

THE VOTE,
DEC. 31, 1920
ONE PENNY.

THE AUNTS & THE CHARWOMAN.

G. COLMORE.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, DEC. 31, 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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AN ENTERPRISING WOMAN EDITOR.

Interview with Mrs. Lydia Commander.

The increased space nowadays devoted to women's interests and activities in the Daily Press is a matter of common knowledge. The international aspect of the situation, however, is not always so clearly realised, nor its extraordinary development since the cessation of war.

Only within the last few months an International News Service has been established in London which is a unique organisation of its kind. It is the only international agency, which has a special Women's News Department, presided over by an International Woman Editor. This is Mrs. Lydia Commander, an experienced Canadian woman journalist, and the firm in question is the Cross-Atlantic Newspaper Services, Ltd., Fleet Street.

"We are unlike other news agencies in this respect," Mrs. Commander told our representative. "We do not deal in what is called 'spot' news, viz., the actual topics of the moment. Our contributions are of more permanent value, consisting chiefly of articles, paragraphs, interviews and biographies. We have a cable service every day, and a mail about every three days. Each week we dispatch across the Atlantic an agreed amount of copy, which on arrival is immediately syndicated to seventeen American, and twenty-one Canadian dailies or weeklies. We have recently extended our territory into Asia, and now supply in addition the *Shanghai Times*."

Our representative suggested that if in the future items of feminist interest could be supplied to newspapers in the Far East, these might prove of substantial assistance in furthering the development of the

Woman's Movement in those distant parts, a suggestion with which Mrs. Commander cordially agreed.

"We have a considerable staff of reporters, both men and women," continued Mrs. Commander. "The men confine themselves to general news, and in addition we have numerous outside contributors, many of them well-known names in the newspaper or literary world. In my section, of course, we deal only with journalism pertaining to women. This includes interviews with noted women of the day, articles upon matters connected with the home or social welfare, information concerning new movements engineered by women, and news items generally connected with women's progress and activity."

"We are not merely a news agency, however," Mrs. Commander concluded. "We are essentially a *service*. This office is open as a social headquarters to anyone from abroad who is connected with our various papers. We believe that international communication between our own and other countries, whether written or spoken, is of far-reaching importance in the establishment of mutual understanding and goodwill. All quarrels or misunderstandings originate, in the first instance, from ignorance. We try to dispel any such ignorance by instruments conveying accurate knowledge. Thought lies at the back of all the tools one uses to transmit this knowledge—the cable, the telegraph, the typewriter and the 'phone—and it is for us to see to it that only good, wise, loving and helpful thoughts are planted. Right thinking, we maintain, is the only method by which the world can achieve that unity which the war did so much to disintegrate."

M.P.'s AND UNEMPLOYED WOMEN.

We think our readers may be interested to see the following references which were made to women in the Debate upon Unemployment which took place in the House of Commons on December 21st.

DR. MACNAMARA: At the end of August there were 54,000 women registered as unemployed. On 10th December there were about 131,000.

MR. HAYDAY: Nobody has yet said a word on the position of the unemployed women. It has all been that the £3,000,000 must be devoted entirely to securing or helping to secure work for ex-Service men. The building trade subsidy for the union is only to be spent for ex-Service men. What is to become of that 140,000 odd women workers who have been thrown out? Many of them are widows whose husbands sacrificed their lives in the war. They are responsible now for rearing perhaps a little family large in numbers. What are you going to do? What is proposed in this particular connection? You are leaving this class of woman with her dependents outside.

CAPTAIN ELLIOT: Does the hon. gentleman know that there are 80 women in Glasgow on the streets to-day because of the action of the trade unions in throwing them out of their work?

MR. HAYDAY: That is not so, my friend.

CAPTAIN ELLIOT: I beg your pardon!

MR. HAYDAY: Allegations of that sort can quite easily be thrown out. Assuming that there were 80 women on the street, as the hon. member says, through the action of the trade unions, how many are there on the streets through the acts of society and the system under which society is at present carried on? (An Hon. Member: "There are 80,000 in London.") That is no argument. These people are unemployed at the moment, and they require assistance and sustenance. There is even this House of Commons, which could do with overhauling in order to give us a better system of ventilation. Our Committee rooms upstairs are almost like dirty and dilapidated stables, and I wonder hon. members have not called attention to the state of the committee rooms before now. I suggest that there is much useful work could be done by women there. I think municipalities should also provide such work as a woman could be employed upon. Practically you say, "Never mind the women," and there is no provision for them.

