

THE VOTE,
APRIL 16, 1920.
ONE PENNY.

POLITICAL PARTIES. WOMEN MUST FORCE THE PACE.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 16, 1920.

OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

THE YEAR'S POLITICAL WORK.

Our work during the year has been based on the resolutions passed at our Annual Conference last April; we have never ceased to demand the equal enfranchisement of men and women and the removal of women's professional and industrial disabilities. We have urged also the removal of married women's disabilities—that the married mother shall have equal rights with the father in the guardianship of their children, that they shall have an equal right with men to determine their own nationality, and that the incomes of husbands and wives shall be assessed separately. We have advocated that there shall be an equal moral standard for both sexes; we have pressed for prison reform; and on every possible occasion have insisted on the necessity of getting more women into Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

The week following our Conference, Dr. Knight and Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck went as our delegates on a deputation to the Home Secretary, organised by the Penal Reform League, when Dr. Knight pressed for women Governors and women doctors in women's prisons, and especially for women Police Commissioners. Mrs. Ayres Purdie gave evidence before the Income Tax Commissions on our behalf. We strongly supported the Nurses Registration Bill, and appointed a member to the Police Court Rota, who visited London Police Courts and watched the proceedings in the interests of women and girls.

Last May we sent a Memorial to the Prime Minister, signed by a great number of influential people, urging the Government to pass into law the Barristers and Solicitors (Qualification of Women) Bill, and subsequently held a public meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, with the same object.

In order to accustom the general public to the sight and sound of women candidates we have arranged in and around London several Model Elec-

tions—the candidates being women, and the count being taken by a member of the Proportional Representation Society. We supported the Justices of the Peace (Women's) Bill, and subsequently the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill; and we have sent to the proper authorities many names of women in and around London and in various parts of the country, whom we consider eminently suitable to act as Justices of the Peace. We are continuing to press that half the number on every magistrates' bench shall be women.

We strongly opposed the Pre-War Practices (Restoration) Act, and tried to secure an amendment to it which would have safeguarded the interests of women. We organised a Women's Right to Live Meeting early this year, at which we demanded equal opportunities for work for men and women. Throughout the year we have supported the women Teachers, the women Civil Servants, and the women Clerks in their efforts to secure equal pay for similar duties.

We worked hard to secure the passing of the Woman's Emancipation Bill, and just before its Second Reading issued a three-lined whip, signed by twelve other women's societies, to each Member of the House of Commons, urging him to be in his place on July 4th and to vote for the Bill, with its equal Franchise Clause. Before the close of last session we circularised our friends in the House of Commons urging them, if they secured a good place in the ballot, to use it for bringing in an Equal Franchise Bill; and we again asked them to support Mr. Grundy's Bill.

We organised a big Public Meeting in London in support of Votes for Indian Women, and urged upon Members of Parliament the advisability of supporting their claim to enfranchisement.

We have sent resolutions to the Minister of Health in regard to the Housing problem; we have urged that in the Unemployment Insurance Bill the contributions

and benefits of men and women shall be equal; and in various Corporation Bills before Parliament we have pressed upon Members the necessity of altering the Audit Clause so that qualified women accountants as well as men shall be eligible to audit the accounts of these Corporations.

As soon as we read in the Press that Elsie Smith had been sentenced to four months' imprisonment for "attempting to smother" her baby, and realised the circumstances which led up to it, we petitioned the Home Secretary for her release, and protested to the Prime Minister against the name of the father of the child having been suppressed in Court. With the help of Lloyd's Newspaper we secured more than ten thousand signatures to the petitions for her release. The Home Secretary, who had previously whitewashed the magistrate in Ellen Sullivan's case, fearing that he might be said to yield to public pressure, declined to release her unless new evidence could be secured in her favour!

Many of our members have been successful as candidates at recent Borough and Urban District Council Elections, and many others have supported their candidatures as well as the candidatures of other women.

Bye-Election Policy.

Where there has been no woman candidate at a Bye-Election we have either from Headquarters, or through our local Branch, sent questions to the Party candidates asking them, if elected, what support they will give to Bills in which we have a special interest, and what they are prepared to do in regard to any special grievances women may have as to unequal opportunities for work and unequal remuneration as compared with men.

THE MARRIED WOMAN TEACHER.

Writing in last Sunday's *Observer*, Dr. Marie Stopes registers an emphatic protest against making the resignation of women teachers who marry, compulsory by any authority. Voluntary resignation is a very different thing from compulsory resignation, and she affirms that "Married women (and all other men and women, too, for that matter) should be free to decide their own careers and their own fates. No profession should be arbitrarily and needlessly rendered a profession which offers those who undertake it the blank alternatives of either giving up their professional work or giving up their natural right as human beings to work at will."

