of the crying need of women

everywhere to be upheld in their campaign for social, political and economic justice, we ask the Assembly of the League of Nations to give its approval to the Montevideo Equal Rights Treaty and submit it to all Members of the League not already signatories.

III. THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES. ¹

The Women's Consultative Committee has had reports from groups and organisations of women throughout the world showing discriminations against women in every field of life—political, economic and social. Space is too limited to give these reports in full ; therefore a brief digest of some of the reports has been made. Needless to say, this does not give a complete picture in any country and may not contain the latest enactments ; but it is sufficient to show the many discriminations against women and the need for the adoption of the principle of equality as between men and women.

Nor have we attempted to deal with the shameful *double moral standard* and the consequent inequality, unfairness and indignity to which women are subjected. This would need a separate report. We declare, however, that laws concerning prostitution should be applied to men as well as to women. There will never be a new and better world until there is one moral standard, without distinction of sex. One of the main reasons for demanding an Equal Rights Treaty is that it would put an end to the double moral standard, and combat the White Slave Traffic.

A. EUROPE.

Suffrage. — There are eighteen countries where women can vote on equal terms with men : Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Danzig, England, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In five countries, women have limited suffrage : Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Roumania. In four countries, women cannot vote on any terms : Bulgaria, France, Monaco, Switzerland. In two countries where women had the right to vote, suffrage has practically been suppressed—*i.e.*, Austria and Germany. In Italy, women had a limited suffrage, but here the right is no longer made use of.

France.

A digest of a report by Maria Vérone, representative of the International Council of Women says :

Nationality. — Unless she expressly declares otherwise, a Frenchwoman who marries a foreigner keeps her nationality on condition that the first home of the married couple is in France.

Married Women. — In marrying, the woman loses her civil rights. She can neither make contracts nor plead in court, nor be a guardian without the authorisation of her husband. She cannot enter into commerce or a profession without his consent. In the matter of property, the husband has the right to administer it whether held in common or separately ; even in the case of a separation or divorce, the wife cannot sell or mortgage real estate which belongs to her without marital authorisation. The parental rights belong only to the father.

Salaries of Married Women. — According to the law of 1907, the married woman who enters a profession which is distinct from that in which her husband is engaged has the right to her own earnings. She can with the money she has saved from her work buy furniture or real estate and she can sell or mortgage these without the consent of her husband. Also, this law gives her the advantage under the given circumstances of pleading in court, if necessary, without the consent of her husband.

Industry. — There are numerous restrictive laws regulating women's work ; as for instance, in the matter of night-work, except that in certain inferior work, badly paid, and which men do not wish to undertake, these restrictions are not imposed. Women can elect and be elected to professional bodies, such as an industrial board of arbitration, workers' councils and tribunals or chambers of commerce.

Professions. — Women can enter all the professions. They can be doctors, lawyers, architects, engineers and public officials. The mixed civil service competitions permitted women sometimes to be placed ahead of men. These mixed competitions have been replaced by separate competitions for each sex, and the possibility of advancement has been limited or suppressed for women.

Teachers. — Women may be teachers in all the school grades and may be members of the faculty of a university.

Germany.

The following facts are taken from many sources which are given in the appendix :

When the German Republic was established in 1919, the Constitution provided equal rights for men and women, but the period of economic depression and the Hitler regime have practically deprived women of all these rights. Hitler, addressing 35,000 women in the fall of 1934 said, according to an article in the *New York Times*, September 9th, 1934 :

“ The idea of political and economic equality for women is a product of decadent Jewish intellectualism and unworthy of the German women. There can be no antagonism between the sexes if each remembers the mission and function that God gave them. We have but one message for women, that is the child. The two worlds must not mix. Man's world is the nation. The woman's field is husband and child.”

¹ Information from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Japan and Latvia was received too late for inclusion in this statement.

Yet there are 2 million more women in Germany than men. These women must support themselves. In an article in the American magazine *Equal Rights*, of October 6th, 1934, by Miriam Beard, the noted writer and author of "America through Women's Eyes" says :

" Under the Nazi regime, Aryan women suffer as well as Jewish women, peasants suffer as well as emancipated career carvers ; all girls endure discrimination, all mothers must face the loss of their children, who at almost every waking hour are snatched from them by Brown drill-masters who prepare them for war . . . Listen to Minister Goebbels : ' We Nazis have put women out of public life, nature fits women for life behind house walls and not in the open ' .

" But even in those cramped quarters she is to be denied her children ; Goebbels tells her to give them cheerfully to the Nazis who would know better than she does how to steel them to ' heroic sacrifices ' on the battlefields . . . In other words, Hitler has undone in a single year the achievements of a decade of Republican Germany. He has rendered valueless the vote which Social Democracy gave women in 1919. He has made useless the legislatures to which women were just admitted. He has been squeezing women out of the thousands of government posts they had just won and he has abolished the Constitution's provision for protecting women office-holders. He is pushing them from the professions, law, medicine, teaching, social service, to which they had just won entry and from the German universities whose barriers they had just climbed. Their influence is wiped from public life where it had scarcely begun to spread."

It is stated that, in one year, unemployment was reduced from 5 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ millions. What is not stated is that in that year the number of women employed decreased from 11.5 to 6 million. The State Secretary of the Board of Finance, Reinhardt, declared in May 1934 that the figure of 6 millions of employed women must be lowered as speedily as possible to 3 million. In March 1934, there were 575,074 women on the unemployment list according to the Central Office of Labour Exchanges, yet the Board of Finance insists : " Cases of an employer taking on women in positions which might be filled by males will no longer be permitted " . In an attempt to induce women to leave employment, a marriage loan was instituted whereby on marriage a thousand or more marks were to be given to the newly married couple on condition that the woman gave up her work. But as the loan was only a loan and had to be paid back little by little, it has not proved an unmitigated blessing. In Easter 1934, 600,000 girls left elementary schools. The household year was established for their benefit whereby they were to work in homes for a year without pay. This has resulted in the complete undermining of domestic service as a wage earning occupation. The German Labour Front in June 1934 admitted that more than 25% of these girls get no holiday. In January 1934, there were as many as 242 labour camps for women. In the textile industry, replacement of the women workers by men is taking place on a big scale. The Federation of German Hosiery Manufacturers decided that by June 30th, 1934, all women engaged on hosiery were to be replaced by men. In the numerous work schemes drawn up by the assimilated unions and the authorities, only one exception to the universal dismissal of women is permitted—namely, where the requirements of industry make woman's labour indispensable.

It is this fact, that women are essential in certain industries, that has prevented a greater dismissal. It is interesting to note that in the first year of the Hitler regime in the munition factory of Wistengers more than 1,400 employees were engaged, nearly all of them women or young girls. In the chemical industry at Mainz on the Rhine at that time 1,300 employees were taken on and they were nearly all women. In Germany, as elsewhere, women are not so largely driven out of inferior jobs as out of the better paid places and positions. Women in the medium and higher official positions are liable to arbitrary dismissal. The authorities are to be guided by the principle that in the National-Socialist State women officials and employees are to be eliminated as far as possible from the public service or are to be moved to lower-paid grades. This follows on a law of May 1933 which expressly declared that women officials could be paid at a lower rate than men. They cannot hold any municipal posts except under less favourable conditions than men.

United Kingdom.

A digest of a report edited by Miss Dorothy Evans, representative of the Equal Rights International, reads as follows :

Since 1928, women have exercised the same political rights as men, except that peeresses may not sit in the House of Lords.

The professions are all open to women except the Army, Navy and Air Force, and women may not be ministers in some of the churches. They may not be members of the Stock Exchanges. But all judiciary positions are open to them and they are required to serve on juries.

State Services. — Women are required to resign on marriage. The diplomatic and certain technical posts are reserved for men. The higher civil positions, though nominally open to both sexes, tend to be filled by men.

Industrial women workers find the opportunities of earning a living curtailed by a number of laws which apply only to women and which shut them out from any trade using the three-hour shift system, from all night-work, from work under ground, from industries in the white-lead processes, from weight lifting, etc. By trade union agreements, women are excluded altogether from certain trades and processes, for instance, in the printing, clothing, tailoring, textile and building trades, where competition with men is feared.

There is a strong and growing prejudice against the increase of women in lucrative employment. It has been publicly claimed that to turn out the women workers would solve the unemployment problem. In July 1934, there were 3,524,800 insured women workers. If this great army of self-supporting women were turned out there would indeed be a critical unemployment problem and many more persons who are now assisted by the employed women would be thrown on to public assistance. As it is, the unemployment insurance funds are fed by women workers, the premium required being proportionately higher for the restricted benefits which they are entitled to draw than the premium the men pay for their greater benefits.

Inequality of pay is general, except in the medical profession. In the two professions which absorb the largest number of women, education and the civil service, the salary of the woman averages four-fifths that of a man in the same grade. This affects their pensions which are based on salary.

In agriculture, women's wages are often as low as half those of men, and even in certain industries where trades boards and joint industrial councils have been set up to protect the sweated workers, these boards have stabilised this gross differentiation of pay. The result is that underpaid workers tend to oust men and the whole standard of living in an industry is lowered.

*There are over 15,000,000 women in England to-day doing a hard day's work in the home. Yet these housewives are not regarded as workers but appear in the census and the law as "dependants" of some male worker. They are in truth his employees but have no rights as such, as other workers have, no regulation of hours, no provisions as to holidays, no guarantee of remuneration. There is no national insurance for the health of housewives beyond maternity benefit.*¹

Married Women. — Many discriminations in the law touch the married woman, putting her in an invidious position in the matter of her liability to income tax, legal domicile, her property rights and her power to make a contract.

If a British woman marries an alien and thereby gains his nationality, she loses her own. She is thus bereft of her citizenship rights in her own country and its protection abroad. A married woman is ineligible for naturalisation.

Hungary.

A digest of the report of Frau Meller, representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, says :

The right to vote for women is restricted. There are educational and other qualifications and she cannot vote before the age of 30. A woman cannot become a judge or member of a jury. She is shut out from the law faculty of the universities and academies. She cannot enter the legal profession and this prevents her from occupying the higher posts in the civil service.

A married woman automatically has her husband's citizenship and domicile. In the family life, the husband is the head of the family and his word is "decisive". The legal effect of this is that the father can independently and according to his own discretion take measures in regard to the child's person or property—namely, concerning the child's education and training and way of life. According to the Guardianship Law, the father by a will or document can exclude the mother from the right of guardianship without giving motives. A woman, except in her quality of mother or mother by adoption, cannot be a guardian. If as a mother she is a guardian, she can handle the child's property without liability only during her widowhood and until she remarries. There is, of course, no such restriction for the father. The mother, if she is the natural and legal guardian, has no right to appoint a guardian in case of her death. She cannot exclude any one who is lawfully a legal guardian.

The wife's occupation and her liberty of choice is determined by the "decisive" word of the husband. According to the Domestic Labour Law, if the husband objects, the wife cannot go into service. If the wife goes into service in spite of her husband's objection and he claims her back the contract is broken. In all occupations, even the professions, the wife is restricted in her choice by the "decisive" word of the husband. There is no legal discrimination between men and women as to the salary of civil employees except that the "rent" of a married woman is half that of a man or unmarried woman. But the advancement of women in the civil service is barred by the exclusion of women from the legal profession.

Irish Free State.

In a digest of a report drawn up by a Conference of Women's Organisations, which was convened by the Irish Women Workers' Union, Louie Bennet, Secretary, says :

The Constitution provides that "every person, without distinction of sex . . . is a citizen of the Irish Free State and shall enjoy the privileges and be subject to the obligations of such citizenship". In spite of the Constitution, discrimination on a purely sex basis does exist.

Nationality. — There is equality in nationality, except that the father only transmits nationality. Widows obtain concessions not applicable to men.

Jury service is not compulsory for women, only voluntary, with the result that women litigants and culprits find themselves almost always before an entire male jury.

Criminal Law. — The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1935 is based on a double standard of morality.

Employment, Civil Service. — Women must retire on marriage. Widows are not allowed to re-enter the service. Married men with dependants receive additional allowances. There is no such provision for women with dependants. The lowest rates of pay are in the grades confined to women. Equal opportunity for promotion is not given. There is sex differentiation in wages in several departments.

Teachers. — The salaries of women teachers in primary schools are less for women than for men. The lowest wage for women is £128 and for a man £140. The maximum salary for a woman is £295 and for a man £377 per annum. All women teachers are compelled to retire on marriage.

¹ This might be said of housewives in practically all countries.