LIEUT.-COL. HURST: One hon. member made a great point about the number of women unemployed at present. There is an enormous demand for the employment of women in domestic service: I really cannot understand, when the ordinary household is most anxious to find a number of efficient women for the very excellent work which lies open to them in domestic service, why some of these women do not come forward and enjoy the shelter and conditions which that life nearly always brings with it.

MR. DEVLIN: We have the linen industry in Belfast in a most appalling condition. Over 40,000 hands in Belfast will be thrown out of employment for a period of not less than four weeks, and perhaps a longer period. Of these workers, about 90 per cent. are women. It is all very well for the hon. and gallant gentleman to say, "Let them go into domestic service." One would think that the only occupation for women was domestic service. I know something about these women in the linen industry and the sweated conditions under which they work. It is recorded in the statistics of the Board of Health that the lives of these women averaged about 39 years. These people, from childhood to womanhood, have been working in the mills and factories, and there is nothing left for them but the dole which you propose to give them for eight weeks. It has not been stated how you propose at the end of that time to deal with the problem of these women. The unemployment allowance of 15s. a

week for a man and 12s. 6d. for the woman will be something, but it is totally inadequate. To give a woman 12s. 6d.—

DR. MACNAMARA: It is 12s. 0d.

MR. DEVLIN: It is less than I was giving the Government credit for. The amount is totally inadequate.

(Unemployed women will not get much comfort from the above debate, although they will realise the truth of Dr. Macnamara's statement that unemployment to-day, with the cost of living 169 per cent. above the pre-war level, is a much more grim and acute problem than it was in the days behind us.)

F. A. U.

M.P.'s SALARIES.

A Committee of Members of Parliament was quite recently appointed by the House of Commons to consider whether their own salaries were not inadequate. As this Committee has already issued a report, we can safely assume that sufficient interest was taken in this subject to ensure a quorum at each meeting. It is rumoured that one of its Members pressed for a salary of £800 a year, another more modestly proposed £1 a day extra while Parliament was in session. It is not recorded that there was any suggestion that absentees should be docked of any portion of their salaries, or that they were to put in an eight-hours day before they secured the extra £1. The proposals which ultimately found agreement in this Committee are comparatively modest—Members of Parliament to have free postage and free first-class railway travelling between London and their constituencies. Although it may not seem to many people that some of the present Members are really worth more than £400 a year for the services they render to the country, yet we hardly think that their constituents will make very much fuss about these extra advantages, if they are conceded. "Your Member will cost you more!" is not a very comforting reflection in these days of increasing unemployment among the masses, continued high prices, and the most urgent need for economy if this country is to be saved from bankruptcy. Women may perhaps be forgiven if they inquire why, in these democratic days, Members of Parliament should be granted first-class railway travelling. If they desire the extra comfort afforded by first-class tickets, could not they themselves pay the difference between first and third-class fares? Surely we look to Members of Parliament and the Government to set the country an example in economy!

XMAS HOLIDAYS.

WHERE TO TAKE THE CHILDREN.

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Court Theatre).
Peter Pan (St. James').
Cinderella (Covent Garden).
Jack and the Beanstalk (Margaret Morris).
Shepherdess Without a Heart (Garrick).
Through the Crack (Everyman).
Children's Songs and Dances (Steinway Hall).
Imperial Circus at Crystal Palace.
Circus and Fair at Olympia.

WHERE TO GO YOURSELF.

To the above and to—
The Beggar's Opera (Lyric).
The White-Headed Boy (Ambassadors).
Miss Ellen Terry in the Old-English Nativity Play (Everyman).
Mary Rose (Haymarket).
Milestones (Royalty).
The Skin Game (St. Martin's).

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD. NEW NAME FOR AN OLD HOSPITAL.

An Army Nursing Reformer.

The death of the Dowager Countess Roberts, widow of the famous Field-Marshal, revives recollection of the immense services which she rendered in aid of Army nursing reform. During the early years of her life in India she was wont to pay constant visits to the military hospitals, where she became painfully impressed by the need of better care for both officers and men. After Lord Roberts had been made Commander-in-Chief in India, Lady Roberts drew up a scheme for the employment of trained women nurses in place of orderlies in the military hospitals, with the unanimous approval of the principal medical officers. After the South African War, when the whole system of Army nursing was revised, Lady Roberts accepted a seat on the board of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Service, maintaining her interest to the last.

Women on Divorce Court Juries.

It is probable that in the New Year the number of women summoned to serve on juries will be greater than hitherto. During the last few months women have been summoned only in boroughs where jurors' names are drawn from the burgess roll. After January 1st, when the new jury lists for the year will be in force, every woman between the ages of 21 and 60 who possesses the necessary qualifications will be liable for service.