Dr. Stopes further contends that local committees who frame rules for the dismissal of married women teachers direct their attack only on the *happy wife*, because:—

"Women openly unhappy in their marriages, breaking up their homes and living apart from their husbands, are eligible to be reinstated. And, further, it is not the motherhood of a woman to which objection is taken, for, in the same district, a woman who is the mother of an illegitimate child has sometimes been reinstated."

In Dr. Stopes' opinion, the teaching profession is pre-eminently suited to persons who are married, whether men or women, and she complains that the public, the children and the women teachers themselves suffer from this arbitrary ruling of many local committees. She thinks that there is no hope for the proper status of teachers in this country until the power of dismissal no longer remains in the hands of local committees, and continues:—

"The married teacher used to be taken as a matter of course, and to-day in many a district the *best* teachers in the schools are all married women, some with families, some without.

"If a woman with sufficient mental capacity to be a teacher desires to have a child, I see no reason whatever that she should not have six or nine months' leave. This can be arranged for, and therefore produces no unexpected crisis in the school; whereas the sudden illness of an unmarried teacher, without a day's warning, may dislocate the whole school, and she may be months away from work.

"If the unmarried woman would realise fully the threat to her possible future in the interference with the married woman's liberty, all women, married and unmarried, would unite in demanding, not that married women should be forced to work, but that they should never be forced out of work. If a woman has enough sense to be a wife and a potential mother, rest assured she has enough sense to decide whether she is going to carry on her Professional work or not. Once married, only the best, the born teachers, will go on teaching, and they are the ones most needed in the profession."

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE EASTER CAMPAIGN

N.U.T. CONFERENCE, MARGATE.

Under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League a public meeting was held in the Congregational Hall, Union Crescent, Margate, when Mrs. How-Martyn, B.Sc. (Middlesex County Council) was invited to speak on "Equal Pay for Equal Work." Another great speaker of the evening was Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, India's great poet and orator, who spoke on the subject of "Women in India." Thanks to the efforts of Miss Alix M. Clark, the meeting was very well attended, and proved a great success. Miss K. L. Webb, the secretary of the N.U.T. Conference, Margate, presided. Mrs. How-Martyn, in a brilliant speech, emphasised the importance of women's work, more specially in the educational sphere. She suggested that if more women were put on the educational councils they would do a great deal of good, and increase the efficiency of the educational system. As for the Equal Pay for women, she said the demand was quite just, for the principle was based on justice, and she could not understand how the National Union of Teachers could have adopted the Burnham Report. Mrs. How-Martyn's speech was enough to convince the sceptics and unbelievers, if there were any in the meeting. Mrs. Naidu told the British audience that in India such a question as Equal Pay for Equal Work would never arise. There would be no question about women separate from that of men. Women worked side by side with men towards a common goal, viz., the unity of the whole nation. There would be no sex antagonism, for men in India are too chivalrous to think of doing injustice to their women. Her fiery speech, as usual, went deep into the hearts of her hearers, and must have filled with shame the male part of the audience who entertained any thoughts of committing the indignity of depriving the women of their just demand.

Miss Webb, from the chair, summed up excellently, and Miss Braise, of the Middlesex Education Committee, proposed a vote of thanks to the two speakers of the evening. She dwelt feelingly on the useful educational work that Mrs. How-Martyn has done in Middlesex. Miss Craig, of Sunderland, seconded the vote of thanks, and pointed out that men demanded more pay on the ground that they had to support a family, but they forgot that women too had often to provide for a sick husband, mother, or other relative.

The meeting dispersed with many expressions of appreciation to the Women's Freedom League for their constant great help in running this Campaign every year at the N.U.T. Conference. About 700 copies of THE VOTE have been sold and 100 of Mrs. How-Martyn's pamphlets on "The Need of Women M.P.s."

HANSA MEHTA.

[Miss Hansa Mehta, B.A., daughter of the Prime Minister of Baroda, made a charming maiden speech at Margate on April 6th, at a meeting of the Women's Freedom League, in support of Mrs. How-Martyn's address on "Equal Pay for Equal Work." The audience was delighted with both the manner and matter of her graceful and brilliant remarks.]

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

No Votes for Nurses!

At the Wimbledon Borough Registration Court, 39 nurses at five local hospitals who claimed the vote under the Service Franchise were refused their rights. These nurses occupied bedrooms by virtue of their employment. The Registration Officer (Mr. A. Steele Sheldon) maintained that the "discipline which must obtain in well-ordered hospitals would not permit a nurse or a domestic servant to exercise in regard to her bedroom the ordinary rights which a man exercised in respect of his own dwelling house." What kind of discipline, then, obtains in barracks and other "well-ordered" establishments inhabited by male voters?