Industry. — Recent legislation gives women an inferior economic status to that of men. In the Unemployment Assistance Bill of 1933, widows and spinsters were completely omitted from benefits. After an agitation, unemployed women were included but not on a basis of equality with men. Discrimination is also shown in the rates of assistance.

Section 12 of the Employment Bill now before the Dail gives the Minister for Industry power to make at his discretion regulations prohibiting the employment of female workers in any form of industrial work or fixing the number of females who may work in a given industry. This legislation is fraught with danger, not only for women workers but also for men.

Lithuania.

The report from the National Council of Women, the Catholic Women's Organisations and the University Women says :

The State Constitution provides for equal rights for both sexes in all spheres of legislation with one exception which concerns nationality. A woman who marries a foreigner loses her nationality.

But the equality principle is not strictly observed and particularly in the matter of paid work. In May 1933, a decree was passed against " multiple earnings ". This decision resulted in the married woman being obliged to give up her work. This Act was due to two causes—the economic crisis and to secure for men some of the positions filled by women. Generally, it is very difficult for an intellectual woman to secure work. Women are not usually appointed to the higher and more responsible and better paid employments.

It is to be noted that the present position of women in Lithuania is not intolerable . . . but we are frightened by the attempts to restrict women's right to work and yet more that public opinion, supplied by the example of other countries, will support the idea that women should return to the kitchen and the nursery and so make it more difficult to fight against this opinion.

Netherlands.

In a brief report from the Netherlands, the following facts are given :

Since 1922, when the *Constitution* was revised, a woman has the same constitutional rights as man. She may vote for the representative bodies. She has also, on the whole, the same civic rights as long as she is not married, the one exception being that she is still excluded from certain professions. She may not be appointed as a notary or judge, nor can she officiate as an arbiter.

For a *married woman* the situation is totally different. She then comes under the authority of the husband. She is barred from civic rights, just as children and lunatics. Her private property and income come under her husband's management and are at his disposal, unless before marriage she has stipulated that she shall retain the right to manage her own property. The father has complete parental rights over the minor children. Although the Matrimonial Law has remained unchanged since 1838, all attempts thus far to improve it have failed.

The *economic position* of women was satisfactory up to the economic crisis. She was free to choose the position for which she was qualified. Now this is changed, not only for married women, who are discharged from all government posts on the day of their marriage, but also for the women who are not married. The woman has hardly any chance of appointment to public posts, however qualified she may be. Both married and unmarried women are being replaced by men. This is not only true of women in government posts and as teachers, but also for workers in private employment. Although the struggle to earn a living in the Netherlands is difficult for a man, it is infinitely worse for a woman.

Scandinavian Countries.

Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland have been noted for some years for their progressive legislation in regard to women. Perhaps in these countries more than anywhere else, there more nearly exists equality between the sexes. We give reports from two of these countries as illustrating the large measure of equality which women enjoy.

Denmark.

In response to a questionnaire sent out by the International Council of Women, the National Council sent answers. A digest of these answers is given below :

Political Rights. — They are equal for men and women. Women have the same legislative rights and may be elected to both houses of Parliament. They may be Government Ministers, may hold office as mayor or judge and serve as a juror.

Property Rights are the same for men and women. A woman may inherit, make contracts and bring actions before the court.

Nationality. — A Danish woman loses her nationality by marrying a foreigner, if, by the marriage, she acquires a foreign nationality and leaves the country. The father transmits his nationality to legitimate children.

Economic Status. — A woman has the same rights as a man to Government posts, with the exception of Military and Ecclesiastical positions. She receives the same pay and has the same chance for promotion. In the professions and business, the status is the same for women as for men. The position of women in banks is lower than that of men, even if in principle there is equality. Some institutions dismiss their women employees on marriage. In industry, the position is the same for both, except that women's wages are generally lower than those of men.

Agriculture. — About one-fifth of the persons employed in agriculture are women. Women are proprietors of farms of all types and sizes and run them well.

In closing their report, the Danish section said : " Denmark no doubt belongs to the countries where equality between men and women exists to a great extent ; and we should like to stress the fact that we

have not many special regulations for women. In our opinion there is a connection between these two facts. However, traditional and sex prejudice still exist; the higher administrative posts are occupied by men, and we sometimes see that the formal equality is not put into practice, especially in the case of married women."

Finland.

A digest of a report sent by Mme Tilma Hainari, President of the National Council of Women in Finland, says :

There is *women's suffrage* on the same basis as for men. On general principles, women are qualified, according to a law enacted in April 1924, to hold public office in Finland the same as men. They may be appointed to every public office and function. They may be appointed judges and may enter the diplomatic or consular service. However, certain restrictions were made by a Government Ordinance of November 1927 at present in force. By that ordinance, certain posts, because of their special character, were reserved only for men—all posts in the Ministry of Defence, except minor office jobs. Other posts, for instance, only to be held by men are that of a prosecutor in court martial proceedings, director in prisons for men, county governor, chief of police, manager of the Customs House, inspector of education in boys' schools, locomotive-engine driver, chief factory inspector, naval officials, etc. On the other hand, certain posts are reserved only for women—chief warder in the women's prison, inspector of education in the girls' schools, inspector of domestic economy, etc. The above Law does not distinguish between married and unmarried women.

Although the law legally grants wide possibilities to women to hold Government offices, women have not thus far obtained the highest administrative offices or judiciary positions, because the law has only been in force a short time. In the field of *education*, women have long had equal standing with men both in official positions and in remuneration. In the Ecclesiastical law of 1869, still in force, no distinction as to sex is made, but up to the present, because of long-established custom, no woman has been ordained minister of a church.

The *Labour Legislation* in Finland has hitherto followed the principle that adult men and women needed equal protection against dangers which growing industrialism creates. All provisions concerning working-hours, periods of rest, extra work, night-work, etc., applied in the same way to every employee 18 years of age or over, independent of sex. Owing to Finland having ratified some *international Conventions*, a few special rules have been added for women. Women under 20 are not allowed to work as seamen on Atlantic traffic ships. All females are prohibited from any painting work of an industrial character involving the use of white lead. Women under 21 are not to be employed loading or unloading vessels, and there are certain regulations in regard to women about to become mothers.

As regards the *status of married women*, the Marriage Law of 1930 is based on equality between husband and wife. It abolished the guardianship of the husband over the wife and granted her equal property rights. The married woman can make wills, draw up contracts in financial transactions, and both plead and prosecute in court. She has also equal rights with the father as the guardian of their children. It is to be noted, however, that the father determines the nationality of the legitimate child. A Finnish woman does not lose her citizenship by marrying a foreigner unless she has moved out of the country and become the citizen of another country.

Switzerland.

From the eleventh report, prepared by the Swiss Associations of University Women in 1935, a few facts are taken and given in brief :

Women engage in public work because of economic necessity. In 1888, for 100 men in professions or trades there were 33 women; in 1900, the proportion of women was 30; in 1914 to 1920, 34; and in 1934, it was 32. This indicates that women working in the professions or trades have not greatly increased and have not therefore replaced men workers.

Of the women working, 70% are single, or widows, or divorced. According to the census of 1929, women's work was divided up as follows: for every 100 women, 40 were engaged in agriculture, 30 in industry, 11 in hotels, 10 in commerce, 1 in transport and 3 in other professions. The statistics of 1930 show hardly 3.8% of the single women working in administrative posts or the liberal professions. Among married women, the rate was 2%. The case of both husband and wife holding an administrative position is very rare.

The economic crisis has had a twofold menace for women: she is not only a victim of unemployment, but her place is demanded by an unemployed man. This attack against women's work, however, is chiefly directed against the women who hold posts of some importance and not against women working on the farms or in industry.

In the teaching profession and the administrative posts, the economic crisis has been used to make a big attack against "multiple earnings" in the same family. This attack has been both Federal and by cantons.

In many cantons, a law has been proposed to prevent married women from teaching. In the Canton of Geneva, a law of May 1933 proposed that all women in administrative posts should give up their positions if they were married. By a law enacted December 1934 to secure reduction in expenses, men's salaries were to be cut 10%, while those of women were to be cut from 16 to 50%.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In a digest of a report by Mme. Duchêne, the representative of the "World Union of Women against War and Fascism", she says :

The Russian dictatorship of the proletariat declares complete social, economic and political equality between men and women. They have the same political rights, the same right to use and share the land, the same marriage rights, the same parental rights, the same rights in the matter of divorce (Soviet Code, Article 33).

Women in Industry. — In the case of employment in trades or industries, the conditions are the same for both and the same salary for the same work is given. Until recently, there were no laws especially for the protection of women in industry, but some have lately been enacted, while, at the same time, efforts are being made to increase the work available for women.

International Labour Office. — Mme. Thibert, in answer to a letter, says: "There is special protection for women in Russia . . . in difficult and dangerous trades . . . A Decree of May 9th, 1931, sets forth the conditions under which a woman may drive a tractor. This decree calls for medical examination . . . If a woman drives a tractor without springs, she is entitled to three days' rest a month. But if women's work is restricted for motives of health, hygiene or danger, there are, on the other hand, certain types of work and professions which are reserved especially for women. Two decrees: December 8th, 1930, and January 16th, 1931, listed such positions, most of them requiring high qualifications, and it was recommended that women be especially employed in these occupations."

B. ASIA.

According to the Constitutions of China, Ceylon, India, and Mongolia, women have voting rights, and, in Palestine and Siam, limited voting rights.

India.

A brief digest of the report by the All-Asian Women's Association, sent by Rani L. Rajwade, organising secretary, follows:

It is agreed by all that the progress of the Indian women during the last twenty years has been incredibly swift. All kinds of outworn conventions have been set aside and every kind of social reform and advancement for the country has had enormous impetus, though this advancement is still held to be far below that of the Buddhist and Vedic eras, when women seemed to have had complete equality with men and were held in the highest honour.

Education. — The customs of child marriage and consummation immediately after puberty and the Purdah system are the causes of a low standard of physique and health among Indian women, and a concerted effort is being made to rid the country of these evils. In some parts of India, Purdah is rapidly disappearing. The average literacy (in their own mother tongue) of the Indian people is only about 10%. The rate of literacy of the Indian women is only 3%. In Madras, there is only one educated girl to six educated boys. The Government is to be criticised for not providing sufficient money for girls' education. The higher education is open to boys and girls equally, but only a small percentage of girls continue their education to the end of the college course. Co-education is gaining ground. It is general in the universities. There are now women doctors, lawyers, teachers, scientists, accountants, journalists, poets, artists, musicians, philosophers, politicians and sannyasinis.

Economic Status. — There are nine million more men than women in India, therefore there is no surplus of unmarried women seeking employment. In the teaching profession, women are paid higher than men owing to the shortage of good women teachers. In other positions, women get paid less than men for the same work and are generally debarred from the better paid work. All trades are, however, open to women. In agriculture, which is the occupation of 80% of India's population, men and women work together as comrades. The 90,000 women who used to work underground in mines are being rapidly eliminated from that work, much against their wish, as no substitute source of employment has been provided.

Property Rights. — The Moslem laws are the best concerning the rights of inheritance and the possession of property by women. The laws relating to Hindu women are out of gear, caused by the introduction and the development of modern conditions into the individual and group life of India. Things must work themselves out. In Baroda and Mysore, great reforms in the legal position of women have recently been instituted. A similar revision in the legal position of Hindu women in the British provinces is being clamoured for all over India. The six million people of Malabar are an exception to the present state of affairs. Matriarchy has held its sway there for thousands of years, and under that system women hold all the property and it descends through the female line.

Political Status. — The present-day Government has accepted the principle that women should have the same rights as men of voting and of being elected to the various legislative and local government bodies. While this position is satisfactory in theory, in practice the Government has given the franchise to only about a million women as compared with ten million men. The chief reason for this disparity is the undue emphasis laid on qualifications based on property and education. The success with which Indian women have taken on the full responsibilities and duties of citizenship has been exceptional and quite surprising. There are women members of the legislative councils and there are also members of municipal councils and district boards. One woman was Deputy Speaker of the Madras Legislative Council for three years and one woman Minister for Health in Travancore State.

Mr. S. C. Bose, in an address in Vienna, March 3rd, 1935, says: "Indian women have an advantage over European women in as much as they do not have to fight for their rights as the suffragettes had to in Europe. What slender rights men have in India to-day are shared by women . . . By participating in the freedom movement in all its aspects, women have made their position unassailable and their demands (for equality) irresistible."