The New Year will also see women serving on juries in the High Courts. There they will have to decide divorce and breach of promise cases, and other actions.

Woman Councillor's Protest.

As a protest against the obstacles placed in the way of housing schemes by officialdom, Mrs. Jennie Walters, the first woman Councillor of Matlock, has resigned. She says: "I sought election to the Council mainly to voice the women's views in reference to housing, but the Council's powers are so restricted by officialism and red tape that it is impossible to introduce individual suggestions to any material extent."

Enterprising Woman Mayor.

Mrs. T. Phillips, Mayor of Honiton, and the wife of a well-known local solicitor, is the first and only woman to occupy a Mayoral chair in the West Country, and the first Honiton woman magistrate. She recently sentenced an offender to hard labour, and in order to ascertain from personal observation to what she was condemning a fellow human being, she visited the county gaol at Exeter and saw exactly what hard labour consists of, and the nature of the surroundings in which the work is done.

Woman Alderman for Paddington.

Councillor Jane Milne has been elected an alderman of Paddington, and thus becomes the first alderman of the borough. Mrs. Milne, who has taken an active part in public affairs, has been a member of the Council for some years.

Women Voters in the City.

For the first time in civic history women were qualified to vote at the annual wardmotes in the twenty-six wards of the City of London which are held on St. Thomas's Day for the election of members of the Corporation for the coming year.

More Women J.P.'s.

In a recent list of thirteen new magistrates at Croydon were the names of three women, Mrs. Houlder, wife of the Deputy Mayor, Mrs. E. M. Redfern, a doctor's wife, and Mrs. C. Nealon, who was recently a municipal Labour candidate. They are the first women Justices for the Borough.

Women Bellringers.

Owing to a strike of bellringers, women rang the bells at St. Clement's Church, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, on Christmas Day, and will also ring them at the New Year.

In the annual report of the Manchester and Salford Lock Hospital attention is directed to the successful adoption of the practice of reserving a special afternoon and evening (Wednesday) for the treatment of women and children. With the appointment to the staff of Dr. Elizabeth C. Boyd as assistant medical officer, in order that female patients may be treated by one of their own sex, there is every prospect of further increases in attendance. Emphasis is laid on the unsuitability of the hospital as a place of reception for female in-patients who have to remain for a length of time. This consideration, it is stated, is fully appreciated by the Corporation authorities and the Ministry of Health, and efforts are being made to secure a suitable residence in the suburbs where the patients may enjoy the outdoor exercise necessary for their recovery.

At the annual meeting of the institution a motion was proposed to change the name of the hospital to the St. Luke's Hospital, Duke Street, Manchester.

The motion to change the name of the hospital was carried unanimously, and official sanction for the proposal will be sought from the Ministry of Health, through the Corporation.

A NEW DEPARTURE!

In response to many requests, a systematic course of Lectures, on the Progress and Freedom of Women, has been arranged, to be held in the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1, on Monday evenings in 1921, from January to Easter. Many members feel that they would like to know more about these interesting subjects, and information is not easy to get, so now is an opportunity, which ought not to be let slip, of hearing the best of speakers—speakers who are acknowledged authorities on their subjects.

The first Lecture will be given by our good friend, Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G., a former Premier of South Australia, on Monday, January 17th, at 7 p.m., and the remainder on the following Mondays up to March 21st. There is sure to be a great demand for tickets, and it would be wise to secure these at once, as space is limited.

OUR MONDAY LECTURES:—

1. The Evolution and Sociological Aspect of Sex.
2. Psychology of Sex.
3. The Matriarchal Period.
4. Position of Women in the Ancient World.
5. Position of Women in the Middle Ages.
6. History of the Suffrage Movement.
7. Women and Trades Unions.
8. Women in the Professions.
9. Some Feminist Writers, (Mary Wollstonecraft, Ellen Key, John Stuart Mill, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, etc.).
10. The Future of the Sexes.

TICKETS for the COURSE of 10 LECTURES.

Reserved Seats 12/6. Unreserved Seats 7/6, which must be bought before January 17th.

Single Lectures 1/-, if any room available.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31st. 1920.

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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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THE YEAR'S SUCCESSES.

The year opened favourably for the cause of women's enfranchisement here at home. The closing days of 1919 saw the passage into law of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill (enabling women to be appointed to any civil or judicial office, including the Magistrates' Bench, all civil trades and professions and the jury panel), and the entry into the British Parliament of the first woman M.P., the results of these twin momentous happenings becoming speedily apparent early in the New Year.