A Useful Precedent.

Mrs. Wilton Phipps has been elected Vice-Chairman of the London County Council, the first woman to hold this position.

Wisdom from the Bench.

Last week, at Newcastle Petty Sessions, a young miner was convicted of a criminal assault last November on a girl of 16. The Chairman, in summing up, said both counsel had repeatedly appealed to the jury as "men of the world." The pity was that, in cases of this description, there were not also serving on the jury some women of the world. It was good to know that the time was coming when women might be serving on juries, for with a jury composed half of men and half of women, many difficult problems coming before the Courts might be the more effectively solved.

Chinese Girls for University.

This week five girl students will be admitted to the Peking Government University, a recognition of the principle of co-education.

Getting nearer Equality.

Middlesex women teachers in elementary schools are to have the same yearly increases of pay as the men.

Lady Astor and Women Teachers.

Lady Astor has joined a joint committee of M.R.s and members of the National Federation of Women Teachers to press in Parliament for equal pay for women teachers.

Record of Year's Work directed by Miss McMillan.

According to the tenth annual report of the invaluable work carried on by Miss Margaret McMillan at the Deptford Health Centre, the past year has seen many developments in the centre. A clinic for eyes and teeth cases and operations was opened at 24, Albany Street, Deptford, the old clinic at Deptford Green being reserved for minor ailments. In May a new hostel was opened at 78, Wellington Street, and in September a new shelter, with baths for the three and four year olds.

Miss McMillan states that she is signing an agreement by which she will surrender all right to the nursery school, clinics, washing centre, and hostels—with the exception of Evelyn House—in September, 1924. The full value of the property given over to the L.C.C. will exceed £7,000. Miss McMillan adds: "I have secured, as I hope, the open-air nursery school and all its development in the few years still before me."

Woman Magistrates in Lancaster.

Last week, four women justices qualified and took their seats for the first time on the bench of magistrates at Lancaster Quarter Sessions. They were: Annie Elizabeth Helme (Lancaster), Jane Elizabeth Heywood (Ulverston), Margaret Marion Kenyon (Bury), and Elizabeth Jane Walsh (Darwen). It is recorded that there was only one prisoner for trial.

First Woman Magistrate in Derbyshire.

Miss Violet Markham (Mrs. James Carruthers) has been appointed a Justice of the Peace.

Another Profession opened for Women?

At an extraordinary general meeting of the Auctioneers and Estate Agents' Institute, held in London last Friday, it was decided to revise the articles of association in order that women might be admitted to the profession on the same footing as men.

This decision is subject to confirmation at a later meeting.

Waterloo Free Buffet.

This buffet for soldiers and sailors, established in December, 1915, was closed down last week, having outlived all similar institutions. It has catered for nearly 8,000,000, at a cost of £15,000, and was worked for four years by Mrs. Wilson, who received the C.B.E. in recognition of her services. The maximum number of men supplied a day was 11,000, and as every one of these men drank two cups of tea, and a good many were known to drink seven, it is claimed that this buffet has supplied many millions of cups of tea during its lifetime.

Women Civil Servants.

The Federation of Women Civil Servants, who are dissatisfied at the unequal standards of pay, recruitment, and opportunities granted to women throughout the Service, are organising deputations to heads of Government departments, and a procession and demonstration on April 28th. They will form up in Hyde Park with bands and banners, march along Oxford Street, and afterwards hold a mass meeting in Kingsway Hall.

International Women Suffrage Alliance

President Wilson has appointed Mrs. Josephus Daniels, wife of the Secretary of the Navy, to be the official United States delegate at the Congress of this Alliance to be held at Geneva in June.

In His Majesty's Forces.

There are 413 women motor-drivers employed by the Army and 889 women employed in Army mechanical transport depôts.

The Warrior-Maid. At Last!

It is officially announced that the Pope will, on May 7, consult with his Bishops on the canonisation of Joan of Arc, which is due to take place on May 16.

Hungarian Woman M.P.

A lady school-teacher has been returned at a by-election for one of the Budapest divisions. She is the first woman Deputy to be elected to the Hungarian Parliament.

FOR THE FUNDS! White Elephant Sale.

MINERVA CAFÉ.

Friday, April 30,—3.30—5.30
and 7.0—8.30.

Ladies and Gentlemen! clean out your homes and bring us all your unwanted goods, books, china, furniture, toys, clothing for men, women and children, boots, etc. Address to Mrs. McLeod, at 14½ High Holborn.

Arrange to meet your friends here on April 30th and Come and Buy. Tea always ready.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 16th, 1920.

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To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

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EDITORIAL.