Hindu Women's Disabilities. — V. V. Joishi, High Court Pleader, of Baroda, says: "The Hindu law declares that women are incapable of enjoying certain rights which men possess. The son inherits the property of his father, but the daughter does not . . . Girls have absolutely no voice in the selection of their husband and they are completely at the mercy of their parents or guardians. She is treated as a chattel, a thing to be given away or disposed of . . . If the wife refuses to live with her husband, he can keep her even by force. She cannot dissolve the marriage . . . Man can marry as many wives as he likes during the life of the first wife. But a woman cannot marry a second husband and if she does so, she is

punished by the criminal law . . . The right to property and the right to inheritance are more or less denied to women. The wife may have her deceased husband's property taken from her by sons, brothers or cousins; she has only right to maintenance. She is not the full owner of property and can therefore only enjoy the income of property and must keep it intact for the heirs."

Palestine.

A report of Dr. Rosa Welt-Straus, delegate of the All-Asian Women's Conference to this Committee, reads as follows :

Personal Status : The personal status of a Palestinian woman varies with the religious community to which she belongs. In 1922, the ecclesiastical courts of the three religious faiths were granted jurisdiction and executive power in the matter of personal status, which, according to law, comprises inheritance, marriage, divorce, guardianship, testimony, wage-earning and property rights. Antiquated laws deprive women of even the most elementary liberty, according to the religious community to which she belongs. As some women under these laws were entirely deprived of the right to inherit and were thus often exposed to want and misery, the Government introduced new enactments which give Jewish and Christian women the right to appeal to the civil courts in matters of inheritance. A woman, since last year, is not forced to return to her husband against her will.

Suffrage. — General suffrage has not been introduced in Palestine. All Jewish women, however, since 1920 have the vote and the right to be elected to the Jewish National Assembly on equal terms with men.

Municipal Suffrage. — Only the women of Tel Aviv, the all-Jewish and largest city in Palestine, have been granted this right on equal terms with men. In all other cities, only men have the municipal vote.

Nationality. — There is gross discrimination against women in the matter of nationality. In the regulations under the Palestine Citizenship Order, *Official Gazette*, September 16th, 1934 : "Disability means the status of being a married woman or a minor, lunatic or idiot or otherwise legally incompetent". Wife and minor children take automatically the husband's and father's citizenship and lose it automatically if his is revoked. In a later enactment, exception is made in case the wife is a Palestinian by birth.

Education. — Literacy is making rapid progress. It is still very low among the Moslem Arab women, much higher in the Christian Arab population. There the Government law schools are open to men and women of the entire population on equal terms for both sexes.

Professions. — Men and women are admitted to practise on the same terms as physicians, dentists, lawyers, architects, chemists, etc. Women teachers work on equal terms with men teachers.

Industry. — The Government introduced a number of regulations restricting women. (Industrial Employment of Women and Children Ordinance, *Official Gazette*, November 29th, 1927.) There is no minimum wage ordinance. Generally, women are paid less than men for the same work. The Jewish Labour Union with 80,000 men and women members stands for complete equality for men and women.

Agriculture. — The small farms are worked by families, the women usually doing a great part of the work. In the Jewish colonies, men and women work on equal terms. The Jewish National Fund has recently introduced a change in its contracts. Instead of the husband only, now both husband and wife are leaseholders. Women also may apply for a leasehold on the same terms as men. Thus it appears that some measure of equality has within the last years been introduced in Palestine.

C. SOUTH AFRICA.

Suffrage. — There is women's suffrage in South Africa for the white race. In Rhodesia and Kenya, men and women have equal voting rights irrespective of race.

A brief report from the Association of University Women says :

Discriminations :

- (1) All civil service posts are not open to women ;
- (2) Women teachers are paid on a lower scale than men and must resign on marriage ;
- (3) In some universities, women are paid lower salaries than men for the same work ;
- (4) Women are prevented from obtaining employment underground in mines.

D. SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA.

Suffrage. — In four countries, women vote on the same terms as men : Jamaica, Porto Rico, Ecuador and Uruguay. In two countries, the vote is limited : Brazil and Peru ; and in fifteen countries, they have no vote : Argentine, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Venezuela.

We give in brief some facts taken from a report of the Inter-American Commission of Women, prepared for the seventh international Conference of States at Montevideo, December 1933 (Doris Stevens, Chairman) :

The Right to hold Public Office. — Women cannot hold public office on the same terms as men in sixteen countries, but can do so in three countries—namely, Brazil, Ecuador and Uruguay.

Right to enter Professions. — Women may not do so in twelve countries; the law is silent on the matter in five countries, and women may enter the professions on the same terms as men in two countries—Colombia and Cuba.

Right to engage in Business. — A married woman cannot engage in business without the consent of her husband or the court in twelve countries; the law is silent about the matter in three countries, and in four countries—Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador and Nicaragua—she may do so without the consent of her husband or the court.

Conjugal Domicile. — A wife has no voice in determining the conjugal domicile in any of the nineteen countries while she and her husband live together.

Married Woman's Property. — A wife may not administer her own separate property on the same terms as her husband in thirteen countries; she may do so in five countries—Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. In one country, the information is inconclusive.

Parental Rights. — The mother has not joint authority with the father over their common legitimate children in any of the nineteen countries. In the case of illegitimate children, the mother has greater responsibility in fourteen countries and there is equal responsibility in five countries—Argentina, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras and Paraguay.

It will be seen from the above that the women suffer the greatest injustice with regard to their *legitimate children*. The Inter-American Commission report says :

“ In nineteen countries of the Americas, we find it set forth in the law that mothers do not have the joint right equally with fathers to determine the future of their common offspring. Nature's law says woman is fit to bear children; man's law says she is not fit to direct them.”

E. NORTH AMERICA.

Suffrage. — Women can vote on the same terms as men in Canada, Newfoundland and the United States.

United States of America.

The following statement as to conditions in the United States is taken from many sources, which are given in the annex :

According to the Law in many states, the right to vote, the right to hold public office, the right to enter the professions, the right to engage in business, the right to witness public documents—all these are the same for women as for men; there is no sex distinction.

Right to serve on Juries. — Women may not serve on juries in twenty-seven States, and they may do so in twenty-one States and the District of Columbia.

Married Women. — In most states the wife may administer her own separate property on the same terms as her husband administers his. She has with him joint control over their common legitimate children and has greater responsibility than the father over her illegitimate children. But the wife has legally no voice in any state in determining the conjugal domicile. The Federal law gives the woman complete equality in nationality with man. She may keep her nationality after marriage to an alien, and may on equal terms with the husband transmit her nationality to her children.

Economic Rights. — More than ten million women were listed as wage-earners in 1930. Of these, about a million and a half, practically as many women as men, were engaged in the professions. The rest were working as servants, as factory hands, in agriculture and as clerks and stenographers. Yet, in spite of this great advance of American women, there is to-day in the United States, as everywhere, an attempt to force women out of public positions and back into the home. In the matter of discrimination against married women, in an investigation of 6,117 cases, about a fifth reported discriminations. And of these, only a quarter had no dependants; almost a third had the entire responsibility for others of their families; well over half shared the responsibility with others.

Congress in 1932 succumbed to the depression crisis, and the House slipped a Marital Status Clause into the Economy Act. This Clause 213 provided that in any reduction of personnel in any branch of the service, if married persons were living together, that one or the other be dismissed from Government service. The obvious intent of this clause, though written in terms of sex equality, was the ousting of married women. Immediately 45 women, all of them highly efficient workers, whose term of service averaged fifteen years and all of them with dependants, were dismissed from the service, losing, not only their income, but also the right to reappointment and to a civil pension. Privation and financial loss followed upon these dismissals. Payment on homes which were being bought by instalments could not be kept up. Many dependants were thrown on public or private charity, and there have been serious social results. At first couples, terrified by impending financial disaster, separated in order to keep their jobs. When the Civil Service Commission ruled that this would not prevent dismissals, they resorted to divorce. Engagements were broken up. Young couples in the civil service are living together without any legal marriage.

The Government, by the Economy Act Clause 213, has set a pattern which is being followed by private employers, and by State, county and local governments, as a justification for dismissing married women. Dismissals are spreading from married women to women in general. The check girls and cigarette saleswomen protested to the New York State Department of Labour, because under a new law they were forbidden to work after 10 p.m.

In any statement about equal rights for women in the United States it must be pointed out that, while the laws of most states as stated above put women in a very good position, the laws in some States are often very far behind the times. There are more than a thousand laws in the United States discriminating

against women. These laws cover more than sixty points of inequality. These discriminations touch women in every sphere of life and activity. There are, for instance, still States where the father may will away the child from the mother, where the child's earnings belong to the father alone, where the wife's earnings belong to the husband, where women teachers in school have not the same pay as men. In order that women may not be subject to the idiosyncrasies of the various States' legislatures, a *Federal Equal Rights Amendment* was introduced into the United States Congress in January 1935, and reads as follows: "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and in every place subject to its jurisdiction. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation." This amendment is now before Congress.

There has been discussion as to whether the discriminations against women should not be eliminated one by one by specific laws in the various States, rather than by a constitutional amendment. The women point to the extreme slowness of doing it State by State. In ten years, from 1920 to 1930, one organisation secured the removal of 141 discriminatory laws in the States. A splendid achievement, but there remain still about a thousand discriminations. In Maryland, in 1920, there were thirty-four discriminatory laws against women. In fifteen years, through a devoted group of feminists, eight have been removed but twenty-six still remain. Obviously, therefore, to remove a thousand discriminations in forty-eight States, generations of women must be born, live and die without seeing the job accomplished, unless there is a Constitutional Amendment.

F. WOMEN UNDER ALIEN RULE.

A digest of a report by Miss Monica Whatley, secretary of the Six Point Group, United Kingdom, gives some facts concerning the status of native women in lands under alien rule. The United Kingdom has not created the conditions described in foreign lands under her rule, but those conditions continue to exist in spite of British rule.

British Territories (Africa).

In many parts of Africa the native woman is so completely "property" that she is not only purchased and bartered but inherited. The father has absolute right to choose the husband for the daughter. An unmarried girl whose father dies is assessed as "goods" and shared by the male heirs. No man may have a wife without paying her owner a price.

In *Rhodesia*, though the law does not recognise the girl's right to her own body, there is a law to protect her from coercion.

In *Natal*, the Native Code lays down the price that may be asked for a girl wife.

Union of South Africa. — The "ownership" of girls is upheld by the courts, but the purchase does not confer wifehood under the law. In *Basutoland*, a reservation over which the British Colonial Office still keeps a measure of control, a measure was passed in 1915 by which no native woman may cross the frontiers into Union territories without the sanction of her "natural guardian"—namely, her owner. If she does, she is liable to fine or imprisonment. This Act was signed by Lord Buxton, Governor-General, and Sir Cecil Rodwell, Imperial Secretary. By the Treaty of Protectorate, the Bechuana chiefs stipulated there should be no coming of age for women. In 1868, by a High Court Decree, it was declared *contra honor mores* to countenance polygamy. But the purchase of girls continued. It was decided that none of the purchased girls could be wives; they are therefore in the position of purchased concubines. The purchased girls have no redress and the men still have the right to own and sell their daughters. Purchased wives are not supported by their purchaser. They have to support him and have no claim on his wages if he works.

Southern Nigeria. — Here slavery still exists. Lord Lugard, Governor of Southern Nigeria, says in dealing with the freeing of slaves: "The male slaves are at liberty to assert their freedom and offer themselves as labourers for wages . . . The case of women is complicated by questions of marriage, concubinage, dowries and divorce . . . based, it may be, on the payment of the 'dowry'. A woman slave who pays her ransom finds herself not free but in the custody of the Government, who may place her in a Mission or in some other form of restraint until a husband is found for her.

Cameroons. — It is claimed that chiefs have rights of possession over all unmarried girls. Widows are assumed to have caused their husband's death and are subjected to shocking treatment subsequent to the decease of a husband.

British Territories (Asia).

China. — *Hong-Kong.* — The Chinese custom of keeping Mui Tsai is a system akin to slavery. Slavery was abolished in China years ago, yet every year thousands of women and girl children are openly sold. Hong-Kong was ceded to the United Kingdom in 1842; the census of 1921 reckoned there were some 9,000 Mui Tsai or domestic slaves upon the island. In 1923, a law was passed which provided that no more Mui Tsai were to be engaged nor any female servant under ten years old. Those having Mui Tsai must have them registered. At the same time, it is a fact that, in Hong-Kong, the law does allow a girl to be bought and sold under the subterfuge of adoption and her position as the property of her purchaser remains the same as that of the Mui Tsai without the protection of registration. If the child slave does not die of ill usage, her owner can sell her for a wife or to a house of licensed prostitution, where girls frequently suffer terrible beatings.