The first seven women J.P.s had already been nominated, and formed into a Women's Advisory Committee to assist the Lord Chancellor in the selection of women magistrates. Although several months elapsed before any further women J.P.s were appointed, they eventually came with a rush from all parts of the United Kingdom, some hundreds altogether having now been nominated at the date of going to press. Four of the new women J.P.s were members of the Women's Freedom League—Mrs. Nevinson (Hampstead), Mrs. E. J. Smith (Brighton), Miss Tooke (Gateshead), and Miss Agnes Husband (Dundee). Their portraits, with biographical details, were recently published in THE VOTE.

February, as has often been the case in the past, was again a momentous month for women. On the 24th, Viscountess Astor, M.P., made her debut in the House of Commons. Her maiden speech was a protest against Sir J. D. Rees' motion for abolition of the wartime regulations in connection with the Liquor traffic, a magnificent testimony to the cause of temperance and true social reform, and her first votes had been cast against the issue of Premium Bonds by the Treasury, and, in defiance of her Party Whip's instructions, in support of the enfranchisement of the women of India. Three days later Mr. Grundy moved the Labour Party's Representation of the People Bill, to confer the franchise on women at the age of twenty-one. It passed its second reading without a division, and was referred to a Standing Committee, but has since been wrecked.

At the opening of term five women entered as students at the Inner and Middle Temple, to prepare for their examinations as barristers. One of these was Miss Helena Normanton, B.A., a member of the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League, and one of the earliest pioneers in breaking down the barriers against the admission of women to the legal profession. Many more women law students have since been admitted. At a somewhat later period in the year the first women jurors were empanelled in several places. These, it is understood, will be largely increased in 1921, and will sit also upon High Court juries.

In May the University of Oxford opened all its degrees, and all its administrative and other posts, in the University to women. Cambridge, however, has for the present decided against the admission of women, but as the ballot had to be made in person, many votes

were lost from members who were known to be in sympathy with the women, but who were unable to get to Cambridge to record them.

The position of women in the Anglican Church has been considerably strengthened by the passing of the Enabling Bill, and the resolution in favour of reviving the ancient Order of Deaconesses passed at the Lambeth Conference in July. Miss Maude Royden's spirited action in securing a London hall as a sphere for future preaching, and the unprecedented offer she received to preach the inaugural Congress sermon in the Protestant Cathedral at Geneva last June, have done much to shake the dust from centuries of intolerant tradition concerning women's sphere in religion.

The present position of women in industry is a very critical one. The demobilisation of women war workers has continued steadily all through the year, and at the time of writing it is proceeding at a quickened pace and an immense amount of distress caused by unemployment has arisen in the ranks of these women workers. Equal pay for equal work is not yet a question of practical politics in spite of courageous action at intervals by various women's organisations, including the Federation of Women Civil Servants, the National Federation of Women Teachers, and the Women's Freedom League. On the other hand, women are making headway in trades and professions hitherto closed to their sex, not the least achievement in this respect being the foundation of Atlanta, a women's engineering factory at Loughborough.

Passing now from the progress of British women during 1919 to the march of events amongst the women of other countries, the outstanding feature of the year under review has been undoubtedly the Eighth Congress last June of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance at Geneva. Mrs. Chapman Catt presided, and the Conference opened with the roll-call of the Suffrage victories since 1913, an almost unbelievable record, for no fewer than twenty-one countries have enfranchised their women during the war. The whole of the Western world, with the exception of the Latin countries, has now made Woman Suffrage part of its Constitution. Many women representatives of these twenty-one newly enfranchised countries attended the Congress for the first time, and gave dramatic descriptions of how their political freedom had been secured, in some cases through revolution, riot and disaster, in others without any conflict at all. For the first time on record, too, in the history of the Woman's Movement, Eastern women delegates were present, from India, Turkey, and Japan.

The next great epoch-making event in women's international life was the full enfranchisement of American women last September, after an uphill struggle which had lasted seventy years. Mrs. Chapman Catt rendered immense service at this juncture by her frequent tours in the States, and repeated audiences with Governors of the various Legislatures, in order to secure the thirty-six ratifications which were necessary before Woman Suffrage could become an integral part of the Federal Constitution. The final ratification was fortunately obtained in time for the Presidential elections in the autumn, when twenty-six million American women voted for the first time. One woman, Miss Alice Robinson, of Oklahoma, was elected to Congress, and many women to State Legislatures.

In September, the sixth quinquennial meeting of the International Council of Women was held in Christiania, and was attended by numerous delegates. The Marchioness of Aberdeen presided, and many resolutions were passed for the social betterment of women and children in all enfranchised countries.

The fourth and last principal international event of the year has been the Board Meetings in London during November of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. Mrs. Chapman Catt presided, and made a memorable appearance on the platform of the Central Hall, Westminster, arm-in-arm with Mrs. Fawcett, our British veteran and pioneer, at a great Joint Mass Meeting to celebrate the victory of American women suffragists.

