

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 19, 1919.

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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MUSLIM WOMEN IN CONFERENCE.

The Vote Favoured.

One of the signs of the times is the great activity of ladies in public work in India. Muslim ladies are supposed to be behind their Hindu sisters in such matters. But the report of the Muslim Ladies' Conference which was held in Calcutta on February, 1919, hardly supports that impression. Both in the matter discussed and in the manner in which results are presented, a high standard is maintained throughout. This is what might have been expected from the personality of so cultured a lady as Mrs. Khediv-i-Jang, who presided over its deliberations. Some of the most prominent ladies in India took part in its proceedings, including a lady of the Mysore family and the wife of the chief religious dignitary in Hyderabad. Both the Nizam's government and his Highness the Begam of Bhopal handsomely supported the conference.

During five years its members have increased from 39 in 1914 to 159 this year. It has shown

progressive strength

in dealing with the questions of Muslim women's education and Muslim women's life in India. It also rendered aid to the wounded during the Great War. It proposes to collect the curricula of Muslim girls' schools in India, compare them, take the advice of experienced educational authorities, and throw some light on the vexed question of what Muslim ladies really want in the education of their girls. An interesting proposal has also been made to combine future meetings of the conference with an exhibition of women's work, including calligraphy. In the matter of penmanship Muslim ladies show great skill and aptitude. Such an exhibition will be of great interest, and, if poor ladies' work is price 1 for sale, will do them, in addition, a useful service.

The pearl of the printed proceedings is the speech of the lady president. She is well known as a writer of fine Urdu prose. But her speech was as practical as it was beautifully worded.

She began with a survey of the objects to be held in view in education. Muslim education is considered in two aspects—the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of manners and morals. Mrs. Khediv-i-Jang rightly laid stress on the higher relative importance of the second compared with the first. She appealed for special courses for girls, different from those for boys, even suggesting that matters of domestic economy should be subjects for girls as far up as the matriculation examinations of the universities. In these matters, perhaps, it may be permissible to point out that the experience of other nations has made a distinction which may be found useful in India. The earliest courses are generally the same for boys and girls. The middle courses ought to be different, laying more stress on domestic subjects in girls' schools than in boys' schools. In the higher courses we come to specialisation; and without saying that the courses for boys and girls should be the same, it may be found that the higher subjects of culture would be common to both, while specialised courses would, of course, be pursued by the two sexes. There was also an

interesting suggestion

made in the President's speech about specialising the various schools for the different classes catered for. There should be, she suggests, schools that meet the needs of all; schools that meet the needs of the poor, who have to earn their daily bread; and schools for the higher classes, to whom the finer arts would make a closer appeal in daily life—

arts such as painting, music and handiwork of a refined character. She adds also the Humanities, "for," she remarks, "example (in literature and history) is the best means of instruction."

The President then proceeds to draw a contrast between English and Indian family life, pointing out in what respects Indians can rightfully emulate the social virtues of the English people. She lays stress on family prayers, which, alas! are becoming uncommon now in England itself.

The question of social and family life is the key to national and political advancement, and this subject is described at some length. As Mrs. Khediv-i-Jang drily remarks, we must not only sing "home, sweet home," but realise such homes in our own lives. The surroundings and impressions of childhood are the basis of all later education, and it is absolutely essential that sincerity, freedom, discipline, love, respect for elders, and consideration for all should be learnt in the nursery, and be the corner-stone of education. A nation can be no better than its individuals, and individuals build their character on what they learned and saw in childhood.

On the very important and absorbing subject of **religious instruction**

there are some helpful remarks. The practice of teaching the Koran by rote, without understanding it, is condemned. The sublime moral teaching to be found in Islam is insisted upon. The ancient virtues of respect for authority, and duties to relatives, to the poor and needy, and to strangers, are insisted upon as the very tests of a refined civilisation. Religious intolerance as between Shias and Sunnis is condemned as wholly non-Islamic and undermining the very foundation of religion.

Mrs. Khediv-i-Jang's remarks about the Purdah are instructive and full of frankness and common-sense. She would not abolish the separate activities of the sexes; but the isolation of women from other women she holds to be wrong, because human intercourse is the best means for personal and social advancement. Some families, she says, boast that their ladies "never go out of their houses." "Well might such families," she exclaims, "boast that they never had any daughters."