The Editor is responsible for unsigned articles only. Articles, paragraphs, or cuttings dealing with matters of interest to women generally will be welcomed. Every effort will be made to return unsuitable MSS. if a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

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POLITICAL PARTIES.

WOMEN MUST FORCE THE PACE.

In *Our Open Column*, Miss Jacob deals with a subject of special interest to members of the Women's Freedom League—the support of women parliamentary candidates at elections. Our present policy is to support any woman candidate, irrespective of her Party, who is prepared to fight both inside and outside Parliament for equal opportunities, equal rewards and equal responsibilities for women with men throughout all branches of our national life, provided that her candidature is agreeable to the members of our Branch, if we have one in the constituency for which she stands. The need for more women in Parliament is so urgent—there are more than seven hundred constituencies and only one woman at present in the House of Commons—that, in our opinion, the Party label of the women who get there is a matter, for the moment, of quite secondary importance. To mention only one matter, there are now three different Criminal Law Amendment Bills to be brought before Parliament, and only Lady Astor to voice women's point of view when they are discussed. Can it be contended that the point of view of other women would be less valuable on this important matter because of the Parties to which they happened to belong? Many women would dispute Miss Jacob's assertion that there are now only two Parties, for Mr. Lloyd George's attempt at the fusion of Conservatives and Liberals has apparently led to a good deal of disillusion on the part of members of both those Parties; but, be that as it may, and even supposing that all political efforts were reduced to the support or opposition of our capitalist system, the Women's Freedom League, as a non-party organisation, would still urge the necessity of getting women of both sides in to fight out their opposing theories on the floor of the House of Commons. But politics are not so simple as Miss Jacob suggests. Every year they grow more complex, both as regards our national life and international relations; and women of all shades of opinion, women of all classes and of all kinds of experience, are needed in Parliament to give all the assistance they possibly can in solving the pressing problems of the near future. Women who are attached to political parties have a special responsibility. They should exert every effort to secure that capable public-spirited women are put forward by those parties and run as parliamentary candidates with all the force and strength of their party organisations at the next election. In this way women who are strong party women will in many cases have a chance of working and voting for their own party women candidates, while women who are not so firmly attached to a particular party can work with good con-

science for Independent women candidates, or for good women candidates of any party. We repeat—the really important thing is to get women into Parliament; and to secure that object women parliamentary candidates should be encouraged to enter the field without delay, either as the nominees of parties or as Independent candidates.

So long as the franchise for men and women is unequal, and while women continue to suffer under so many disabilities in the eyes of the law, it is very difficult for many women to be whole-hearted adherents to any party. It is true that the Labour Party has brought in a Bill to concede to women equal voting rights with men; but that same party forced on the Government its Pre-War Practices (Restoration) Act, which presses so hardly on working women, and prevents them from gaining a livelihood in so many trades and sections of trades in which they became skilled workers and earned good wages during the war. The Government can claim that it has passed its Sex Disqualification Removal Bill, by which women are allowed to enter the legal profession, to sit on juries, and the magistrates' bench; but it refuses to open the higher posts in the Civil Service to women on equal terms with men, and denies to women teachers, women civil servants and women clerks the same remuneration which it accords to men for similar duties. Where is the political party which works strenuously for equal pay for equal work for men and women? Which political party presses for women to become members of the Privy Council, for the right of British-born women to their own nationality, for the laws of inheritance to be equal for men and women, for mothers to have equal rights of guardianship with fathers over their children, for equal marriage and divorce laws, and for an equal moral standard for both sexes? There may be, there probably are, men of all parties willing to support these claims; but, until the parties put them definitely on their programme and press for them in our legislature, many women will continue to remain in the wilderness so far as men's political parties are concerned. In the meantime we are convinced that women's outside organisations are absolutely necessary to force the pace of men and women inside political parties in order to secure the complete removal of all existing inequalities of the law and custom as between men and women.

THE WOMAN JUROR.

Mr. Holford Knight, in the April Number of *The Englishwoman*, gives us just what so many women have been asking for. He provides exactly the kind of information required for the successful carrying out of this particular public function, which has hitherto been rather obscurely treated. Women liable for jury service since the passing of the Sex Disqualification Act, are (a) Householders assessed to the poor rate or to the inhabited house duty at not less than £30 a year in Middlesex and the County of London, or £20 in other counties. (b) Residents possessing £10 a year in real estate or rent-charge, or £20 in leaseholds held for not less than 21 years. (c) Burgesses in certain boroughs. Women are also eligible as jurors in cases (a) and (c) in respect of a joint occupation of premises with men. Jury lists are prepared each year in July, and printed copies exhibited on the doors of all places of worship for the first three Sundays in September. During the last week in September the Justices hold a special sessions to revise the list, and claims for exemption or insertion should then be made. The list as then approved (there is no appeal from the justices) is printed and comes into operation on the first of January for the next year. Mr. Holford Knight explains the duties involved in jury service, and confronts the objections of the anti-suffrage mind, concluding his article on a hopeful note: "The opening of jury service to woman is a symbol of her comradeship with man in building a new and better order."