THE AUNTS AND THE CHARWOMAN.

A Story of New Year's Eve.

Eleanor's aunts moved with the times. They had been very much against having a vote before a vote was to be had: "What did a woman want . . ." etc.; but now that they were voters they would have liked an election every six months. It had become every woman's duty—at least every intelligent woman's duty—to support the Constitution.

But, alas! there were so many women who were not intelligent: that was what was so objectionable, and that was why all Eleanor's aunts objected to recording their votes by means of a \times . For any woman could make a \times , even the most inefficient; even that Mrs. Briggs, the charwoman, so ignorant that at the beginning of the war she had not known the difference between Belgium and Bulgaria; even she, incapable of political understanding. . . . And they stood up, all the aunts, for political understanding, although formerly, as Eleanor once— But she found it did not do to refer to "formerly," and finally realised that there was no "formerly"; the aunts had always been in favour of women having the vote, of course they had. What they had disapproved of was the methods, the indecorous behaviour, people chaining themselves to things, and marching about in gangs.

There were four aunts. There was the single aunt, who went in specially for efficiency. There was the married aunt, whose particular subject was waste and the high prices due to high wages. There was the widowed aunt, whose mental vigour was concentrated on the suppression of vice in the masses. There was the aunt whom Eleanor called the double aunt because she had been twice a wife and was now for the second time a widow, and whose energies were devoted to the training and discipline of domestic servants. The great difficulty of the double aunt was that there were almost no servants, and that those there were didn't want to be trained, and refused to be disciplined.

So that now, on New Year's Eve, of all days in the year, when all the aunts, and several friends of the aunts, and Eleanor (though she didn't matter) were assembled in the double aunt's drawing-room, she had had to fall back on Mrs. Briggs—Mrs. Briggs, who didn't even know, as the single aunt recalled, the difference between Belgium and—

However, fortunately, as a charwoman she was quite capable. She made really quite good currant scones, and drop scones, and hot cakes, and cold cakes, and sandwiches, and was passable at housework, and not bad as a parlourmaid.

Of course she was nowhere near smart, with her rusty dress and her rusty hair, and her hands that really—but then one didn't expect much in a charwoman.

What was absurd was that a person of that sort, who had no idea how to use a vote, should have a vote; a person with no conception of politics or patriotism or efficiency. For when the double aunt, just to test her, just to see what her ideas were, or if she had any ideas at all, had asked her how she thought women ought to use the vote, she had said—what do you think she said?

Nobody could guess.

"She said, 'To 'elp the 'elpless.' For of course she hasn't an aitch."

They were all sitting round the fire after tea was over, very comfortable, eating chocolates, and two of the aunts moving with the times in the direction of cigarettes, and everybody except Eleanor, who was busy trying to understand the enormity of the charwoman's reply, was sarcastic or indignant or head-shakey over that reply, when the door opened and Mrs. Briggs herself stood in the doorway and began: "If you please, ma'am. . . ."

And then she stopped—or seemed to stop, because then—

New Year's Eve is a strange time, and on New Year's Eve strange things happen.

All of a sudden the drawing-room and the fire and the chocolates and the cigarettes were swept clean away, and the people who had been in the room were out on a great wide plain. It was almost night. The sky was pale with the pallor of cloudless twilight before the stars come out, and the only star that shines is the evening star. One star was shining now, but it shone not in the West but in the East, and the light from it lighted all the plain.

By its light Eleanor saw the single aunt surrounded by figures and statistics and all sorts of things that make for efficiency; and the married aunt surrounded by closed schools and unbuilt houses and over-crowded homes; and the widowed aunt in the midst of prisons and reformatories and cats-o'-nine-tails; and the double aunt in a company of depressed looking women in severe print dresses and unbecoming caps. And of the guests some were surrounded by balls and parties, some by money, some by family ambition. . . . Eleanor did not look much at the guests, because after observing the aunts she became absorbed in the contemplation of Mrs. Briggs.

The charwoman's rusty dress had disappeared, and so had her rusty hair. She was dressed in some material—only it seemed non-material—diaphanous, silky, shiny, soft ("Not to be got anywhere," Eleanor found herself thinking, "under thirty-nine and six a yard!"); and where her hair was wont to be was a frame of light. She, like the others, was surrounded by objects, but the objects were not lifeless things like those which surrounded the aunts; they were alive, they were living beings. There were children in rags, men and women with "unemployed" written all over them, girls young, stupefied, despairing, with murdered babies in their arms, homeless fathers, overworked mothers; there were lame dogs too, starved cats, ill-used horses; and somehow, though there were so many beings, human and sub-human, Mrs. Briggs seemed to touch them all.

