

IS A WOMAN'S PLACE IN THE HOME?—A DEBATE

Rebecca West Says Man Wants to Go Back Home— Wife Should Stay There, Says Alfred Duff-Cooper

THE following excerpts are taken from the debate on the topic, "Is a Woman's Place in the Home?" between Rebecca West, British author, who is well known to audiences in the United States, and Alfred Duff-Cooper, Member of Parliament. The debate was one of a series given recently at the London School of Economics in aid of the King Edward Hospital Fund.



Captain Alfred Duff-Cooper.



Rebecca West.

MISS WEST SAYS:

"Man is throwing up his hands in the sphere of politics. He wants to go back to the home, and I think we ought not to oppose him because I feel strongly myself that the ideal person to take on the job of the politician is the married woman who has brought up her family. I think that the married woman who has spent most of her time instructing children in moral behavior would be the ideal politician."

MR. DUFF-COOPER SAYS:

"For most of us the home is the place of real importance. I believe that at present it is a bulwark against influences which threaten society. I believe that the results depend upon the home more than upon anything else to carry us through the dangerous times that lie ahead, and what is the home if it is to be deprived of its centre and heart, its dominating influence and presiding deity, the mother and the wife?"

power gives him—is the account of a man whom nearly all men admire—Napoleon. Of course, we always exult when we would like to be ourselves.

When we choose a god we choose one as much like ourselves as possible—or even more so! Now there is one man whom men do really admire, and that is Napoleon, and the cause of their admiration of Napoleon is that he was an enormous and extensive failure—a terrific male jester, who made the most tremendous failure ever seen, and who at his death had not only lost everything, but had also shorn his country of power, and had greatly diminished the vitality of the French people by calling for so much of their best for his army.

Winston Churchill's Secret. Who, for instance, is the most invincible and popular of our contemporary politicians—who keeps on being popular no matter what he does? Mr. Winston Churchill. I think his popularity is due to the fact that he is so richly a failure in everything he does; he has that extraordinary power, which counts for nothing, of being full of beans—a power which man has chiefly admired in the past.

We ought, therefore, to be sympathetic to men when they do realize their failure, and I think that this is what they are doing. After all, the Great War was a supreme example of the failure of men. The whole history of Europe, as far as its influences on the political ideas of men are concerned, came to a crisis in the great war, which was a very dreadful thing for the men themselves, yet it taught them a certain amount of reason. I think that we get an increasing sense of this fact as the political proceedings of exhausted statesmen become more and more absurd.

Women's Part in Politics. In the House of Commons, for instance, Winston Churchill is proposing to give pensions to widows. This is a very good thing, of course, and various parties have been asking for it for anything so absurd as that the childless woman should get a pension. It is, I think, scandalous. There is nothing behind it which can excuse this extraordinary waste of public money. If the money is there to be given away it ought to be given to the widows with children.

Respects Sympathy for Men. I think, therefore, that if we really understand now that men want to go back to the home we ought to be thoroughly sympathetic with them. After all, men do lose a lot by doing too much. One of the first consequences of overwork is lack of charm, and I ask,

I believe that the only reason why the proposal has been listened to, as it has been listened to, in the House of Commons, is that man is throwing up his hands in the sphere of politics. He wants to go back to the home, and I think we ought not to oppose him, because I feel strongly myself that the ideal person to take on the job of the politician is the married woman who has brought up her family. She may have had a certain amount of training in her youth in some scientific or professional occupation, but she is not likely to be able to go back to that work at the end of her married life because, more than likely, she has not got to touch with the higher intellectual processes during the years when most of her time was spent in conversation with her husband.

For, after all, politics do not often demand a very fine technique, and when they do, the technique is apt to change into intrigue. I think, therefore, that the married woman who has spent most of her time instructing children in moral behavior would be the ideal politician.

Call Our Politics Corrupt.

In America political parties at present are controlled by men of this new type. In England politics have had their groundwork settled by past ages when men really were interested in things outside the home, but in America they have not got that background, and the consequence is that American politics are extremely corrupt, and the men who are interested in business are totally uninterested in politics. Such men do not take any part in making politics into something that will really look after the future of America, because when they have finished their day's work—being modern men—they want to go home.

But the modern woman is now taking a real interest in politics, and in about twenty years' time American politics will largely be in the hands of women, and they will not stand the narrow mechanical legislation that men are now imposing on their country.

What is man when he has lost his charm? I think that if we really understand now that men want to go back to the home we ought to be thoroughly sympathetic with them. After all, men do lose a lot by doing too much. One of the first consequences of overwork is lack of charm, and I ask,

MAN'S VIEW OF WOMAN IN SCHEME OF LIFE

By ALFRED DUFF COOPER.