But although Mrs. Khediv-i-Jang has a high idea of women's responsibilities, she has no patience with the **parrot-cry of equality.**

A woman's mission is not to be despised because she has to make her home beautiful and bring up her children, and make them and her husband happy. In other countries, she says, the conditions may force women to earn their own livelihood. That is not a blessing, but a grave disability. It does not apply to India, and in these circumstances Mrs. Khediv-i-Jang thinks that women would do well to cultivate a higher life, rather than run vainly after shibboleths picked up from other conditions of life. She does not mention the vote expressly, but from the fine account she gives of what Muslim women have done in the past, she would, presumably, favour the vote while safeguarding a reasonable use of the Purdah. She expressly urges a co-operation of the sexes for the highest attainment of the ends of life.

A. YUSUF ALI.

MEN AND WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

Mention has already been made in previous numbers of THE VOTE to the activity of women in this year's annual meeting of the British Association. The number of papers on scientific and industrial subjects which were read by women is the largest on record. One of the most important of these was a joint production on "Replacement of Men by Women in Industry," by Professor A. W. Kirkcaldy and Miss L. Grier, of which the *Daily Telegraph* gives the following report,

Miss Grier produced figures showing that in July 1914, the number of women employed in industry was 2,178,600, or 25.8 per cent. of the total number of workers, and in November, 1918, the figure was 2,975,000, or 36.1 per cent. of the total workers. In April, 1919, the figure had fallen to 2,397,000, or 28.8 per cent.

For the most part, said Miss Grier, women had been unsuccessful in heavy work, more than one woman being necessary to do the work of one man, and there was even a case on record of six women being required to do the work of one man at a forge. It had not been found feasible to bring women into trades which require a long training. In fact, the large numbers of

unskilled women and men

during the war had made a great change in the character of many industries. The products were wanted immediately, and two courses were open—to change the character of the workers from unskilled to skilled, or to change the character of the work from skilled to unskilled, and to make the work, as far as possible, repetition work. This latter course was the one adopted. But, at the same time, it was to be noted that many employers had pointed out that where it was possible to give women training they had made good use of it. The greatest success among women, and a success which might have a permanent effect in industry, was in processes which required nimbleness and dexterity. Many employers had said that where the deftness was required women were better and often more accurate than men. In some branches of the boot finishing trade the fact that women were able to earn higher wages than the men so aroused the jealousy of the men that they had to be separated. Another branch of industry it had been noted in which many

women achieved great success

was in some delicate engineering work.

Women were excluded from some industries partly because of the attitude of the trade unions and partly because, owing to the high wages they commanded, it was no longer profitable to employ them. Where women could do work as well as or better than men, it was very important that nothing should be placed in their way, because during the war a very great source of labour had been tapped among women, and in certain directions they had made good. They had learned to co-operate both with employers and with men workers, and it was to be hoped that they would continue to be employed, and that there would be a great putting of the house in order with regard to the exclusion of women from industries just because they were women.

Professor A. W. Kirkcaldy said that it was to be borne in mind that before the war over a quarter of the labour force of the country was provided by women. During the war production increased everywhere with a

diminished labour force.

The great trouble with the working people at the present time was not so much a desire for increased wages and leisure as the haunting dread of unemployment. What with improved machinery and processes we could produce as much in four or five months now as we produced in a year before the war. The question which was troubling the workers was, what, if they produced at that rate, was to become of them during the remaining months of the year? Anyone who could convince them that their fears were baseless would be rendering a great service to the country. He was convinced that there was no fear of unemployment unless we played the fool. The markets of the world were prepared to absorb any amount of goods.

A QUIET DAY.

The League of the Church Militant hopes to arrange for a Quiet Day in London, which will probably be October 4th, before starting its autumn activities.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Revue Touring Evils.

The recent agitation in the Press against the degraded conditions under which many underpaid chorus girls are frequently forced to exist is by no means a "stunt," but a very real evil which has badly needed ventilating for some considerable time. "An open incentive to misconduct," was the description given at the Trades Union Congress during the week to the wages given to too many girls in the chorus. One of the inevitable results of the boom which theatres have enjoyed in England since the war has been the formation of hundreds of theatrical touring companies. The majority of these are beyond reproach, but in cases where managers engage their choruses from dubious agents the girls have been offered 25s. and 30s. a week, with opportunities thrown in their path to succumb to the attentions of rich male clients. Strong backing is being given in consequence to the demand of the Actors' Association that a standard minimum wage of not less than £3 a week be established for women in theatres, whether on tour or in London.

Ex-Service Women and the Colonies.

The Overseas Settlement Committee, 59, Victoria Street, is devoting a special section to the needs of Waacs, Wrens and Wrafs who desire to emigrate. Six women delegates have been sent out in advance to Canada, Australia and New Zealand to investigate possibilities and to assure the settlers and farmers of the new countries that the women who are now awaiting their passage are perfectly capable of adapting themselves to new and strenuous conditions of life. A free passage will be granted to all applicants approved by the Dominion representatives.