All the time the star seen first in the East was rising towards the zenith of the sky. It passed over the heads of the aunts, one by one, and over the heads of the guests, and hovered, or seemed to hover, for a moment over Eleanor's head, then passed on and paused and stood quite still above the head of Mrs. Briggs.

In Eleanor's mind were scraps of what had been said round the fire. "Efficiency . . . women's part in politics . . . to 'elp the 'elpless." They sounded in her ears, became a buzz—then a rustle. . . .

"If you please, ma'am," said the charwoman at the drawing-room door, "the cars is 'ere."

There she stood with her rusty dress and her rusty hair, and the aunts and the guests cast condescending eyes upon her.

Eleanor sat bewildered. Was it real? Which was real? Had the aunts—had all these people—seen—what she—or—

"I wonder," she found herself saying, "if Mrs. Briggs knows what she's like inside?"

"My dear Eleanor!" exclaimed the single aunt. The others speaking as with one voice said:—

"Pray, my dear child, don't be disgusting!"

G. COLMORE.

OUR ADVERTISERS

like to know the results of their Advertisements. When writing them mention the 'VOTE.'

OUR PETITION.

Parliament has been prorogued, and will not re-assemble for the new session until February 15th. The Women's Freedom League has asked the Prime Minister to receive a deputation before Parliament meets again of representative young women under thirty years of age to put before him the need of enfranchising women on the same terms as men. In the meantime we are getting signatures of young and voteless women to our Petition urging the Government to bring in and pass through all its stages into law a simple franchise measure to secure this political equality of women and men. Women cannot fail to realise that their political inferiority seriously influences their economic position. At the present moment there are nearly one hundred and forty thousand unemployed working women in this country—in Greater London alone unemployed women number between twenty-five and thirty thousand. The Government, however, does not take these women into consideration; neither the Government nor the local authorities think it worth their while to think out schemes by which they can be employed. Working women are denied membership of many trades unions and are prevented from working in many trades in which they could earn adequate remuneration, because of the jealousy of their male competitors. It must be remembered that the vast majority of these women are voteless women—women under thirty years of age—who have no political power. Had they been voters they could have demanded that the present House of Commons, and the Government, should give some serious consideration to their position. It is certain that during the next few years women, and especially young women, will have a harder struggle than ever before to win their way in industry and the professions. "What I have I hold" is still the motto of the men who hold the positions which women are qualifying to fill, and women will find that their lack of political power will be a heavy handicap in the race they are to run. In the early days of the Women's Freedom League the Suffrage cause owed an incalculable debt to its younger women who were willing to work so hard and to risk so much in daring to secure women's political emancipation. These women were not striving for any personal gain—their one desire was that the whole status of woman should be raised; and now that they have secured the vote for themselves they know that women's position generally can never be anything but inferior to that of men so long as men continue to have this political advantage. The primary object of the Women's Freedom League is to obtain votes for women on the same terms as men. To state that many young women are apathetic in regard to the demand for political power is only a further reason why other women should work harder to secure it for them. The exercise of a vote is often the beginning of a young man's political education. There are thousands of young women who realise their need for political enfranchisement; it is the signatures of these women that we want for our Petition, and we urge every reader of THE VOTE who is in touch with young women to send to us for a copy of our Petition, and get their young friends to sign it without delay.

WHAT OUR ADVERTISERS TELL US.

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BOOK REVIEW.

The Mirrors of Downing Street. By "A Gentleman with a Duster." (5s. od. net.) Mills & Boon. (Can be obtained at this office.)

No one would expect "a Gentleman with a Duster" to be a revolutionary, an iconoclast, or indeed anything but an elegant personage, a believer in aristocracy, in our old traditions and the ancient virtues. It is true that he tells us that his duster is honest cotton, but we cannot help thinking that the effect would sometimes have been greater if he had used more elbow grease in his dusting, and perhaps occasionally had made use of a dustbin. The author has had unique opportunities of personal relationship with the chief public men of our day, and he is evidently depressed at the lack of outstanding greatness among them. Mr. Lloyd George is the first to receive the benefit of his duster. His shallowness is exposed—"a giant mounted on a dwarf's legs" is the reflection. Lord Carnock, our former Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and Lord Fisher, "that dare-devil of genius, that pirate of public life," come out better; but, Mr. Asquith! Well, one wonders if the Gentleman's spectacles are sometimes a little dim. Lord Northcliffe, "the Spring-Heeled Jack of Journalism," and Arthur J. Balfour, "the most egotistical of men," and Kitchener with his religious sense of duty—they are all dusted; and, after submitting to that operation, show many defects. Lord Robert Cecil is "rather the shadow of great statesmanship than the living spirit of great statesmanship"; Churchill has "many of the qualities of real greatness, but lacks the unifying spirit of character"; while "the nation owes Lord Haldane a debt of gratitude for the example he has given it in behaviour!" After dusting, Lord Rhondda, Lord Inverforth, and Lord Leverhulme appear to be quite homely, sensible capable people.