"THE LAND OF THE FREE!"

A TEA-CUP TALK.

Mary.—How disappointing women are. They go to school and college, and yet remain narrow and conventional, if they are not frivolous and unbalanced.

Joan.—Is that in spite of their education or because of it?

Mary.—I have never considered the question. Perhaps they have been wrongly taught.

Joan.—Modern education for women is not quite sixty years old. From whom did it emanate?

Mary.—From the demand of women themselves, I am told. And most teachers are women, so women must be to blame, if anything is wrong.

Joan.—Are school courses of study and examinations, college and university courses and examinations, laid down, settled and schematized by women?

Mary.—I suppose not.

Joan.—But these give the standard for education, and therefore impose male ideals of life and conduct. So, for the last sixty years, while studies have flourished, the woman student has been forced to occupy an inferior position in the sphere of intellectual work.

Mary.—But was not this always so?

Joan.—No. In ancient times and in the middle ages women were the source of knowledge, as of life, and they passed their lore down, from mother to daughter, through the centuries.

Mary.—I don't quite see why the change to male education was a change for the worse.

Joan.—It was so partly because selfishness came in. Woman, possessing a more developed organism than man and a deeper spiritual nature, was thereby fitted to hold her place as Mother and Ruler. But a male autocracy, to keep itself intact, must crush these claims, and must see to it that woman's brain is not allowed full development. So woman became narrow and accustomed to the unnatural limitations which had been there as long as she could remember. She became conventional for a livelihood, obedient to farmyard law, and her owner fed her as a reward.

Mary.—I think I follow you. We should not blame women for the limitations imposed upon them.

Joan.—Assuredly not. But still less should we blame them for surmounting these limitations, even if this means flying, an exercise severely discouraged by owners of domestic fowl.

Mary.—But surely we are past this stage. Women can now be well educated.

Joan.—They can if their fathers allow it, for the mothers, pecuniarily subservient, have not the final word on schooling, as everyone knows. Then there is much lee-way to make up.

Mary.—How so?

Joan.—From the time of Queen Elizabeth till the middle of the nineteenth century Education was not for women. At the "Reformation" the great public school foundations, which were intended for boys and girls, were deflected from their proper use and devoted entirely to boys. Professions open to women in the Middle Ages also became a monopoly of men. "The Ignorance Gap" for women lasted three centuries! Some professions are open to women now, but even in those cases there are quiet corners where the Good Boy keeps the professional "Plums."

Mary.—The War provided careers for many women.

Joan.—Yes, and they were taken away just when they were most wanted for production of Peace goods. Where are the Munition Girls? Their machines, with but slight adaptation, could have been whirring still, and providing us with goods for daily wear and use, and them with work. "Where's Troy and where's the Maypole in the Strand?"

Where is the daily bread for the women who were "splendid," who "saved the country," and "won the war"?

Mary.—But surely you agree that the men should have their jobs again.

Joan.—Individual men, for whom, by name, individual jobs had been kept, should have them. If the man in question did not return, then the woman who filled his place and did his work (so admirably we may say) should keep that post. A million casualties in the war means a million women staying on, if justice were considered.

Mary.—I thought the women wished to leave.

Joan.—That is a mistake. They were, and are still, being hounded out by the sex-jealousy and selfishness which imagines that it is a gain to the race if women can be made weak and dependent.

Mary.—But were not the employers anxious to get the men back?

Joan.—Most employers greatly preferred women workers, as producing greater output, and being more reliable and skilful. But they were so harassed and intimidated by inspections and threats of the Trades Unions (which are systematically attacking women's independence) that they gave way, and dismissed their expert workers.

Mary.—Why do these men not want women to earn money?

Joan.—Partly because they know that independent women are not driven into marriage, or illegal union, by stress of poverty.

Mary.—That seems a low motive.

Joan.—It has been openly expressed by workmen, "When the women are not getting all that money they'll try to please us." In other words: "They'll marry us when all other resources fail them."

Mary.—Dear, good men. They are not vain!

Joan.—No; but they are short-sighted, because in excluding women from Trades' Unions and paying them less than men, they encourage them to "undersell" men.

Mary.—But surely women seldom do exactly the same work as men, even in the same trade.

Joan.—That is true, but the inequality of work is often purposely arranged. A slight re-adjustment or variation makes the woman's task a little different from (though not necessarily easier than) the man's, and the excuse for under-pay is ready.