"Mrs." Abraham Lincoln.

Mr. John Drinkwater is shortly leaving for America to superintend the American production of *Abraham Lincoln*, and also to lecture at several cities in the United States. He will be accompanied by Mrs. Drinkwater, who has been closely associated with him in his repertory work. She appeared in the original production of *Abraham Lincoln* at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, and has frequently taken part in the play during its long run at Hammersmith.

Woman Preacher at Pontypool.

Sister Hannah Hudson, the first woman preacher to be appointed to a church in Monmouthshire, has begun her duties at the United Methodist Church, Pontypool. She has already spent 12 years in similar work in Newcastle-on-Tyne, of which city she is a native.

A Long Swim.

Mrs. Hilda Willing, of Rochester, swam from Rochester to Sheerness (15 miles) in a little less than six hours. She is the first woman to swim this course.

Rival Women Organists.

Miss Mary Kemp, it appears, is not the oldest woman organist in England, as the newspapers recently stated. Miss Cole, of Helions Bumpstead, Essex, is her senior by a few years, and has been honorary organist of the local church since her girlhood.

Re-opening of Lyceum Club.

The Lyceum Club, which is the headquarters of a large number of London's women workers in literature and art, will re-open early next week at 189, Piccadilly. For some months the Lyceum has been without a club house.

Policewomen for Rhyl.

The Association for the Care of Friendless Girls has induced the Flintshire Police Committee to station two policewomen at Rhyl.

Women as Dental Mechanics.

The average earnings of women dental mechanics vary from £3 to £5 a week. This may not promise great affluence, but at any rate it provides a living wage, which is more than some of the post-war trades for women appear to do. The London School of Dental Mechanics, 49, Wigmore Street, has 21 women students now in training. The number is limited so that each may receive individual tuition. No pupil who is not likely to prove efficient is allowed to continue after a trial has taken place, but every girl who has passed satisfactorily through the course has obtained employment. The majority have found work in the workshops of dentists, and one or two with some capital have set up in business for themselves.

Training War Widows.

There are some hundred widows now in training under the recent scheme of the Ministry of Pensions, now transferred to the Ministry of Labour. The subjects chosen include midwifery, sick nursing, massage, health visiting, upholstery, dressmaking, cookery, etc. In the case of widows and dependents of officers a maximum grant of £75 is allowed to accepted candidates for cost of instruction and maintenance during training. Widows of deceased men accepted as candidates for training are paid a maintenance and training allowance up to £1 weekly.

Women at Washington.

An invitation to the first world congress of working women has been issued from the National Women's Trade Union League of America to the women of 34 countries, whose representatives are to meet in Washington the week preceding the International Labour Congress called by the League of Nations. Each country will be entitled to ten women delegates accredited by trade union organisations.

Icelandic Women.

In spite of their isolated surroundings, especially during the war, Icelandic women have been taking the initiative in social reforms. The women of North Iceland have had a council since 1914, with yearly meetings, and have issued a journal of proceedings since 1916. Reykjavik also has a council for many of its unions, and works for a children's home and a women's institution. All the women of Iceland, since 1915, have collected for a hospital for the whole country, which is to be built at Reykjavik.

Australian Women M.P.'s

The women of New South Wales and Victoria are now eligible for seats in the State Legislature and on municipal councils. The women of Victoria have also, in addition, secured the right to be magistrates in children's courts, justices of the peace, barristers, and solicitors. It is expected that the women of New Zealand will shortly be enfranchised in the same way.

Woman M.P. in Saskatchewan.

Mrs. M. O. Ramsden has been elected to represent the district of Pelly in the Saskatchewan Legislature. She is the first woman to be elected in Saskatchewan, and the second to contest a constituency. Mrs. Ramsden succeeds her husband, who died a few weeks ago.

Feminism in South America.

At Santiago, Chile, a feminist movement has begun, with the aim of obtaining for women equal political rights with men.

THE VOTE.

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 To the Editor—on all editorial matters.
 To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
 To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE
 orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.
 Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.
 Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

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.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

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SACRED INFANT LIFE IN HOLLOWAY AGAIN!

Our Man-made Laws.

Some time ago Elsie Kathleen Smith, a young girl of 21, of very respectable family, in answer to the call of patriotism, entered the service of the Government and became a clerk in the W.R.A.F.'s. Under the conditions of an unnatural environment she became acquainted with a Canadian officer, and a child was subsequently born.