The Mirrors of Downing Street having received due attention, this Gentleman transfers his gaze to ordinary mortals. He observes that a nation gets the politics it deserves, and says that "we are a nation without standards, kept in health rather by memories which are fading than by examples which are compelling." He blames the aristocracy for not setting us a high standard, the Church because it "whines for the world's notice instead of denouncing its very obvious sins," and the Leaders of Labour for encouraging "the economic delusions of Socialism." He deplors the fact that "principle is crumbling," that moral earnestness is "beginning to smoulder," and sighs for the return of Puritanic ideals. This is the Gentleman's criticism of our life to-day. Is it a fair one? If so, we think that "dusting" is not enough. The conscience of men and women must be aroused. We need not hark back to the past for our national ideals; we have them with us always—Justice and Liberty. Men and women together—irrespective of their class or creed—will respond to a clarion call to raise those standards high. During the last quarter-of-a-century men have failed lamentably to supply leadership. Movements there have been—innumerable; but, outside the women's movements banners have not been raised above the level of the crowd. The world has at last learned that true leadership and genuine progress can only be achieved when men and women equally share the burdens. The Mirrors of Downing Street will need far less dusting and will more accurately reflect our national life and national ideals when women and men are there in equal numbers and share equal responsibility. The work of "A Gentleman with a Duster" is doubtless very useful; but would not the result be even better if a woman could give the Mirrors at Downing Street a thoroughly good spring clean?

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB, 9, Grafton Street, Piccadilly, W.1.—Subscription: London Members, £2 2s., Country Members £1 5s. (Irish, Scottish, and Foreign Members 10s. 6d.) per annum. Entrance Fee, one guinea. Excellent Catering; Luncheons and Dinners à la Carte—All particulars, Secretary. Tel.: Mayfair 3932.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS, W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO
BE FREE

Friday, December 31.—Hogmanay Party, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Tickets, including refreshments, 2s. 7 p.m.
Monday, January 10, 1921.—Hampstead Branch Meeting, 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W. 3. 8.15 p.m.
Monday, January 17, at 7 p.m.—Public Lecture, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1. Speaker: Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G. Subject: "The Evolution and Sociological Aspect of Sex." Chair: Mrs. Dexter. See notice.
Wednesday, January 19, 1921, at 3 p.m.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1. Speaker: Councillor Jessie Stephen. Subject: "Woman's Right to Work." Chair: Mrs. McMichael.
Saturday, January 22, 1921, at 10 a.m.—National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.
Saturday, January 22, 1921.—Whist Drive and Supper, Minerva Café, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, January 26, 1921, at 3 p.m.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1. Speaker: Miss K. Raleigh. Subject: "What St. Paul Really Said to Women" (Part 2). Chair: Mrs. Northcroft.

PROVINCES.

Friday, December 31.—Portsmouth. New Year's Eve Party, Unitarian Schoolroom. 7 to 10 p.m.

MORE WOMEN J.P.'s.

CARNARVON.

The following women have been placed on the commission of the peace for the borough of Carnarvon: Mrs. Jane Margaret Jones, of Minafon, social worker; Miss Emily Davies, of Tyfry, social worker; Miss Myfanwy Crowther, schoolmistress. They are the first women magistrates to be appointed for any borough in North Wales.

LANCASTER.

The following women have been placed on the commission of the peace for the County Palatine of Lancaster: Miss Ada Birley, Mrs. H. Eastwood, Mrs. O. Hall, Lady Maden, Miss Kate A. Sellers, Mrs. F. Tattersall, Miss Caroline Whitehead.

ROCHDALE.

Among the seventeen new magistrates appointed for Rochdale are three ladies. The latter are Miss Mary Josephine Bright (who belongs to the family of John Bright), Miss Fanny Clegg, of Crompton, and Mrs. W. G. Watson, who is associated with the local Women's Citizens' Association and the temperance movement.

SHEFFIELD.