Mary.—But is good pay really essential for a woman? After all, a man has to keep a wife and family, while a woman only keeps herself.

Joan.—Do you mean that every man should be paid for several persons' keep, or only married men?

Mary.—Married men, I suppose. Bachelors don't need more than one wage.

Joan.—Then does an employer hasten to raise a man's salary when he marries?

Mary.—Well, no, and I have heard of married men whose salaries have even been lowered, because it was thought they would not dare to leave.

Joan.—And what of widows working for children, or spinsters keeping parents? Do they have higher wages on that account?

Mary.—Certainly not. It is even made a pretext for grinding them down.

Joan.—It is clear, then, that the value of work is still counted by the unit. "Widows' Pensions" would be (technically) payment by the State for work done for the State.

Mary.—I see the point of Widows' Pensions, but in the home I do think husband and wife should be one.

Joan.—Which one?

Mary.—Now you pose me.

Joan.—The Law will help you to a decision.

Mary.—What does the Law say?

Joan.—The Law says that the husband is the one, and the sole parent of the child.

Mary.—Never! There must be some mistake.

Joan.—There are several. As to authority over the child, the Law ignores the wife completely. The

husband is allowed by law to place the children in any domicile he chooses, and need not tell his wife where they are (an exception being made for those under seven). He can change their religion, education and mode of life as he thinks fit. He can appoint by will a guardian to act with his widow and need not get her consent.

Mary.—This sounds like Persia or Turkey.

Joan.—No; it is the "Land of the Free."

Mary.—What did you say about the children under seven?

Joan.—The wife, if perfectly good and moral (oh, the pious laws!) is allowed to call on the babes, that have been removed from her care, occasionally. The Hon. Mrs. Norton, who worked for years to obtain this great privilege for future mothers, describes her own mental torture, suffered on these "occasions."

Mary.—It is wicked and scandalous. And this is still the law?

Joan.—Yes. But of course there are millions of husbands who would never take advantage of it. These laws seem to be the product more of stupidity and insensibility than of intentional wickedness.

Mary.—Well, I suppose you will tell me next that a man can drag his wife about without her consent.

Joan.—Not now. But up to 1891, when the decision in "Regina versus Jackson" established the wife's freedom, the husband was within his legal rights if he used force to put his wife where he chose. And that is not so very long ago.

Mary.—How disgraceful! I had no idea, I ought to have come to see you years ago.

K. A. RALEIGH.

THE BASTARDY BILL, 1920.

We urge all our readers to secure a copy of this Bill, and to urge their local Members of Parliament to see that it does not pass without full discussion of all its clauses. We are strongly opposed to many of its provisions, most especially one which makes the child a Ward of the Court and practically deprives the mother of the guardianship of her child, connecting it with the Police Court from its earliest infancy; and another which seeks to compel the mother to give the name of the child's father. We have had more than enough attempts at compulsion of women through endless ages, and we instinctively repudiate any further effort in this direction. The Second Reading of the Bastardy Bill will take place in the House of Commons, Friday, May 7th.

OLD AGE HOMES.

Miss C. E. Harrison, in the April *Cornhill*, describes with justifiable pride ("Another Plea for Old-Age Homes") how ever since 1869 such Homes have been in existence in London.

A certain Miss Green, 50 years ago, took up Housing for the Aged, and, with her friends, rented a little house in Notting Hill, speedily filled by aged applicants. Soon other houses were added, till now there are 19 in London and the Suburbs, with 179 rooms sheltering 201 old men and women. They are free, unfurnished, with fire in Winter, medical attendance and a lady visitor. The inmates, 170 of whom are Old-Age Pensioners, live to a ripe age.

There are also 27 similar Homes, organised by various local committees, in and around London, and many as far off as Toronto and other places.

The Outlook

The Weekly Review of Politics, Reconstruction, Literature, Drama, and Art.

SIXPENCE WEEKLY.

The Woman's Outlook. A section of "The Outlook" is devoted

Weekly to the Interest of Women and Reviews on

SOCIAL, POLITICAL, INDUSTRIAL AND DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

IN THE

WOMAN'S INTEREST.

SATURDAY, 24th APRIL, ISSUE

MISS NINA BOYLE

ON

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S ILLEGITIMACY BILL.

The special article appearing in the "Woman's Outlook" weekly is contributed by women thoroughly conversant with the subject with which it deals. These articles in turn cover the many fields of women's work. Together with this weekly article appear notes on current topics of interest. A further article appears every week of more domestic interest dealing with the home, garden, dress, etc.