Cyprus. — During the last three years, Turkish girls in Cyprus have been sold at the rate of twenty a month to Arabs in Palestine in search of wives, and the traffic still continues.

If we accept the definition of slavery as drawn up by the League of Nations Slavery Convention of 1926 that "slavery is the status of a person over whom all or any of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised", we cannot deny that the status of women in many instances is only that of a slave, since the right of ownership of her own person is denied her.

French Territories (Africa).

A brief report by Maria Vérone, of the International Council, on the status of women in the French colonies, says :

The native woman is subject to the customs of the country, but certain legal provisions have been made which modify a little her very unhappy state.

Algeria. — According to a law of 1930, and a decree of 1931, certain rights have been given the Arab women of Algeria, whose position formerly was worse than that of animals. They can now demand a divorce from their husbands in the case of abandonment, insufficient support, or the disappearance of the husband, for a period of two years. They have the right to inherit, whereas formerly they were disinherited and had no property rights whatever.

West Africa. — In Gabon and the Cameroons, the woman is bought by her future husband. In many places, a rich man can buy as many wives as he likes ; they are in reality his slaves working for their master, who often ill-treats them and underfeeds them. In the Cameroons, on the death of the husband, the wife is the property of the heir. This custom, suppressed in certain places, still exists in the interior.

French Territories (Asia).

Indo-China. — The greatest evil is in connection with the children who are born of the union of natives and Europeans. The latter are usually public officials. These children are generally abandoned by the father and become wretched outcasts, rejected alike by both natives and Europeans.

IV. CONCLUSION.

Enough has been given in the foregoing report to make it quite evident that throughout the world there are unjust discriminations against women. These discriminations have not brought prosperity to the nations. It is to be noted that the countries which are held to be most civilised and progressive are those very countries where some measure of equality has been given. But even in these countries, the status of women is being lowered.

The acceptance of an International Convention establishing the worldwide recognition of complete equality of rights between the sexes is the only remedy for this situation. The slightest breach in the principle of equality means a lowering of women's legal and economic status which renders the rights already won unstable.

The attempt to secure equal rights for women, nation by nation, is not sufficient. It would require generations to bring about a world change by such a method, just as in the United States the method of winning equal rights State by State was found to be an unending task. The Equal Rights Treaty should be approved by the Assembly as a body and then presented to all the Members of the League not already signatories. Each nation could then embody the principle in its laws according to the needs of that nation. As the country developed and men acquired greater rights, women would equally enjoy these rights.

Therefore, the Consultative Committee, representing 45 million women, appeals to the delegates of the Assembly to take this new and forward-looking step of supporting the Equal Rights Treaty, which would make the Assembly of 1935 historic.

International Council of Women :

(Signed) Louisa C. A. VAN EEGHEN ;
(Signed) Dr. Renée GIROD
(proxy for Maria VÉRONE).

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom :

(Signed) Madeleine Z. DOTY ;
(Signed) Eugénie M. MELLER.

International American Commission of Women :

(Signed) Alice PAUL ;
(Signed) Doris STEVENS.

Equal Rights International :

(Signed) Dorothy EVANS ;
(Signed) Madame HEKIMI
(proxy for Lilian VON MATSCH).

All-Asian Conference of Women :

(Signed) Dr. Rosa WELT-STRAUS.

Annex.¹

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STATUS OF WOMEN IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

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- (d) Native Administration Act, 1927.
- (e) Reports by Medical Officers on Infantile Mortality. International Conference, June 1931.
- (f) Report of Select Committee, Senate of Union Parliament, on Native Customs and Marriage Law, 1913.
- (g) Native Women Restriction Act; Basutoland, 1915.
- (h) Native Code of Natal.
- (i) Native Marriage Ordinance; Southern Rhodesia, 1917.
- (j) Native Administration Act of Union of South Africa, 1927.

British Territories (Asia).

- (a) League of Nations Union. Speakers' notes.
- (b) Article by Mrs. M. M. DYMOND in the *Slave Market News*, April 1933.
- (c) "Child Slaves in Hong-Kong". Lt.-Cmdr. and Mrs. H. L. HASLEWOOD.
- (d) In an interview between Mr. H. D. Vernon, of the Colonial Office of the United Kingdom, and Miss Nina Boyle, he admitted that Turkish girls were sold at the rate of 20 a month to Arabs in Palestine in search of wives, and that this traffic has been going on at this rate for the last three years, and still continues.

French Territories (Africa and Asia).

- (a) Report by Maria Vérone on conditions in the French colonies.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.¹

for securing the Appointment of Women to the International and Expert Committees of the League of Nations.

STATUS OF WOMEN.

The Joint Standing Committee of Women's International Organisations has noted that, on the agenda of the Assembly of the League of Nations, there appears the consideration of the status of women.

While the Joint Committee is not concerned to express its views on this question as a whole, it is concerned with the particular question of the equal opportunities of women and men in regard to all posts in or in connection with the League of Nations itself. That equality is guaranteed in the Covenant of the League and its application in practice is the sole matter with which our Joint Committee is concerned.

We are aware that, as regards the appointment of women members to the Committees and other bodies of the League, in some cases it is solely the Governments of the States Members who make such appointments. In other cases where appointments are made by the Council of the League, we are not unaware of the difficulties caused by the comparatively small number of women who, in their respective countries, have access to positions such as would make them specially qualified for appointment to the League Committees. This aspect of the question, therefore, tends to fall under that wider consideration of the status of women which is being dealt with by other bodies.

But my Committee is seriously concerned with the position of women in the Secretariat of the League, not in individual cases, but taking that service as a whole. The study of the staff reveals the fact that, so far from there appearing to be that steady improvement in the relative position of women which might have been expected to occur from the opportunities of acquiring experience provided by time, the number of women in higher posts tends rather to decrease. We are aware that a process of rationalisation has recently been carried out, and we had hoped that this would have reacted favourably by permitting the reasonable promotion of competent and experienced women members of the staff.

We would desire respectfully to emphasise that, in the administration of the League, the ideals of justice and equality for which it stands should consciously be kept in mind alongside the need for a high standard of efficiency. Just as the matter of a certain proportion of nationals of the different States Members is borne in mind, other factors being equal, so surely a certain fair distribution of the posts between men and women would suitably be considered, without detriment to efficiency of the personnel which must, of course, be the first consideration of those responsible for a great service.

(Signed) Edith M. H. BIGLAND,
Honorary Secretary.

¹ This committee is composed of the following organisations :

World's Women's Christian Temperance Union, International Council of Women, World's Young Women's Christian Association, International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, World Union of Women for International Concord, International Federation of University Women, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, Equal Rights International.

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE WOMEN'S GUILD.

NATIONALITY AND STATUS OF WOMEN.

Immediately after the war, numerous European countries and a few outside Europe accorded to women equal suffrage and the right of election to official bodies. These changes seemed to satisfy the demand for equality between the sexes and many were of the opinion that a definitely feminist movement would no longer be necessary. Soon, however, it became evident that this political equality was not the end and final goal of the equal rights campaign, but only a first step on the road leading to complete sex equality. The fact that women had won equal rights in one sphere of public activity led to an investigation of the opportunities existing in other spheres and an examination of all male rights in order to ascertain what further steps were possible and necessary to achieve complete equality between the sexes.

Certain legal hardships, which women themselves had not realised in the days before they won their independence and entered the ranks of paid workers, now became intolerable, and the new demands were not initiated by organisations but came from the women themselves, because the practical difficulties they experienced showed them that they were not yet completely freed from their shackles. The question of the nationality of married women, for example, assumed special importance owing to the fact that, when new States were created, a great many people were placed in the position of immigrants, the result being that many women either became stateless or, after living in a country with advanced laws and customs favourable to women, found themselves under a backward regime with laws framed according to bygone ideas. It is therefore an error to consider the demands of the women's organisations as purely academic and not based on urgent practical needs.

The civil rights of women are not as yet really secure in any country. The International Co-operative Women's Guild, which carries out its activities within the framework of a great worldwide trading organisation, made an investigation a few years ago into the personal rights of women in the co-operative movements of the various countries. This showed that there are still countries where the provisions of the civil code make it difficult for married women to become members of co-operative societies because they are unable to make a contract without the consent of their husbands and cannot undertake any liabilities which might become a charge on the family income. Conditions differ so widely that almost every country has different laws, and this puts great difficulties in the way of any international agreement.

There are two classes of legislation. In many cases, it is essential that each country must frame and administer independently its own laws, but, on the other hand, certain forms of legislation can only become operative if they are approved by, and also form part of, the code of other States. This applies to the nationality of married women. Within the last few years, for instance, it happened that a country anxious to accord fuller rights to its women could not do so without the collaboration and assistance of other States. National action cannot solve this problem; an international convention forming the basis for a universal settlement is essential. It is for this reason that all the women's organisations have always pressed for an international solution, and during the last few years all the important women's organisations have been forced to give special attention to this question because it has been proved again and again that any insecurity as to nationality affecting any member of the family entails hardships, not only for the wife and children, but also for the husband. We do not wish to trace here the thorny path that the women's organisations had to travel in order to attain their objective, but we should like to explain that, after the Hague Codification Conference of 1930, the International Co-operative Women's Guild did not oppose the decisions of the Conference but supported the ratification of the Hague Convention solely because of its conviction that this did, in fact, bring relief to a number of women. In Austria, for instance, a woman gained the right to resume her own nationality if her marriage with a foreigner were dissolved through death or divorce. Moreover, the Hague decision that a woman shall not lose her own nationality unless she takes that of her husband is decidedly an improvement on existing legislation. Again, Article 10, which provides that a married couple cannot change their nationality during the course of the marriage without the consent of the wife, certainly improves the woman's position, for, if the wife's consent is to be a determining factor, the husband will be forced to consult his wife's wishes before making a decision. No one will maintain that the Convention solves fully all the problems at issue. The Conference itself adopted by twenty-seven votes to two a resolution urging the various States to examine the legal position in their country with a view to ascertaining whether it would not be possible to introduce into their laws the principle of complete equality between the sexes. In this connection, we should like to draw attention to a danger that should not be overlooked when framing national or international legislation to accord the sexes equal rights—namely, the

repeal of absolutely essential laws affecting women in order to bring about complete legal equality with men.

Under the marriage laws obtaining in some European countries, for instance, a husband is responsible for his wife's debts if incurred in providing for the needs of the household, while the wife has no similar liability. In such cases, it would have to be considered whether it would be more advisable to extend the liability to both parties or frame entirely new laws applicable to both sexes and more in harmony with present social and economic conditions. A hard and fast rule as to complete equality can be specially dangerous to protective legislation affecting women as mothers. Here, where there is no equality of function, legal equality cannot exist. Even in the Soviet Union, where the principle of equality between the sexes as regards industrial provisions has been very widely introduced, there has been no attempt made to sweep away all protective legislation applicable to women as mothers and prospective mothers.

We venture to suggest that all these considerations make it imperative that the League of Nations should consider this question in all its bearings and not be content with evolving a mere formula, for we are convinced that great care and foresight will be needed to avoid a solution damaging to the interests of women and children. Unfortunately, the method at present adopted by the League—and it is the League that must conduct any further investigations into the problems at issue—seems too circumscribed to achieve the desired result. The International Co-operative Women's Guild is of the opinion that, instead of setting up a non-statutory committee of women's organisations, it would have been preferable to appoint a Committee answerable to the League which, like any other permanent League Commission, would have the task of making a complete study of the questions included in its terms of reference. This Committee should be composed of both sexes and should include lawyers and statesmen, as in the case of the Health Committee, the Child Welfare Committee and others. An advantage of such a Committee would be that all kinds of women's organisations could be represented on it, whereas, at present, large groups of women, such as those forming the Catholic, Socialist and Trade Union organisations, whose point of view differs from that of the Women's Consultative Committee, are not in a position to collaborate in its work. Success will only be possible if the interests of all the different women's groups, together with the legal and political aspects of the problem, receive full consideration and a policy formulated which will ensure a just and satisfactory solution of the whole question. At present, we feel that it is not receiving from the League the attention it deserves, although we appreciate the fact that the nationality of married women is on the agenda of the 1935 Assembly. If the Assembly would use its powers to set up a special committee composed of prominent jurists, representatives of those countries opposed to equal nationality rights and representatives of all the important women's organisations, there would appear to be a possibility of ultimately framing a Convention that would not take the form of an empty formula but would put forward concrete proposals giving a real lead to the various Governments.