Mrs. Anne I. Marsh has been appointed a J.P. for Sheffield. Mrs. Marsh is the wife of Alderman H. P. Marsh, who has for many years been one of the most active and useful men in many branches of Sheffield civic life. Mrs. Marsh has been lady Mayoress of Sheffield, and has for a long period worked hard for charitable and philanthropic objects. She is diocesan secretary of the Mothers' Union, a position she has held ever since the Diocese was formed; has been secretary and treasurer of the Women's Home Mission for the Sheffield Rural Deanery, is a member of the Committee of the Sheffield Voluntary Schools' Clothing Guild, and of the University Girls' Hostels; she has also been an official of the National Union of Women Workers. During the war Mrs. Marsh rendered valuable service in connection with numerous organisations; and has taken an active interest in the Girls' Patriotic Club. Many other organisations have had her help and support; she is very fond of music, and was at one time a member of the Sheffield Festival Chorus. She was an excellent Lady Mayoress, and gave valuable aid to her husband during his year of office.

HOGMANAY PARTY.

The Women's Freedom League is having a Party on New Year's Eve, December 31st, at the Minerva Café, at 7 p.m. There will be Progressive Whist, Round Games, and amusing Guessing Competitions. Everyone will be welcome. The inclusive charge will be 2s., including refreshments.

THE 'DAILY MAIL' YEAR BOOK, 1921.

(Can be obtained at this office. Price 1s. 6d.)

This very useful little Year Book is, as usual, well up to the mark in its brief and interesting accounts of men and matters of current interest. We note with pleasure that the number of entries concerning women are increased in length compared with last year. These include an article by the Bishop of Birmingham on "The Lambeth Conference," with special reference to women in the Church; a paragraph relating to the appointment of women jurors; a somewhat inadequate paragraph on Women's Employments culled from a note by the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment in their report on the first six months' working of their scheme; a reference to the recent victory of American women's enfranchisement; a list of the 19 Peeresses in their own right in the United Kingdom, with brief biographical details; and last, but certainly not least, a useful and informative summary compiled by Mrs. Fawcett, of "What Women have Gained in 1920." In it she comments that "it is almost impossible to count all the doors that have been opened to women since February, 1918" (when the Bill to enfranchise women in this country received the Royal Assent). Mrs. Fawcett also points out the enormous services conferred on women by the passing of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill, which came into operation on January 1st, 1920. Apart from its conferring the opening of both branches of the legal profession to women, and the appointment of women magistrates and women jurors, the Act has had consequences far beyond its purely legal scope, inasmuch that "political associations, learned and professional societies, no longer put their telescopes to their blind eye when they look in the direction of women." Mrs. Fawcett records that during 1920 there has been an immense increase in the number of women serving on county and borough councils, and other locally elected bodies. Women also, since their enfranchisement, are being placed much more frequently than before on Government committees, and on boards of management of general hospitals.

A TRUCE OF GOD IN IRELAND

There was a large audience at the Caxton Hall on Saturday, December 18th, at the meeting convened by the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, to demand a Truce of God in Ireland. The chair was taken by the Rev. Father Hall, the speaker being Councillor Mrs. V. W. Crawford, who had just returned from a tour in Ireland, where she had been investigating matters at first hand. In a dispassionate speech, all the more impressive from its very calmness, Mrs. Crawford gave an account of the terrorism reigning in Ireland. Messages of sympathy with the aims of the meeting were received from Cardinal Logue, the Archbishop of Tuam, and many bishops and distinguished ecclesiastics of the Catholic Church in the United Kingdom. Many Catholic Societies were represented on the platform, and other societies, including the Women's Freedom League, the National Union for Equal Citizenship, and the League of the Church Militant, had also sent representatives. A resolution was passed nem con calling upon the Government to establish a truce of God in Ireland without delay. Before the close of the meeting Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., who was on the platform, was prevailed upon to speak, and described with passionate eloquence the terrible condition of his tortured country. Nevertheless, he felt no hatred for England, but only desired friendship between the two nations.

THE "VOTE."

It has been arranged to hold a

WHIST DRIVE AND SUPPER

for
"The Vote" Funds on

SATURDAY EVENING, JANUARY 22nd.

At 7 p.m.,

at the Minerva Café. It is a long time since a direct appeal has been made for "The Vote," and this Preliminary notice is given in order that readers may book the date and send in their offers of help at once. We want you to take

Tickets, 3/6 each

—it would be a good plan if friends would take four tickets, and thus secure a table for themselves and friends. We want also promises of

Suitable Gifts for Prizes

and donations towards the supper. The organizers will spare no effort to provide a thoroughly enjoyable evening and they hope to raise at least £30 from the effort. Please let us know as quickly as possible what you are going to do to show your appreciation of your paper. We await your promises.

ALIX M. CLARK,

Hon. Head: Vote Sales Department.

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THE VOTE

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