As was pointed out in THE VOTE of August 22nd, the Government which takes these young girls from home and home influence, and plants them among strangers and in the midst of dangers, does not consider itself responsible for the results that follow in the case of those individuals who are more easily influenced, more flighty and weaker in character and principles. So this young girl drifted into a Salvation Army institution, the Maternity Hospital at Hackney.

Here, some four weeks ago, her baby girl was born after an exceptionally long and difficult ordeal, and when the young mother herself was in a particularly

weak and hysterical condition.

Then, in her lonely and miserable state, when the baby was about a week old, she received a letter from her sister telling her that she might come home, but *they would not have the child.*

Soon after, as we understand, an attendant entering the ward missed the baby from the mother's side and enquired where it was, and the mother answered, "Under this pillow." The attendant, making a hurried exit, summoned the nurse, who extricated the infant and in two or three minutes restored its breathing, and it completely recovered.

The quite unaccountable sequel was seen on September 10th at the Old Bailey, when this girl of 22 was charged with attempted murder by smothering the infant, and received four months' imprisonment in the second division. The defence stated the girl was

driven desperate

by the sister's letter and in no condition at the time to be fully responsible for her acts. He did not propose to mention the name of the Canadian officer-father, who was now said to have returned to Canada.

The judge stated his inclination to bind the prisoner over and keep her in the home, but *infant life was so sacred that they could not afford to let the opinion get about that attempts to do away with infant life could be passed over lightly*; therefore, though he realised that the young mother was distraught, all the same, she must furnish a warning to others by being shut

up till 1920 with her little baby girl in a prison cell, "where she would be well cared for."

We all remember well another little mother, Ellen Sullivan, aged 16, who was remanded to Holloway for a short period on a trivial charge with the same assurance "that she would be well taken care of," and, with her baby, was speedily released by death.

How long is a judge to prate upon the Bench about the sacredness of infant life and to send infants and their mothers into prison cells, the last places where they should be found? How long will it take British women to insist that no infant before or after birth shall be within prison walls? How long shall unfortunate young mothers of the race be incarcerated amid surroundings in every way bad for themselves and their offspring?

Our eminent Home Secretary asserts the

object of Prison

is not to reform the prisoner, but to deter from crime, and the infant victims perishing in our gaols may serve a useful purpose in protecting their contemporaries without, but women will never be satisfied with this comfortable doctrine.

Four months for the mother. How much does sacred infant life exact from the family who refused their help, and from the sister whose unkind letter caused the crime? They have committed no offence and they go free!

We may leave the mouse in the mouse-trap to die, but if we do not give it to the cat or drown it we are not its murderers. We may make it quite impossible for a mother to succour her child, but if in despair she ends its troubles she is the only criminal, and nobody else has done any harm.

Sacred infant life is derived from a father as well as a mother, but on the father's side it has no sanctity unless he is married to the mother, and even under those circumstances its sanctity is usually much less.

All decent men and women know that this is

unnatural and unjust

and an evil to the State. Every father must share with the mother responsibility for the child that is as much his as hers.

When, through neglect by the father, the mother is driven to criminal acts, he must stand beside her in the dock and share her disgrace and penalty.

The suppression of the names of fathers of unwanted babies in trials of this nature is a very bad custom and a serious evil, and must be altered without delay. In every case both parents' names must be given, and they should both be present in court; more than anything else, this innovation, which has long been energetically advocated by the Women's Freedom League, will protect that sacred infant life so venerated by our magistrates and judges upon the Bench, so despised by other people and in other places.

E. KNIGHT.

What we have done about this Case.

We have written to the Home Secretary, demanding this girl's immediate release, and have circulated the Press. We are also getting up a Petition for her release, which can be signed in our office, and are sending a Protest to the Prime Minister against the suppression of the Canadian officer's name, coupled with a demand that in future cases of this kind the man's name shall be published as well as the girl's, and that he shall be with her in court.

What we are going to do next week.

A public Protest meeting is being organised at very short notice for 7.30 p.m. next Monday (September 22) at Hackney, probably at the Town Hall. Speakers, Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Nevinson, Mrs. Mustard and others. Every Member of the League and every person who attaches any importance to justice and fair play must come forward and help to fill the Hall, and send out from Hackney a united demand for the immediate release of Elsie Smith.

A NEW WORLD.