The International Co-operative Women's Guild approves the action of the Consultative Committee in calling for a revision of the Hague Convention's nationality provisions. The Guild agrees that these did not go far enough, although they were undoubtedly a first step towards the solution of a very weighty problem. We should welcome the ratification of a fresh Convention recognising the principle of equality between the sexes, but we are anxious that this should not merely state a theoretical formula but should include proposals for something more definite than a recommendation that all States should seek to abolish, both in law and in practice, all discriminations between men and women as regards nationality. Such a recommendation would, we fear, be interpreted by each State according to its own views and would not lead to the adoption of a common policy by all the women's organisations. The Convention would thus be applied according to the circumstances prevailing in each country and, as at the present time there is in many countries a strong tendency to oppose the principle of equality and still further limit the rights of women, it seems probable that in such cases it would lead to a further curtailment of a married woman's independence and her right to control over her own person. Moreover, from a legal standpoint, it is possible that, even though equal nationality rights might be granted in theory, provisions as to the nationality of the children might make it so difficult for a married woman to exercise her right to decide her own nationality that this would, in fact, prove wholly illusory. The International Co-operative Women's Guild feels, therefore, that it can only endorse the proposals of the Consultative Committee if these are regarded as providing a basis and guiding principles for a complete investigation into all aspects of the problem in order to ensure that, after having won theoretical equality, women do not find themselves in practice in a still more dangerous position than they are at present.

In our opinion, such an investigation should give particular consideration to the following points :

The provisions governing the acquisition of nationality by a woman :

- (1) On marriage ;
- (2) During the course of the marriage ;
- (3) When the marriage is dissolved by divorce or through death.

In this connection, it would be essential that the wife's consent should be asked either verbally or in writing both by the authorities of the country she is leaving and those of the country where she is about to settle. Not until a definite declaration on this point has been obtained can other allied problems be dealt with satisfactorily.

Due consideration must also be given to the interests of the children. In no question affecting the marriage laws must the interests of the children be treated as of secondary importance, for nothing has a worse effect on the physical and mental welfare of young people than for them to be the centre of parental disputes and forced to live in an atmosphere of perpetual conflicts which may give rise to all kinds of cruelties. The parents themselves will not always be influenced by considerations of what will be best in the future interests of their children; they are more likely to be swayed by the question of property rights or a love of their own homeland, even though there may be better social and educational prospects for their children in the new country, and such considerations will often outweigh the question of what is best for the children.

This matter, moreover, is closely bound up with the question of the parents' rights over their children and whether the State or the parents shall decide the nationality of the children. There are instances, for example, where sons of military age who were still minors were not allowed to change their nationality although younger members of the family were permitted to do so, with the result that the family was split in two. In how far the rights of parents are to take precedence of the claims of the State is likely to become a very important question as the State in all countries tends to concern itself more and more with the life and education of the child out of school hours.

We feel, therefore, that it is imperative to ask more from the League of Nations than the elaboration of a mere formula which, however valuable it may have proved as a means of stimulating women's interest and establishing the principle of equality, will not in itself provide a solution of one of the most difficult and complicated of those problems that demand an international solution.

As always, the International Co-operative Women's Guild declares itself ready to give all possible support to the work of the League and places itself and its members at the League's disposal in any way that may help to bring about a satisfactory solution of all the above-mentioned problems.

(Signed) Emmy FREUNDLICH,
President.

(Signed) A. Honora ENFIELD,
Secretary.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN.

STATUS OF WOMEN.

The International Federation of Business and Professional Women welcomes the consideration by the 1935 Assembly of the League of Nations of the question of the "whole status of women, with special reference to a Convention on the subject of the equality of rights for both sexes which was signed at Montevideo in December 1933 by Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay", and appreciates the opportunity provided by the Council to express its views upon this question.

The Federation primarily concerned with the Economic Status of Women.

As an organisation whose membership is composed of some 100,000 women engaged in earning their living in the professional and commercial field in twenty-two countries of the world, the Federation is primarily concerned with the economic aspect of the status of women. The Federation stands for the establishment of conditions which will assure to women, and to men as well, the fullest possible opportunity for the development of whatever capacities they may possess.

The Federation has long been gravely concerned with the difficulties its members face in their work, difficulties whose fundamental cause lies in the inequalities of status still existing between men and women. Even where equality exists in law, in practice women are often severely handicapped by habit and prejudice. This is particularly apparent in times of economic depression, as evidenced by the reaction against women's right to work during the past three years.

The growing tendency to exclude women from employment is viewed by the Federation with increasing anxiety. Numbers of its own members in all countries cannot find work, whilst the younger generation of women faces an increasing limitation of opportunity both of training and of obtaining work in the future.

Protective Legislation and the Equality of Rights Convention.

While urgently desirous of an improvement in the status of women by international agreement between Governments, the Federation, as early as 1932, declared its position on the question of the adoption of an international convention drafted in similar terms to the text of the Equality of Rights Convention, Article No. 1, by pointing out that, while the Federation was "in favour of equal rights as regards the constitutional and civic rights of women, the social implications of the Equal Rights Bill were so involved and the conditions applicable to the members of the International Federation so diverse that it was felt impossible to take action on the Equal Rights Treaty as a whole".

The Federation has always stood for the maintenance of the just and recognised standards which labour has built up through the years to prevent the exploitation of working men, women and children, and would deplore any breaking down of such standards, which organised industrial women have repeatedly declared to be essential to their welfare. Where, however, the legislation establishing these standards has adversely affected the interests of business and professional women, the Federation has consistently demanded the exemption of such categories of workers.

Need for Investigation into the Whole Status of Women.

Recognising that the usefulness of any international agreement must ultimately depend upon national action, based on a knowledge of the varying social and economic conditions in each country, the Federation considers that the only reasonable method of approach to a solution of so complex a problem as equality of rights between the sexes is by way of investigation into the status of women in each country.

The Federation has already initiated a programme of research into the economic status of women in the countries where its national branches are established. This investigation is only in its elementary stage, but attached to this memorandum is a list of the most important research studies which have already been made by the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs in the United States of America and published in that country. In general, the aim of these studies has been to discover the psychological and economic factors which govern women's success in and suitability for professional and commercial life, the extent to which they have been affected by unemployment and whether or not age and sex curtail their opportunities for advancement.

Other national federations are at the moment engaged in research on similar lines.

Exclusion of Women from Employment and Increasing Limitation of their Opportunities of Training and Work.

No investigation can be made into the question of the economic status of women without recognising that, whereas formerly much of the work of production was entirely in the hands of women, who were the administrators of household industries, these industries in the modern economic order have been taken out of the home and commercialised.

"In seeking gainful employment to-day, women, like men, are actuated by economic necessity, . . . and by a desire to lift standards of living for themselves, their families and their dependants. . . . It is certain that the necessity to provide for dependants is an important factor for women as well as for men." ¹ "As long as men's incomes are insufficient to cover civilised requirements or even elementary necessities, millions of girls and married women are forced to supplement the family income by seeking work. Furthermore, even where there is no economic necessity, there are large numbers of women who would still work for their own satisfaction and whose skill forms a necessary element in the scheme of production." ²

While there is a mass of evidence to show that women's work is "an essential and not easily dispensable element in the modern economic order", ³ past experience and recent

¹ Mrs. G. MacM. BOWMAN, in "Changing Standards": Report of the Fourth Annual *New York Herald-Tribune* Conference on Current Problems, 1934, pages 186 and 187.

² See Report of the Director of the International Labour Office, 1935, page 67.

³ Arthur SALZ, in the "Encyclopædia of Social Sciences".

events have proved that this fact is not yet sufficiently realised. Even in normal times women are often severely handicapped in seeking training and employment by such restrictions as :

- (a) Non-admittance to the study and practice of certain professions in certain countries ;¹
- (b) Denial of opportunity for promotion to higher executive or administrative positions, regardless of ability, qualifications or experience ;
- (c) Refusal to appoint married women or to allow women to retain their positions after marriage ;
- (d) Payment of lower salaries than those given to men for similar duties, regardless of ability, qualifications or experience.

Moreover, since the economic depression became acute, not only have these restrictions been more widely applied, as, for instance, in Canada and the United States of America, where there is an increasing tendency to discriminate against women, but women's opportunities for training and employment have been further curtailed by new legislative measures, excluding women from positions which they had already filled with ability, efficiency and even distinction.

This type of legislation has limited salaries, excluded from employment married women, such as lawyers, doctors, public servants and teachers, or has greatly restricted their opportunities of training and work, and, in one country², has provided that " wherever possible women shall be replaced by men ".

The Federation, whose membership includes not only the office worker, but also the scientific, technical and administrative woman, considers that, quite apart from all question of right or justice, such action is economically unsound and will prove no solution for the unemployment problem which all countries face to-day.³ Leaving aside the fact that in many occupations the employment of women is a technical necessity, the Federation is persuaded that their exclusion from employment or from exercising their trades or professions will not only decrease their power of purchasing goods but also of purchasing services, for many women create employment for both sexes in the enterprises which have been built up and maintained by their own initiative and energy.

The Federation stands for a closer working co-operation between men and women and deplores the increasing tendency once more to make sex the criterion in the choice of workers, instead of considerations of ability, qualifications, efficiency and experience.

The Federation trusts that steps will be taken in the near future to explore the whole question of women's work and that Governments will refrain from passing further restrictive legislation until the subject has been more clearly and definitely surveyed and analysed.

Enquiry into the Whole Status of Women by an International Commission.

Recognising the need for definite improvement in the whole status of women, the Federation urges that an enquiry should be made by Governments into the present status and position of women in their countries, taking into account the legal, social, political and economic aspects of the question, and suggests that this enquiry should be placed under the authority of an International Commission appointed by the League of Nations. The aim of this enquiry should be to reveal the best methods of improving the status of women in each country, and to establish the measure of agreement *on definite points* now possible between Governments, taking into account existing difficulties both in law and practice. The results of such an investigation should provide an effective basis for further concerted international action.

The Federation earnestly trusts that such an enquiry will be undertaken at the earliest possible moment, and offers its co-operation wherever possible.

¹ For example, in the Province of Quebec, Canada, women are debarred by sex from the practice of law and from the study and practice of architecture.

² The Netherlands.

³ Refer to " The Economic Depression ", *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4, April, and No. 5, May 1933, pages 30 to 40 ; " Unemployment and Employment among Women ", by Henri Fuss, Chief of the Unemployment, Employment and Migration Section of the International Labour Office, *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, April, 1935, pages 30 to 38 ; and Report of the Director of the International Labour Office, 1935, page 76, paragraph 2.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN.

STATUS OF WOMEN.

The International Federation of University Women has noted with interest that the Assembly is asked by certain delegations to examine the status of women as a whole and not merely in relation to nationality. As a member of the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations, the Federation has subscribed to the principle of equality set forth in the Treaty signed at Montevideo. This memorandum draws attention to one or two aspects of the question which have a special interest for university women.

BASIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN.

If the status of women in the intellectual world had not changed remarkably within the last century, the International Federation of University Women could not exist. Its basis of membership is the possession of a university degree, and it is, roughly speaking, about fifty years since women have been given the freedom of the universities. That means freedom to enjoy the highest academic and professional training available. The opportunity to enter professions for which that training has fitted them has followed at various intervals of time in different countries and in different professions. But at this stage in the world's history it can confidently be stated that in the field of intellectual work women have begun to prove their use to the community. Those of exceptional ability have enjoyed liberty to develop their gifts along the most suitable lines, and a large number of very competent workers have been able to use their intelligence where it can be of most benefit to others—*i.e.*, in the kind of work for which they are best fitted. The International Federation of University Women is mainly composed of women actively engaged in professional work in thirty-seven countries.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN TO THE WORLD'S WORK.

It is sometimes said that women are well qualified for administrative and organising work, but less gifted for original, independent labour in the high altitudes of the academic or scientific world. It is too early as yet to compile trustworthy statistics to combat this easy generalisation, for the proportion of women able to devote their energies to pure research is still small and only the future can produce the true measurement of their developed ability. But it is permissible to point out that, even in this comparatively early period of more adequate opportunity, women have done first-class original work in many fields.