The Outlook

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS, W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, April 16.—Model Election, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Conservative Candidate (to be announced later); Independent, Miss Gibson; Labour, Mrs. Ayres Purdie; Liberal, Mr. Lawson; Teacher, Miss Froud. Chair: Mrs. Tanner. 7.30.

Monday, April 19th.—Kensington Branch Meeting, 144, High Holborn. Conference Resolutions and Instructions to Delegate. 6 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20.—Public Meeting, Congregational Church Lecture Hall, The Vineyard, Richmond. Speakers: Mrs. Chas. Beatty, C.B.E., Miss F. A. Underwood. Subject: "The League of Nations." Chair: Councillor Mrs. Edwards. Admission free. 8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 21.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Councillor Margaret Hodge. Subject: "Old Faiths and New Ethics." 3 p.m.

Friday, April 23.—National Executive Committee, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 2.30 p.m.

Friday, April 23.—Dinner to Conference Delegates, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. 6.30. Tickets 3s.

Saturday, April 24.—Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Council Chamber, Caxton Hall, Westminster. 10 a.m.

Sunday, April 25.—Reception to Conference Delegates at Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. 3—5 p.m. Special Tea, 9d.

Wednesday, April 28.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Mrs. Nevinson. Subject: "The Bastardy Bill, 1920." 3 p.m.

Friday, April 30.—White Elephant Sale, Minerva Café, afternoon 3.30—5.30, and evening 7.0—8.30. Please send goods to Mrs. McLeod at the Office.

Wednesday, May 5.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speakers: Miss Helen Ward, Mrs. Abbott. Subject: "The Geneva Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance." 3 p.m.

Friday, May 7.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Debate: "That only very exceptional women are fitted to sit in Parliament." Opener: Councillor Margaret Hodge. Opposer: Miss Helena Normanton, B.A. Admission 1s., 7.30 p.m. Chairman: Dr. G. B. Clark.

Monday, May 17.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Miss Horniman, M.A. Subject: "Theatrical Reminiscences." 7.30 p.m.

Saturday, October 2.—Dance, Caxton Hall, Westminster. Friday, November 26 and Saturday, November 27.—Green, White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

PROVINCES.

Saturday, April 17.—Middlesbrough. Miss Muriel Matters will lecture in the Suffrage Club, Linthorpe Road, on the Montessori Method. 10.30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 20.—Portsmouth. Public Meeting, The Grand Jury Room, Town Hall. Speaker: Miss Elsie Morton. Subject: "Proportional Representation." Chair: Mrs. Whetton. 7 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20.—Central London Parliament. Minerva Café, 7 p.m.

Monday, April 26.—Westcliffe-on-Sea. Labour Hall, Southend: Mrs. Stafford Bailey on "The Uselessness of Vivisection," 7 p.m.

Friday, April 30.—Rye. Model Election. Miss Elsie Morton.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Friday, May 21.—Kingsway Hall. International Women Suffrage Alliance. Public Meeting to prepare for Geneva Congress. Chair: Mrs. Pethick Lawrence. Speakers: Miss Maude Royden, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mrs. Philip Snowden. 7.30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m.

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OUR OPEN COLUMN.

(To the Editor of THE VOTE.)

Dear Madam.—As I am voicing the feeling of a section of women in the W.F.L., I trust my letter may not be without its use. It seems to me that in adopting the policy of supporting at elections any and all women, irrespective of party, the W.F.L. is accepting the somewhat contemptuous outlook we most of us have on the present corrupt system of party politics. I grant that we have very good reason for this attitude, but it is not helping to remedy the evil to turn our backs on it and consider ourselves as an isolated section of the community, being women, only concerned with our own particular feminine interests. Now the three parties represent three divergent philosophies—at least, they did. We see that these three parties are now practically two. The Conservatives and Liberals are out to maintain the status quo (with more or less palliative reforms) and the Labourites to replace the present system with an entirely different one.