HAVE been studying this sex question for some thirty-five years. My first impression was that there was a certain difference between men and women. They sounded different and they looked different. My observations and researches I have made since those early impressions, my eyes have been opened and the testimony of my early years has been confirmed—that woman is different from man. As I say, they look different, they sound different, they act differently and they are shaped differently, and so my whole theory on this question is based on the premise that man and woman are different.

It might be thought that this was a generally received opinion, but it seems to me a bitter opposition exists, and the theory is indignantly denied by the majority of the human race. Personally, I think the trouble began about 140 years ago, when there were disturbances in the streets of Paris and men went about saying that all men were equal. Before they knew where they were they were reduced to the position that men and women were equal. Then, according to the old adage I used to hear at my nurse's knee, "One lie leads to another," and before the French knew where they were they were saying that all men and women were equal.

A Modern Question.

If men and women are different, I think they ought to be used for different purposes. But in this age of democracy, when one says that two people are different, one is immediately met with the question, "Which do you think is better of the two?"

I give half the troubles of today to the fact that people refuse to recognize differences. If I say that men and women are different things, they are intended for different purposes, they do not expect to be met with the criticism, "What! do you mean that just because this is a knife it can never do any of the work of prodding things?"

Man and woman are different in this respect, and I do not think that

one plays a greater part in the development of the world or in the important work of the world than the other, and I do say that they should be applied to different uses. It may be that the sphere of their activities occasionally overlaps.

When I consider the purposes, the uses, the work, to which woman should be, and in the past has been most usually devoted, I find that they are those activities which could always be employed and demonstrated in the home, and that is why I say that woman's place is in the home.

Let us consider these purposes: First and foremost, we cannot deny it, is the production and the education of children. There is a province into which men have never endeavored or even claimed to intrude, and I do not think that women should complain that there is anything to be learned in a function which is, after all, essential to the continuation of the race. The education of young children—what can be a nobler application for the activities of human beings, and what can be better carried on in the home and where better than in the home? There are those who think that nowadays these things should be done in communal establishments, but that opinion is restricted.

Importance of the Kitchen.

To travel to another department of the home—the kitchen. After all, whether we like it or not, the most spiritually minded of us have to feed two or three times a day, and as the human race will not continue for long without reproduction, it will not continue at all without the consumption of food. Therefore, I claim that this department of woman's activities is also of tremendous importance.

After all, it is the sum of little things which makes up the total of human happiness in the long run, and it matters more to every man that he should have two good meals a day properly cooked than that the nation's budget should be satisfactory. There again woman rules the kitchen as she rules the nursery, and she always has done so in every civilized country of the world.

To go from the kitchen to higher spheres, we come to the drawing room, where entertainment takes place. It is one of the most important attributes of woman and one of her most important tasks to comfort and console weary man on his return from his day's work on

behalf of the family. The task of consolation and comfort cannot be performed in public; it is essentially a matter which should be restricted to the home, and when she has comforted him sufficiently she proceeds to entertain her friends.

There again the modern world is competing with the home. The weary man is very apt nowadays to be dragged out from his comfortable home to a place of public amusement, to a place of communal refreshment which, in my humble opinion, is very inferior to the pleasure which he should enjoy in his own home. The pleasures of the night club, where it is impossible to dance because of the crowd, impossible to eat because of the noise, and impossible to talk because of the noise, are inferior to the old-fashioned pleasures which were enjoyed quietly and discreetly and becomingly in the privacy of the home.

Jane Austen as Example.

It may be thought by some that I have put the task of the woman too low, but I am prepared to admit that there are none of the higher functions of the human race which woman is not adequately equipped to perform. Perhaps the greatest thing which men or women can do is the production of scientific or artistic work. In my opinion, however, that, too, can always be done better in the home.

There is no greater exponent of the art of literature in England, or possibly in the world, than one who never left the home for a moment—Miss Austen—and who probably spent more long and weary hours in the home, and in a small home, than any novelist or artist has

ever done. Yet she found in these humble surroundings sufficient material to produce five complete masterpieces. I do not believe that our more traveled novelists have gained anything from their explorations which has put them on a footing with the stay-at-home artist.

After all, women need not be ashamed of the home as the place from which their activities are radiated, because the most important things, birth and death, happen there.

Would Like Men at Home.

For most of us the home is the place of real importance. Men have to go to work—which is much to be deplored. I think it would be much better if men could stay at home, too. I prefer the philosophy of Dr. Johnson, that anybody who works except for money is a fool. I am very sorry, but most men, and many women, must go to work. I think it would be better for them if they could stay at home and amuse themselves, because the majority of the work done by men leads to no good. Things they do for their own amusement are very much better.