In science, for instance, we may cite, in addition to the famous name of Mme. Curie, the names of Professor Johanna Westerdijk, Professor Elisabeth Schiemann, Dr. Florence Sabin, Dr. Hariette Chick, Dr. G. Elles, as a few among many who have made valuable contributions to knowledge.

As physicians and surgeons, women have made immense progress within the limited time they have been enabled to practise. In the United Kingdom alone, there were 5,391 women on the Medical Register in 1933. Hospitals staffed entirely by women have worked excellently. The appointment of women as professors in the medical faculty of universities (*e.g.*, Professor Laimi Leidenius, of the University of Helsinki) is itself good evidence of their standing, for it is still true that, in most countries, a woman needs to be better qualified than a man if she is to obtain an appointment open to both sexes on nominally equal terms. The recognition gained by such women as Lady Barrett and Dr. Alice Hamilton is not due to their work having been remarkable as the work of women, but simply to its unqualified merit.

Names of women distinguished for their learning and originality could be cited in many other fields—archæology, anthropology, history, philology, philosophy, jurisprudence, economics. In practical field work, the planning and supervising of important excavations, women such as Miss G. Caton Thompson, Dr. Hanna Rydh and Dr. Dorothy Garrod have been remarkably successful, thus disproving in the most simple and effective manner the hoary theory of women's inability to control and organise male labourers.

In the great profession of teaching, women have been largely occupied for a considerable time. But whereas in the past the majority of women teachers were employed to instruct young children or girls, who were not expected to be much educated, to-day large numbers

of secondary schools of the "lycée" or "gymnasium" class are staffed by women. In the universities themselves, a certain number of women are employed, chiefly as "assistants", some as lecturers or "dozents", and a few as professors. The table given below (published by the International Federation of University Women in 1932) shows the general distribution of men and women students and teachers in the universities of a number of countries, as given by returns made in 1929-30. The percentage of women on the teaching staff is low, a fact by no means wholly accounted for by the greater "marriage mortality" among women. The percentage of women professors is very low indeed, but the fact remains that, at the time this table was drawn up, there were seventy-eight women holding professorial appointments in the countries given.

Country	Students		Professors		Lecturers, etc.		Percentage of Women Students	Percentage of Women Professors	Percentage of Women Lecturers, etc.
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women			
Union of South Africa ¹	—	—	225	9	406	66	—	3.84	13.98
Australia ¹	—	—	105	—	45 ⁸	51	—	—	10.01
Belgium ²	5,354	849	442	1	331	20	13.68	0.23	5.69
United Kingdom ⁴	37,095	13,686	829	13	3,103	585	26.95	1.54	15.86
Bulgaria	4,735	1,626	93	2	133	14	25.56	2.10	9.52
Canada ¹	—	—	811	7	1,008	120	—	0.85	10.63
Denmark	4,095	926	97	—	99	10	18.44	—	9.17
Estonia	2,338	1,157	69	—	90	1	33.10	—	1.09
Finland	4,968	2,655	171	2	321	20	34.82	1.15	5.86
France	55,948	15,184	1,103 ³	7 ³	467	59	21.34	0.63	11.21
Germany	64,423	12,884	1,570	5	2,999	54	16.66	0.31	1.76
Irish Free State	3,742	1,669	193	8	221	60	30.84	3.98	21.35
Italy	38,168	5,810	1,478	11	6,255	227	13.21	0.73	3.50
Latvia	6,220	2,259	76	—	233	33	26.64	—	12.40
Lithuania	2,880	1,130	44	—	100 ⁶	2 ⁶	28.17	—	1.96
Luxemburg	42	12	18	—	—	—	22.22	—	—
Netherlands ⁵	6,800	1,450	404	5	188	10	17.57	1.22	5.05
New Zealand	— ⁷	— ⁷	70	1	144	14	—	1.40	8.85
Norway	3,874	557	125	2	157	9	12.57	1.57	5.42
Roumania	22,951	9,227	502	2	415	4	28.67	0.39	0.95
Sweden	6,803	1,265	211	—	338	9	15.67	—	2.59
Switzerland	6,567	1,098	664	3	382 ⁸	15 ⁸	14.32	0.44	3.77
Yugoslavia	7,451	1,942	217	—	208	12	20.67	—	5.45

¹ No figures available showing the proportion of women students.

² Figures refer only to the universities of Brussels, Ghent, Liège.

³ This figure includes : Professeurs titulaires, maîtres de conférences, chargés de cours réguliers.

⁴ London University Medical Schools not included, as no figures available for the students.

⁵ Figures for universities of Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen, Amsterdam, Delft. There are apparently no women lecturers or professors in the other universities and a negligible number of women students.

⁶ Readers and assistants not included.

⁷ Exact figures for students not available—said to be 50% women.

⁸ Readers, assistants, etc., not included.

In Government civil services, university women have obtained the right, in many countries, to hold posts in the higher administrative grades, and have justified the confident expectation that they would do well. In public life, a number have been or are Members of Parliament, and in this connection we may mention Miss Eleanor Rathbone, who herself represents the Combined Universities in the United Kingdom Parliament.

University women are also found in the ranks of engineers and architects, where they are performing very good work. We may instance here the winning of the open competition for designs for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon by a woman architect, Miss Scott. As museum curators and librarians, university women hold a number of highly responsible positions. Very recently, the State of New South Wales appointed a distinguished woman to the important post of Mitchell Librarian.

The few examples cited above might be multiplied indefinitely, for women have shown themselves prompt to respond to the chances they have had of bearing their share in the more "intellectual" kinds of labour. But all we desire to do here is to give a general outline of the present position. There are many departments of intellectual work and in most of them women will be found at work.

THE REACTION AGAINST WOMEN INTELLECTUAL WORKERS.

The International Federation of University Women has noted, with grave concern, the recent tendency in many countries to arrest the progress of women in the sphere of intellectual work. The replies to an enquiry circulated last year among the National Associations of

University Women made it clear that few countries are free from a tendency to place obstructions in the path of the professional woman. Legislative measures have been enforced by some States, and threatened by more. Municipal and other local authorities have yielded to pressure brought to bear upon them and have sought to palliate the unemployment of men by reducing the possible competition of women. Since questions of employment are matters for the International Labour Office, we do not attempt here to enter in any detail into that question or to quote examples of the restrictions from which our members have suffered. But they are numerous and very serious in their immediate effect on the status of university women as well as ominous for the future. Restrictions imposed on the entrance of women students to the university are a further effort to make doubly sure the elimination of competition in the professions. Economic stress, combined with muddled thinking, has had paralysing effects on the present position and future prospects of women intellectual workers.

THE NEED FOR A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY.

The incidence of unemployment is mainly felt, at present, by younger graduates and married women. To deprive young people of the hope of a useful career and to dismiss married women from posts they have proved themselves competent to fill is likely, in the long run, to be an expensive waste of good material. The International Federation of University Women is convinced that such short-sighted policy is fundamentally mistaken. To deny to women intellectual workers the right to earn their living by the practice of a profession and to drive them into household labour, without respect to their vocational abilities, is not the road towards a more civilised world, but a return to primitive conditions. What young women with a capacity for intellectual work *need* is the opportunity of leading an active life in the exercise of a profession, with reasonable security of the tenure of positions honourably obtained by good work.

Not only on economic grounds, but also and even more emphatically on the ground of the common human right to develop natural capacity to the utmost and to use special training in directions where it can be of the fullest service, does the International Federation of University Women urge that every effort should be made to reverse the present tendency to debar women either from obtaining the education suited to their highest capacities or from using that education, when obtained, in the service of the community.

Since the whole question of employment is closely bound up with the status of individuals, it is obvious that the legal and economic status of women in each country is a matter of the first importance to their ultimate welfare. The International Federation of University Women urges, therefore, that all possible steps shall be taken to secure to women the place they have earned in the polity of nations.

The text of a resolution passed by the Council of the International Federation of University Women at Budapest last September is appended.

(Signed) Joh. WESTERDYK,
President.

(Signed) Theodora BOSANQUET,
Secretary.

Annex.

RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION AT BUDAPEST ON SEPTEMBER 4TH, 1934.

Considering the value of work accomplished by women in scholarship and scientific research, in the exercise of the liberal professions, in social work, in highly responsible administrative posts and generally in the departments of public life ;

And considering that, since paid work by women is an integral part of our modern economic organisation, to revert to forms of social organisation of a bygone age will afford no effective solution of the present economic crisis ;

And considering that unemployment is due, not to a shortage of work available, but principally to economic complications for which the remedy cannot be found in limitation of opportunities for work by individuals but rather in international co-operation through which alone a solution of the problem can be reached :

The International Federation of University Women,

Strongly deprecates the tendency increasingly evident in the majority of countries by new regulations to debar women from careers for which they are well qualified, whether on grounds of sex or marriage ;

Considers that such regulations are inimical to the family which is itself the foundation of society ;

And desires to affirm its profound conviction that it is only by permitting and encouraging women to play a full and responsible part in the intellectual life of their country that the civilisation and the prosperity of future generations may be developed on a sound basis of general understanding and enlightenment.

OPEN DOOR INTERNATIONAL FOR THE ECONOMIC EMANCIPATION OF THE WOMAN WORKER.

STATUS OF WOMEN.

This Statement deals mainly with the Rights of the Woman in her Capacity as a Worker for Pay.

While the Open Door International desires to see the women of every country of the world enjoying equality of status and equality of rights as between men and women in all relationships of life, its own special task is to secure equality of status and equality of rights as between men and women in their capacity as workers for pay. This statement, therefore, deals mainly with that aspect of the question.

The Status and Rights of the Man are taken as the Human Normal: the Status and Rights of the Woman are always Lower.

The status of an individual is the sum total of his rights and duties. In every community, it is the status of the man which is taken as the normal.¹ His rights are accepted as those pertaining to the human being. To the woman are always denied some of these human rights. In one country or another, she is denied the right to personal liberty, the right to hold property, to contract, to sue and be sued, the right to education, the right to vote and to eligibility, the right to independent personal nationality, the right to enter trades and professions or to hold public office. In one country or another, the woman is dealt with as a negotiable chattel, or sold into marriage or treated like a slave licensed for the lusts of men. In many countries, marriage itself deprives the woman of human rights. There is no country in which, in her capacity as a worker seeking to sell her labour for gain, the woman is not denied by reason of sex or marriage or childbirth some of the normal human rights enjoyed by the male worker.

The Human Rights which make up the Status of the Man in his capacity as a Worker or Earner.

Among the fundamental rights which make up the status of a man in his capacity as a worker or earner are :

- (a) The right to enter any trade or profession or calling and the opportunity for education and apprenticeship ;
- (b) The right to sell his labour for gain without requiring an authorisation from a third party ; together with
- (c) The right to control his own earnings free from the control of another ;
- (d) The capacity personally to enforce these rights by process of Law.

It is an accepted commonplace that the enjoyment of these rights distinguishes the status of the freeman from that of the slave, which has been defined as " the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised ".

It is fundamental, too, that a man can only enjoy the right to work if he exercises it under the same conditions as other workers ; that is, if he is not subject to any restrictions (except such as apply equally to all men alike) as to the kind of work, or the conditions of work, or the materials in which he may work.

Among other rights which a man enjoys to-day in his capacity as an earner in certain communities are those which ensure to him on the same terms and at the same rate as other men minimum rates of pay and benefits or allowances under national insurance schemes for sickness, invalidity, old age and unemployment.

To give Equal Status and Equal Rights as between Men and Women must involve giving to Women the Same Rights as Men enjoy in their Capacity as Earners.

To ask for equal status and equal rights as between women and men means to ask, among other things, for the same rights for women as for men in their capacity as earners, and to ask for these rights irrespective of marriage or childbirth.

¹ It is true that in some countries both the males and the females of certain races or communities are denied such normal rights.

It means to ask that a woman shall have the right to enter any trade, profession or calling and be free to sell her labour for gain under the same conditions as a man, without requiring for this an authorisation from her husband, or the court, or any other person.

It means that she shall have personal control of her own earnings and the capacity personally to enforce their payment.

It means that regulations for the health and welfare of the worker shall apply equally to both sexes.

It means that any prohibition or regulation of employment, underground or at night, or where phosphorus or lead compounds or other dangerous materials are used, shall apply equally to both sexes.

It means that the rates of minimum wages and of benefits and allowances and contributions under national insurance schemes for unemployment, sickness, invalidity, or old age shall be the same for women as for men, and be payable on the same conditions.

It means that a woman shall not be prohibited from earning for six weeks after childbirth.