I should be the last person to deny the very urgent need of reforms where women are concerned, and I have done my bit from the beginning of the active movement in 1906 to bring about these reforms. But it is being borne in upon me that to ignore the party system as being no concern of ours is going to land us women into serious difficulties. We have been accustomed for so many centuries to beg from our masters successive alleviations of our subject condition, that we still are influenced by this age-long habit. Now that we older women are enfranchised, it is up to us to enquire into the party system (not ignore it) and temper its purely male-made outlook by our female influence in order to bring about human-made politics. I cannot see any sane alternative to the necessity of women siding with one or other of the two philosophies that are presented to us at the present day—are we going to throw our influence on the side of maintaining the capitalist system, or are we to help forward the daily strengthening socialist tendencies? It is up to us to search out the ideals of the two philosophies and decide once for all which appeals to us as women, and then throw all our weight into that body that we consider most likely to realise our ideals for the human race. One or other of these philosophies must in the end triumph, and if we leave it to evolve on purely male-made lines, we can have only ourselves to blame. Already I see danger to women in this evolutionary process. Among so-called "progressive" men there is surviving the idea of the fundamental and essential superiority and dominance of the male sex, giving them the right to say how far women may go and to lay down for women what their functions are in the community. In the big fight before humanity it is our duty, as women, the larger half of the race, to ally ourselves openly and fearlessly on one side or the other, so that the future may be built, not on a male-made system, but on one that is human-made. Unless we are alive to the situation we shall find that our last case is worse than our first. It is not a matter of no moment to which party we belong. If we use our vote we are supporting one party or the other, whether we like it or not. As a constructive policy, may I advocate debates, addresses, etc., on the principles of the various parties, so that women cannot shelter themselves behind the cry, "I did not know"?—Yours faithfully,

G. H. JACOB, B.Sc.

EDINBURGH.

(To the Editor of THE VOTE.)

Madam.—Judging from the report in THE VOTE, Miss Rebecca West seems to have given the members of the Freedom League a peculiar reading of Spanish history. Because, over a period of some hundreds of year, a certain number of nuns, some very bad, and some very mad, came up before the Inquisition, she asks us to believe that the downfall of Spain was due, not as is commonly supposed, to the ambition and incompetence of her kings and politicians, but to the evil machinations of her nuns. This theory would be pleasing no doubt to some people, but they would have to be very credulous to believe it.—Yours faithfully,

LEONORA DE ALBERTI

55, Berners Street, W. 1.

BRANCH NOTES.

PORTSMOUTH.

Many thanks to all the members who helped with the Jumble Sale. They will be pleased to know about £6 was realised. There will be a Public Meeting on Tuesday, April 20th, on "Proportional Representation." Miss Elsie Morton, of the Proportional Representation Society, will be the speaker, and there will be an illustrative P.R. Election. The Mayor has very kindly lent us the Grand Jury Room for this meeting. The chair will be taken at 7 p.m. by Mrs. Whetton.

Gratefully acknowledged for Local Election Fund: Miss Peacock, 5s.

MISS MAUD ROYDEN.

Kensington Town Hall. Fellowship Services on Sunday. 3.15: Dr. Percy Dearmer—"The Appearances at the Resurrection"; 6.30: Miss Maude Royden, Subject: "Christianity and other Religion." Master of the Music, Mr. Martin Shaw.

FRIDAY,
APRIL 16,
1920.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

SOUTH EASTERN BRANCHES.

HASTINGS.

Organiser—Miss WHITE, Magazine House, Winchelsea.

A very successful Meeting was held at the Town Hall, Hastings, last week, when the Rev. S. H. Wing and Miss Margery Fry gave inspiring addresses on the subject of Penal Reform. The Rev. S. H. Wing was the first speaker. He said those who constituted the criminal class were not thus because they were essentially worse than themselves, but as the result of the environment into which they were born—they were more susceptible to the influence which ever surged in the hearts of men. There had already been some slight improvement, but they realised the hardships the prisoners had to go through. In prison they tried to make men work; the better way would be to try to make them work by showing them the advantages of it.

Miss Margery Fry said they must not only have Reforms in Prison. It was the whole question of their responsibility to those who broke the laws of the land. It was Society at large that was responsible for the evils of the Penal system. The child

problem was very acute. So long as they allowed boys and girls to be put in prison they were making criminals.

The chair was taken by Mrs. Strickland, who reminded the audience that the Women's Freedom League, when the vote was granted, thought their place to use their widened opportunities, and one object was to call attention to many reforms that were needed to-day. Mrs. Darent Harrison and Councillor McDougall also spoke. Nine new members were made, and a good collection was taken.

BEXHILL.

A Model Election has taken place this week at the Kahveh Café. Miss Elsie Morton explained the system of Proportional Representation. Mrs. Reads and Miss Richardson have been nominated by the local branch of the Women's Freedom League, as possible Magistrates. Both ladies are qualified to fill such a post, and their names have been sent to Headquarters.

RYE.

A Model Election, conducted by Miss E. Morton, of the Proportional Representation Society, will be held on Friday, April 30th. Further details in next week's VOTE.

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(Miss MAIE HOEY will play Hamlet.)

Tuesday Evening, May 11th, at 8 o'clock.
Ibsen's Historical Play "THE PRETENDERS."
(Miss CLARA REED will play the original part of Bishop Nicholas.)

At The Cripplegate Institute, Golden Lane, Barbican, E.C.
Monday Evening, May 31st, at 8 o'clock.
Charles Dickens' "A TALE OF TWO CITIES."
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