As the home has been in the past our great mainstay and prop, and has survived the storms and buffets of generations, I believe that at present it is a bulwark against influences which threaten society. I believe that the results depend upon the home more than upon anything else to carry us through the dangerous times that lie ahead, and what is the home if it is deprived of its centre and heart, its dominating influence and presiding deity, the mother and the wife?

DR. BUTLER PRAISES THE LEAGUE AND ITS 'HUMAN' WORK

DR. BUTLER has returned recently from a visit to Geneva, where he had exceptional opportunities for observing the work of the League of Nations. He shows how the United States Government can lend its sympathy to the objects of the League, which he calls "one of the greatest public agencies of all time."

By DR. NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER, President Columbia University.

PERHAPS the most helpful way to approach the organization and operations of the League of Nations, established by the Treaty of Versailles, the Assembly of which is now holding its sixth annual session at Geneva, is to look upon it as the latest, the most wide-reaching, and by far the most hopeful of the many endeavors to secure human cooperation for the advancement of the highest human ends. In this particular instance the cooperating units are organized States, but the impulse behind the movement is none the less human, nor is its aim.

From the very beginning the covenant of the League of Nations, which forms Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, has been gravely misunderstood by a large portion of the population of the United States, and misinterpreted to them. It is expressly set out that the subscribing States agree to the covenant of the League of Nations "in order to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security."

This had been a boasted and eagerly pursued aim of the Government of the United States from the very beginning of the nation's history. Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, the Adamses, Michelson, Clay, Webster, Seward, Fish, Blaine, McKinley, Hay, Roosevelt, Root and Taft had each in turn been engaged in advancing this noble cause in official capacity. In our State documents and in the correspondence of our public men are to be found illustrations by the hundred of our profound interest in these matters, and, time and time again, formal declarations by the Congress of the United States have given definite and specific support to them.

In the light of these facts Americans must not think their neighbors in other lands peculiar if they are surprised when they see that an enterprise of this description is well and solidly launched and that the Government of the United States has no part in it whatever. There can be no use now in thrashing over old straw or in trying to affix blame or responsibility upon the political party or that, upon the political party or that. The simple fact is that the people of the United States, in two successive Presidential elections at which this cause

Columbia's President Calls It One of the Greatest Public Agencies of All Time and Tells How the American Government Can Aid Its Activities

and character of its accomplishments are certainly extraordinary. These have not included, as yet, some of the more spectacular results that are in view, but they have been, none the less, amazingly successful. It may very well be that the shortest line of approach to the establishment of national security, with resulting sharp limitation of armament, will be found to be not the most direct line but one which will proceed in roundabout ways and through the multiplication of kindly and helpful acts of international cooperation which of themselves carry conviction of the sincerity and high-mindedness of the nations which participate in them.

Take for example the field of public health. No one nation, however effective or meticulous its system of quarantine and inspection, can stamp out a disease like typhus when it becomes epidemic in Eastern Europe or in Asia. The subdivision of the Secretariat of the League which has to do with health, directed by a most competent and devoted Polish physician, has undertaken to deal with typhus and other epidemics as and when they appear. From Geneva for Eastern Europe and from Singapore for Asia, this body of scholarly and high-minded workers is engaged in stamping out at its origin the cause of one of the most destructive of human pestilences. Human lives are saved, human families are preserved, communities are made and kept fit for permanent residence and the general level of civilization is raised in a way that could not be done save through international cooperation.

Mandates and Exploiting Weakness.

This is but one of many illustrations that might be given of this very striking aspect of the League's work. It facilitates the visitor to Geneva to see the skill and accuracy with which the records are kept, the use of modern graphic methods in recording and in portraying statistics, and the practical steps taken to establish, and keep established, close and effective contacts with representatives and correspondents of the League in many lands. It is hardly possible to say that the people of the United States have no interest in such work as this.

Another undertaking is that which has to do with the so-called mandates system, a wholly new and most striking departure in international public law. For hundreds of years those stronger and more highly developed nations which came to have control over less advanced peoples, often in a distant hemisphere and with access to great wealth of natural resources, have dealt

with them as they would. Under such conditions, however high-minded any Government or its colonial department might be, there were many temptations to political and economic abuses of one sort or another to which abuses both offered invitation and gave protection.

At the Paris conference of 1919 the various powers, having stripped the German Empire of its colonies, divided these among different mandates. Similar action was taken at the San Remo conference of 1920 in regard to those possessions in Asia of which Turkey had been deprived. The principle of the mandate system is that the people of the territory affected are neither given their independence on the one hand nor annexed by a stronger power on the other. They are, rather, placed in the position of a minor or ward in civil law, whose affairs are to be managed by a trustee until he is able and competent to manage them for himself.