It means that employers shall not be required to make special arrangements for the woman worker, or the child-bearing or nursing woman; but that all regulations to safeguard the health of the worker shall apply equally to both sexes, and that help given in connection with the birth of a child shall not result in any restriction on the freedom and opportunities of the mother to earn.

The Enjoyment by Women in their Capacity as Earners of Equal Status and Equal Rights with Men would benefit and truly protect the Woman.

Nothing but good can result from recognising in legislation that a woman is a human being, and from giving her in her capacity as a worker for pay equality of status and of rights with the man. In this way only can the woman worker be truly protected.

It is as true of a woman as of a man that it is in her interest that she should be free to sell her labour for gain without the authorisation of her spouse or the court, and that she should control her own earnings, and have the capacity personally to enforce their payment.

It is equally true that any restriction on this right, not equally applied to men, is against the economic interest of the woman, and undermines her status as a worker.

It is equally true that special regulations applied to women and not to men—wrongly described by some as “protective” and advocated by many well-meaning philanthropists in the supposed interest of the woman—are in fact against her economic interest. They do not protect her. They facilitate her exploitation. This is true irrespective of marriage, pregnancy or childbirth.

Marriage is not a reason for depriving a woman of any human right. Marriage is not a reason for curtailing her right to earn. To refuse to employ a married woman is to deny the woman earner's right to marriage. It is, moreover, a denial of her common humanity. To restrict the married woman's right to earn is to deal a blow at her right to education, apprenticeship and professional training, and tends to perpetuate the low status of all women earners by encouraging the limitation of their employment to unskilled and consequently low-paid processes.

Neither pregnancy nor childbirth is a reason for curtailing the right of a woman to earn. It is a right she should enjoy as a human being. It is unjust and against the public interest thus to lower her earning capacity at the time of her greatest need. She, as others, should decide for herself. She alone knows her own situation and needs.

It is possible to provide help for a child about to be born or newly born without damaging the mother, but it is always wrong to penalise the mother or to restrict her rights as an earner. Burdens placed on the employer of the pregnant or nursing woman in the supposed interest of the woman and her child are automatically shifted by the employer on to the woman. If he is required to pay wages during absence arising out of childbearing, if he must allow time off to the woman for nursing her child, he takes care that he himself will not suffer. He protects himself by paying women low wages, or by ceasing to employ pregnant or even married women.

Any regulation of the hours or place or conditions or kind of work can only benefit, and therefore can only truly protect, the woman worker, if it applies to all workers, men and women alike. Applied to one sex only, it is economic tyranny. Any regulation or prohibition dealing with health and welfare, heavy or unhealthy work, dangerous materials or processes, night-work, work underground, and conditions and rates of minimum wages, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old-age benefits, in order really to protect should apply equally to men and women.

A Wrong Interpretation of the Term "Equal Rights" would be a Danger to Women.

The text of an international convention intended to give equality as between men and women must be such that ratification by a State necessarily involves bringing its national legislation into line with equality of rights between men and women ; that is, "denouncing" ¹ existing international Treaties or Conventions which are contrary to such equality, and altering existing national laws which are contrary to such equality. For example, three of the States which signed the Convention on Equality of Rights for Both Sexes adopted at Montevideo in December 1933, or requested the President of the Assembly to hold this discussion—Argentina, Cuba and Uruguay—should have to free themselves from the obligations under the Washington Conventions of 1919 to prohibit the employment of women at night and after childbirth, and to alter any legislation giving effect to these prohibitions, so that women should have the same freedom to earn as other workers, and that provision for the child at the time of its birth should not result in restriction on the freedom of the mother (see Annex, for examples of such international Conventions and national laws). It is therefore of the utmost importance that the words used in a convention intended to give equality of rights should be so clear and definite that they can only be interpreted in this sense.

The Convention on Equality of Rights for Both Sexes, adopted at Montevideo in December 1933, is incorrectly described in the letter to the President of the League of Nations Assembly, in which ten States asked for a discussion on this subject, as one "to remove all legal distinctions based on sex". The operative article of that Convention in fact, reads as follows :

"The Contracting States agree that, upon the ratification of this Treaty, men and women shall have equal rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions."

The term "equal rights" includes for women the economic rights advocated in this statement. But some people deny that to place a restriction on the woman worker which they wrongly describe as "protective" is to deprive her of any right. ²

It would constitute a great danger to the economic position of the woman worker if an international convention, purporting to give equality of rights in all spheres, were to be interpreted so as to make it possible to exclude women from the economic rights advocated in this statement. This would be to deny that these economic rights are rights where women are concerned. It is therefore essential that the text of any international convention should be clear on this point.

Action the Assembly is asked to take.

The Open Door International therefore asks that, if the Assembly adopts an international convention purporting to give equal status and equal rights as between men and women, such convention shall be so worded as to make it clear :

(a) That the equal status and equal rights proposed include for a woman, irrespective of marriage or childbirth, equal status and equality of rights with a man in her capacity as a worker for pay, so that a woman shall be free to work and protected as a worker on the same terms as a man, under legislation and regulations dealing with conditions and hours, entry, training and payment (including minimum wages and insurance), which are based on the nature of the work and not upon the sex of the worker ;

(b) That a ratifying State undertakes :

(i) To free itself from its obligations under any international convention which it may have ratified and which is inconsistent with the policy laid down in (a) above (see Annex below) ;

(ii) To repeal all national legislation and regulations inconsistent with this policy (see Annex below) ;

(iii) To enact national legislation to give effect to this policy.

(Signed) Chrystal MACMILLAN,
President.

(Signed) Winifred LE SUEUR,
Hon. Secretary.

¹ The method to be employed by a State for releasing itself from obligations following its ratification of a treaty or convention.

² There are also some who say that the above quoted text of this particular Convention does not ensure equality of rights as between men and women, but only equality of rights as between one man and another, and equality of rights as between one woman and another.

Annex

EXAMPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND OF NATIONAL LAWS SPECIALLY AFFECTING THE WOMAN IN HER CAPACITY AS A WORKER FOR PAY (1) WHICH ARE NOT BASED ON EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AND THEREFORE PUT WOMEN IN A LOWER STATUS THAN MEN, AND (2) WHICH AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION INTENDED TO GIVE EQUALITY OF RIGHTS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN SHOULD REQUIRE A RATIFYING STATE TO DENOUNCE OR REPEAL.

I. EXAMPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

(a) The *Berne Convention of 1906* which prohibits the industrial employment of all women at night in industrial undertakings in which more than ten men or women are employed, and has been ratified by Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

(b) The *Washington Convention of 1919* which prohibits the industrial employment of all women at night, and has been ratified by Albania, *Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Portugal, Roumania, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.* (Those in italics have adopted legislation or other measures which carry out the provisions of the Convention.)

(c) The *Geneva Draft Convention of 1934* which prohibits the industrial employment of all women at night except those in responsible positions of management and not ordinarily engaged in manual work.

(d) The *Washington Childbirth Convention of 1919* which prohibits the industrial employment of women for six weeks after childbirth and places burdens on the employers of pregnant women and women with newly-born children, and has been ratified by Argentina, Brazil, *Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Luxemburg, Nicaragua, Roumania, Spain, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.* (Those in italics have adopted legislation or other measures which carry out the provisions of the Convention.)

(e) The *Geneva White Lead (Painting) Convention of 1921* which prohibits the employment of all women in any painting work of an industrial character involving the use of white lead or sulphate of lead or other products containing these pigments and has been ratified by *Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary (conditionally), Latvia, Luxemburg, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Roumania, Spain, Sweden, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.* (Those in italics have adopted legislation or other measures which carry out the provisions of the Convention.)

(f) The *Geneva Draft Convention concerning the Employment of Women on Underground Work in Mines of All Kinds of 1935* which prohibits the employment of women, with certain exceptions, on underground work in any mine.

II. EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION.

(L.S. below stands for the *Legislative Series* published by the International Labour Office. *I.L.I.* stands for *Industrial and Labour Information*, published weekly by the International Labour Office).

(i) *Argentina.*

Decree of May 16th, under Act No. 11, 317, Section 8. Prohibition of the employment of women, *inter alia*, in the driving and care of cattle and from work in hospitals intended exclusively for infectious and contagious diseases. (L.S., 1927 — Arg. 3.)

(ii) *Australia.*

The Queensland Act of December 23rd, 1929 (20 Geo. V, cap. 28). Provision that the minimum wage of an adult male shall be sufficient to maintain himself, his wife and three children, and that the minimum wage of an adult female shall be sufficient to maintain herself. (L.S., 1929 — Austral. 6.)

(iii) *Austria.*

Decree of December 15th, 1933, compelling a married woman working in the service of the State to give up her post if her husband is likewise employed in State service and if, *inter alia*, his salary, together with her pension, exceed certain specified sums. (*I.L.I.*, February 19th, 1934, pages 262 and 263.)

(iv) *Belgium.*

Royal Decree of December 8th, 1934, authorising the Minister of Labour to lay down in each branch of industry the percentage of women (married or unmarried) to be employed.

(v) *United Kingdom.*

National insurance schemes for unemployment¹ sickness and invalidity² providing that the contributions paid by and on behalf of insured women and the benefits paid to insured women are lower than those for men, and requiring married women to fulfil more onerous conditions before receiving unemployment benefit.³ Provisions of the Trade Board Acts and the Orders made under them by which the legal minimum rate of wages for the lowest grade of female worker under more than forty trade boards has been fixed at a very much lower rate than that fixed for the lowest grade of male worker. (For actual rates see *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, September 1934, page 314.)

(vi) *Bolivia.*

Presidential Decree of September 21st, 1929. Prohibition of the employment of women in canteens, public houses, or in undertakings specified as unhealthy, and between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. (L.S. — Bol. 2.)

¹ Unemployment Act, 1935; Sections 8 and 21, Schedule 3, and Section 36, Schedule 4.

² National Health Insurance and Old Age Pensions Act, 1932; Section 3.

³ Unemployment Insurance (Anomalies) (Amendment) Regulations, 1933.

(vii) *Brazil.*

New Federal Constitution of July 16th, 1934, prohibiting to women work in unhealthy occupations.

(viii) *Canada.*

New Brunswick Act of April 10th, 1930 (20 Geo. V, cap. 11). Provision for the fixing of minimum wages for women and girls. (*L.S.*, 1930 — Can. 11.)

(ix) *Chile.*

Legislative Decree No. 178 (49) to ratify the Labour Code of May 13th, 1931. Prohibition of women's employment in works specified as beyond their strength or dangerous to their physical or moral welfare in view of their sex. (*L.S.*, 1931 — July 1st.)

(x) *Cuba.*

Legislative Decree of October 16th, 1934. Prohibition of the employment of women during the night in the terms of the Washington Night-work Convention of 1919. " This Decree provides that the admission of women to industrial or commercial employment must be preceded by a medical examination carried out by an official doctor, who will issue free of charge a certificate of fitness for the work they are to do. Women admitted to employment must be examined annually and on the occasion of every change in the nature of their work. Women employed in industrial undertakings may not be given work to do at home . . ." The Decree prohibits the employment of women on certain dangerous and unhealthy work, which it specifies, and on underground work and carrying loads. The National Health Board will periodically specify the classes of work regarded as dangerous and unhealthy in accordance with scientific progress. (*I.L.I.*, June 3rd, 1935. Pages 325 and 326.)

(xi) *Ecuador.*

Act of October 6th, 1928, prohibiting the employment of women between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m., but allowing women over 18 years of age in exceptional cases to work at night as nurses or in telephone offices, factories and cinemas. (*I.L.I.*, May 6th, 1929, page 168.)

(xii) *Estonia.*

Act relating to the employment of children, young persons and women in industrial undertakings. Power given to the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare to draw up, in agreement with the other Ministers concerned, a list of unhealthy and heavy occupations in which women must not be employed. (*L.S.*, 1924 — Est. 1.)

(xiii) *Finland.*

Resolution of the Council of State issuing regulations for work-places in the rubber-goods industry, November 15th, 1927, prohibiting the employment of female workers in the manufacture and packing of surgical goods. (*L.S.*, 1927 — Fin. 2.)

(xiv) *France.*

Article 217 of the Civil Code prohibits a married woman from signing a contract without her husband's consent, and she consequently cannot exercise a profession without his consent. Article 4 of the Commercial Code forbids a woman to engage in commerce without his consent.

(xv) *Germany.*

Act of June 30th, 1933 provides that a woman may not be appointed a permanent member of the Federal Civil Service until she has reached the age of 35. (*I.L.I.*, July 24th, 1933, page 167.)