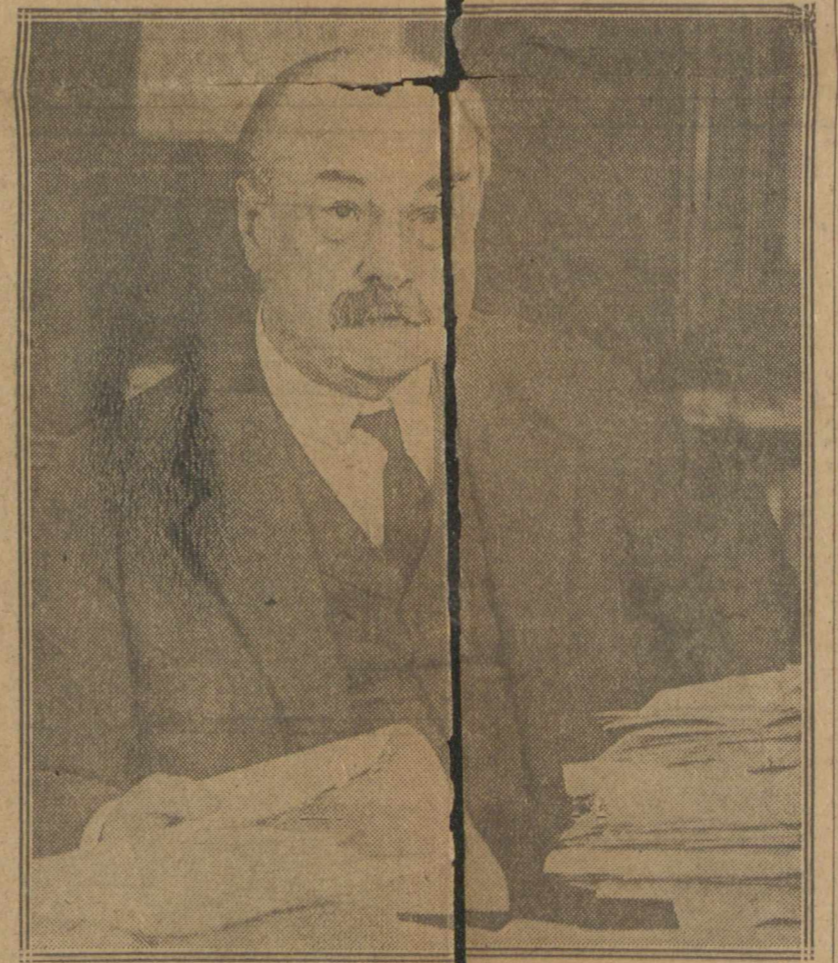
There are several interesting points to be observed in connection with the mandate system. In the first place, it represents a long advance over the old notion of simple conquest and exploitation of the weak by the strong, of those in a lower state of civilization by those in a higher. In the second place it recognizes the fact that nations, like human beings, must pass through a period of schooling in self-government and that they can gain most from a kindly and well-disposed schoolmaster. Without going too much into detail, it may be said that the mandatory system has been applied to Palestine, to Syria and Lebanon, to Transjordan, to Togoland and Cameroon, to Ruanda and Urundi, to Southwest Africa, to the Pacific Islands, to German New Guinea and to Nauru.

None the less this principle is now firmly embedded in international public law, and the advance which it represents is literally stupendous. Honestly and intelligently administered, the mandate system will make impossible those thousand and one forms of cruelty, greed and exploitation which have too often marked what is ironically described as the progress of civilization. It is hardly possible to say that the people of the United States have no interest in such work as this.

A third matter of large importance has to do with the protection of racial and religious minorities in Europe. When the Covenant of the League of Nations was drafted no mention of this topic was made. Treaties subsequently entered into, however, have placed upon the League responsibility for the protection of these minorities. The minorities problem is acute in countries like Transylvania, Hungary and Poland. It is plain that the administration of so delicate a matter as this must be easier than so to exercise the power conferred on the league as to bring down upon it the wrath of more nations than one.

Where abuses exist they are usually due to arbitrary administration by an individual, and the Government concerned is quite ready to deal with the matter on the basis of authoritative private representations from Geneva. Any public discussion of such a matter, however, would be fatal. One may wonder whether the protection of minorities can ever be completely effective as against the wrongheadedness and determined injustice of a racial or religious majority. This may be one of the bills that flesh is heir to.

The League has disposed once for all of secret diplomacy with its infinite possibilities of evil. For the United States secret diplomacy has always been impossible by reason of the constitu-



Nicholas Murray Butler.

United Photo.