(xvi) *Greece.*

Act. No. 3524 of January 13th, 1910. Consolidated October 28th 1929, Section 50. Prohibition of the employment of women in general on any work in mines and metallurgical establishments. (*L.S.*, 1929 — Gr. 5.)

(xvii) *Guatemala.*

Decree No. 1434 of April 30th, 1926. Prohibition of the employment of women for four weeks before and five weeks after childbirth. (*L.S.*, 1926 — Guat. 1.)

(xviii) *India (Bombay).*

Act gazetted May 9th, 1934. Prohibition of the employment of a woman in a factory for four weeks after childbirth, during which time the employer in whose factory she has been employed for not less than seven months previously is required to pay her a maternity benefit, and a woman who works in any factory during the prohibited time is liable to a fine. (*I.L.I.*, August 6th, 1934, page 202.)

(xix) *Italy.*

Decree fixing the proportions of women to be employed in Government services as follows : Vacancies in administrative departments, 5% ; in the telephone service, State manufacturing undertakings and hospitals, 10% ; with the exception of schools or of maternity or children's hospitals. (*I.L.I.*, January 1st, 1934, page 13.)

(xx) *Japan.*

Act No. 33 of March 29th, 1923. Prohibition of the employment of women to clean, oil, examine or repair dangerous parts of machinery or transmission apparatus in motion, or to perform any other dangerous work. (*L.S.*, 1923 — Jap. 1.)

(xxi) *Latvia.*

Seamen's Order of October 30th, 1928, prohibiting the employment of women under 18 on board ship. (*L.S.*, 1928 — Lat. 4.)

(xxii) *Lithuania.*

Requirement that an employer of women in bakeries shall allow breaks amounting in all to not less than half an hour on every working day on which they are employed for more than four hours. (*L.S.*, 1926 — Lith. 3.)

(xxiii) *Luxemburg.*

Provision in Grand-Ducal Decree that the employment of women, married or not, is subject to a preliminary authorisation by the Government. Speech of Mr. Krier (Workers' Delegate, Luxemburg) to the eighteenth session of the International Labour Conference. (*Provisional Record*, No. 13, June 15th, 1934.)

(xxiv) *Mexico.*

Decree of July 31st, 1934, prohibiting the employment of women in the sale of alcoholic liquor to be consumed on the premises. (*I.L.I.*, November 12th, 1934.)

(xxv) *Netherlands.*

Decree of June 13th, 1929, laying down less rigid regulations as to hours of work for a man employed as a barber, hairdresser or a watcher than those stipulated for women. (*L.S.*, 1929 — Neth. 5.)

(xxvi) *Peru.*

Decree of December 9th, 1930, requiring that a woman employed as a waitress or chambermaid in a hotel should have a permit, which is given subject to her producing certificates that she is of age and that in the view of the police she is of good conduct, and that the medical officer gives her a certificate of health. (*L.S.*, 1930 — Peru 2.)

(xxvii) *Poland.*

Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, of March 11th, 1927. Provision that an employer of more than 100 women must provide at his own expense a crèche for breast-fed infants not more than 15 months old, whose mothers he employs. (*L.S.*, 1927 — Pol.)

(xxviii) *Portugal.*

Decree No. 14498, of October 29th, 1927. Prohibits employment of pregnant women and nursing mothers, otherwise than in light work of short duration, not harmful to the physical and intellectual development or their morals. (*L.S.*, 1927 — Por. 6.)

(xxix) *Roumania.*

Royal Decree of January 30th, 1929. Prohibits women from working at night between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. in commercial as well as industrial undertakings, except where the Minister of Labour allows an extension of the hours for which they may work (*inter alia*, in restaurants, hotels, theatres and cinemas). (*L.S.*, 1929 — Rum. 1.)

(xxx) *Salvador.*

Decree of May 31st, 1927, by which an employer of commercial employees may compel a male employee to work 8 hours a day and a female 7 hours a day. (*L.S.*, 1927 — Sal. 1.)

(xxxi) *Union of South Africa.*

Act 22-1931, of May 29th, 1931, prohibiting the employment of women underground in a mine. (*L.S.*, 1931 — S.A. 1.)

(xxxii) *Spain.*

Royal Decree of August 23rd, 1926, under which a married woman requires the authorisation of her husband to enter into a contract of employment, and her husband can object to the courts to the payment to her of remuneration for her work, and the court may authorise her to receive her wages herself and utilise them for the requirements of the household. (*L.S.*, 1926 — Sp. 5.)

(xxxiii) *Sweden.*

Act of June 29th, 1912, amended by Act of June 12th, 1931, by which the Crown may prohibit the employment of women in occupations involving special risk of accident or which are specially exhausting or dangerous, or may prescribe the conditions under which they may work in such occupations. (*L.S.*, — Swe. 5.)

(xxxiv) *Switzerland (Glarus).*

An Act of May 5th, 1929, amending Section 6 in the Act of May 6th, 1923, prohibiting the employment on overtime of a woman expecting her confinement. (*L.S.*, 1929 — Switz. 3.)

(xxxv) *Turkey.*

Act No. 1593, respecting Public Health, of April 25th, 1930. Prohibiting the employment of a woman in a factory, workshop or public or private undertaking for three weeks before and three weeks after childbirth, unless a medical practitioner certifies that the health of the mother and child will not be prejudiced thereby. (*L.S.*, 1930 — Turk. 1.)

(xxxvi) *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.*

Order 177 of the People's Labour Commissariat of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, of May 17th, 1930, forbidding seventy-nine employments to women, including work with pneumatic hand-tools, in railway transport (as firemen, stokers, engine-drivers, wheel-examiners, pointsmen), in river transport (as helmsmen, engineers and pilots), and in marine transport (as seamen of all ratings, masters, mates, carpenters). (*L.S.*, 1930 — Russ. 3.)

(xxxvii) *United States of America.*

State of Wyoming. — Session laws 1890, ch. 20, December 31st, 1890, prohibiting the employment of women "in or about any coal, iron or other dangerous mine, or underground place whatsoever", except in an office or in the performance of clerical work.

State of New York. — Session laws 1912 and 1921 prohibiting the employment of a woman in a factory or in a mercantile establishment in towns over 3,000 population within four weeks after she has given birth to a child.

(xxxviii) *Venezuela.*

Labour Act of July 23rd, 1928, Section 16, prohibiting the employment of women in the retail sale of drink and in any undertakings likely to be detrimental to their morals or decency. (*L.S.*, 1928 — Ven. 2).

* * *

Note. — The above examples are in many cases taken from the *Legislative Series*, published by the International Labour Office. It is, however, possible that, in some cases, regulations or legislation may have been subsequently amended or repealed.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

NATIONALITY OF WOMEN.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, which is an organisation of Catholic women working to secure the political, social and economic equality of men and women and which is represented in twenty different countries, supports the principle of complete equality in nationality rights for men and women, whether married or unmarried, and views with satisfaction the inclusion of this subject on the agenda of the sixteenth Assembly of the League of Nations.

The Alliance hopes that an international convention may be drawn up incorporating the principle of equality and clearly expressing the right of a married woman to an independent personal nationality on equal terms with men.

The Alliance strongly supports the view expressed in the International Petitions of Catholic Men and Catholic Women (document A.33.1932.V), which were presented to the thirteenth Assembly of the League, begging "that a woman, whether married or unmarried, should have the same right as a man to retain or change her nationality".

The Alliance is also in complete accord with the detailed resolution on this subject passed by the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship at their congress at Istanbul, which is appended.¹

STATUS OF WOMEN.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance welcomes the inclusion of the subject of the status of women on the agenda of the sixteenth Assembly of the League of Nations. The Alliance attaches the greatest importance to this question, believing that the raising of the status of women throughout the world is not only a matter of justice but is one of social urgency,

¹ The text of this resolution will be found in the statement of the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship.

in that on it depends the release of the full services of women, half of humanity, for work in solving the problems and sufferings of the world.

Knowing that other international women's organisations have prepared for submission to the League a detailed statement concerning disabilities which women suffer in various countries, St. Joan's Alliance has not duplicated such a statement.

St. Joan's Alliance stands for full equality of women (married or unmarried) with men in all matters relating to the enjoyment of civil and political rights, including in particular equal rights of exercising electoral, legislative, juridical, executive or administrative powers and the right of being elected to or sitting on or voting as members of any public body exercising any such powers, and admission to all public employment, functions and honours, or the exercise of any professions or trades, with equal opportunities of advancement and without difference of pay.

In this way, we maintain the ideal may best be realised of giving every human being, man or woman, the opportunity of carrying out their own vocation without artificial obstacle.

The Alliance believes that it is possible to raise the status of women by means of an international convention and it urges that, in any international convention designed to give equal status to women with men, it should be made quite clear that any countries ratifying it accept the principles of equality set out above.

(Signed) Vera LAUGHTON MATHEWS,
Chairman.

UNION INTERNATIONALE DES LIGUES FÉMININES CATHOLIQUES.

STATUS OF WOMEN.

[Translation.]

The present memorandum is submitted by the Bureau of the Union internationale des Ligues féminines catholiques as a contribution to the work being done by the League of Nations in regard to the legal status of women.

This memorandum does not deal with the problem as a whole, but is intended only as a statement of the attitude adopted by the Union in regard to certain fundamental points.

It cannot be denied that this legislative work is at present urgently needed in many countries.

Whereas, in certain countries, women, even if adults, are deprived of personal freedom or are subjected to the shame of slavery, in other countries their legal status ensures for them, even if married, unlimited personal freedom and absolute economic independence, by which the stability of the family group may be endangered, and, finally, in other countries, the law perpetuates a situation of unjustifiable inequality as between men and women, by placing the married woman, more particularly, in a position of inferiority which is contrary to her personal dignity and by assimilating her to minors in respect of all acts of civil life, the Bureau of the Union internationale des Ligues féminines catholiques considers that laws, the object of which is to ensure for women the place due to them in the world, might with advantage be based upon the following considerations :

Woman is a person created for the attainment of a personal end which it is her right and duty to pursue freely.

Differences of a physiological and psychological character between man and woman do not imply any inferiority of either as compared with the other but lead to natural differences in aptitude for the performance of functions that are different but of equal importance.

The happiness of men and women, no less than the happiness of humanity, demands that each of them should be concerned for the common welfare and should perform those services for which they are respectively fitted by the aptitudes bestowed upon them by the Creator.

Such services cannot be real or complete unless men and women respectively make to society, in all the domains which require it, the human contribution which corresponds to the specific differences in their natures.

In regard to the domain of the family, which is the basis of society, the welfare of society, the welfare of man and woman united in marriage, the welfare of children, (1) demand the unity, stability and indissolubility of the conjugal union, (2) call for the co-operation of both parties to the marriage in the direction of the family group and in the work of educating the children. Consequently, the law should, in particular :

(1) Guarantee to woman freedom that is consistent with her nature and her dignity, freedom to choose her state of life and, if she chooses to marry, freedom to choose or freedom to accept her husband, respect of her right to provide for her own support by work that is adequately remunerated ;

(2) Recognise in fact the principle of equality in the matter of morals as between the sexes ;

(3) Contain provisions to the effect that a woman may never be deprived of her nationality ; that, in the event of her marriage, her nationality should not be affected

unless she freely consents thereto and that prospective parties to a marriage who are of different nationality shall each be entitled to adopt the nationality of the other, since it is natural that the family should have a common nationality and that such nationality should be determined as is best for the family group ;

(4) Adopt the notion of "co-operation" rather than that of "subordination" as the principle underlying the legal provisions which govern the respective rights and duties of the parties to marriage but, nevertheless, provide for the delegation of authority to the husband and father in the event of disagreement between the parties to the marriage constituting a serious danger to the life of the family group, subject at all times to the wife's right of appeal ;

(5) So regulate the system of property that the management of the family property is effected through the co-operation of the two parties to the marriage ;

(6) Admit the equal rights of man and woman in matters of guardianship and inheritance ;

(7) Intervene, so far as is necessary and possible, in order to create conditions of economic life of such a character that the work of the father may be sufficient to provide the resources that are necessary for the family and thus contribute to the removal of that inequality in the distribution of burdens which too frequently occurs in the families of wage-earners where, in present circumstances, the mother has to discharge, not only the duties of an occupation, but also those of household work.

(Signed) F. STEENBERGHE-ENGERINGH,

President.

(Signed) M. ROMME,

Secretary.