Our versatile Prime Minister is now turning his thoughts to a new world, and dilates on its possibilities in a new periodical called *The Future*. Last December he was equally enthusiastic about a new Government whose duty it would be to remove all existing inequalities of the law as between men and women. It is a very old device to turn people's attention from present wrongs by predicting pleasanter times in the future, and we thought this practice was too antiquated to serve even a politician's purpose. Women electors, at any rate, are by this time convinced that the new Government is, as far as their interests are concerned, no better than older ones; and they may perhaps be forgiven their scepticism in regard to the new world of Mr. Lloyd George's dreams. Women are concerned with realities in the present world, and want to see new houses being built in the country to relieve the appalling overcrowding in congested districts; they want cheaper and better food with less adulteration, and an immediate stoppage of the criminal waste of foodstuffs at some of our principal ports; they want to secure industrial freedom for all men and women who are willing to work and a reduction in the prices of all the necessaries of life; they want better and equal facilities for education for boys and girls; and equal opportunities, rewards and responsibilities, with men in all branches of our national life. The Women's Freedom League is convinced that the Old World has great possibilities when women have an equal share with men in the direction of its affairs.

WOMEN WORKERS' MEETING IN GLASGOW.

It is a great pity that some youthful admirers of what is understood to be Bolshevism made use of the meeting held under the auspices of the Women's Trade Union League in the Berkeley Hall, Glasgow, on September 9th to create disorder. As Mrs. Agnes Lauder pointed out, six or seven years ago women had been removed by the hair of the head from meetings in Glasgow for much less interruption than was made by the youths on the present occasion. Miss Gertrude Tuckwell was in the chair, the speakers being Mr. Arthur Henderson (now M.P.), Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., Miss Margaret Bondfield, and Miss Mary Macarthur; and we are pleased to learn from Miss Mina Steven, who was present at this meeting, that the note of women's equality with men rang through the speeches. Mr. Thomas insisted that the women who had come to their country's help during the war must not be scrapped now, but that they should be supplied with work and paid for it at men's wages. Miss Bondfield deplored the apathy and indifference of the rank and file of women workers; and as women are permanent factors in the industry of the future, she urged that they must be educated to see the value of their services. Mr. Arthur Henderson said that women must fight for equality in our franchise law.

LONDON BOROUGH COUNCILS.

From a leaflet just published by the Women's Local Government Society we learn that the total number of London borough councillors (including members of the Westminster City Council) is 1915, but only 38 of these are women—that is, 1 in 50. Women may now be elected to serve on these councils on the same terms as men, and in every one of the twenty-eight London borough councils women candidates should now be preparing for the elections which will take place in November. The help of women councillors is needed for efficient administration, and we should very much like to see capable women on the committees dealing with finance on each of these councils. The following matters which are of vital concern to women come under the jurisdiction of borough councils—housing,

sanitation in the home, the removal of dust and refuse, maternity and child welfare, and food control and inspection. Women, too, should be on these councils so as to represent the ratepayers on the local health committee, and to get on to the watch committees which supervise the conduct of the police and the state of the streets. We are convinced that if women in fair numbers were on these councils they could render great social service by insisting on organised recreations and amusements for young people, which would act as a counter-attraction to the streets, at present the only alternative for many of them to their dingy, overcrowded homes. We hope to publish shortly a list of women who are willing to stand as candidates for these borough councils, and we confidently rely upon our readers to give them every possible support.

A BOOK FOR MOTHERS.

The medical officer of health for the Willesden Urban Council has just brought out the fifth edition of a helpful little book which has been sent to the parents of all notified births in the Willesden area during the last 15 years. Its title is "The Care of the Mother and the Child." In its pages advice is given to the expectant mother as to suitable clothing, hygiene, and fresh air, with lists of the things required during the birth of the child for both mother and infant, and the address of the nearest clinic. Methods by which the nursing mother and baby may best be protected from the usual ailments of infancy are described, and various schemes of feeding, together with a series of instructions as to the general care of the child.

One thousand copies were distributed the first year this little book was published, and the number has risen steadily ever since, so that the present edition consists of 6,000.

MUNICIPAL MATERNITY HOME.

The Hammersmith municipal maternity home in Ravenscourt Park is to be formally opened in October. It is only intended for women of the borough who live in rooms and cannot be properly looked after at such times. Already 30 women have applied for admission. There are 20 beds in the maternity wards, 12 cots for sick children, and other cots attached to the beds in the lying-in wards. The home is to be run in connection with the local infant welfare centres, and the minimum inclusive charge will be 30s. for a fortnight.

REMEMBER!

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CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER.
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SEND us Goods for Christmas Presents,
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The Friends of Armenia, the Independent W.S.P.U., the Women's Freedom League Nine Elms Settlement, League of the Church Militant, and Women's International League will also have stalls at this Fair.

BOOK REVIEWS.

*"The Need for Women Members of Parliament." By Edith How Martyn, B.Sc.(Econ.), A.R.C.Sc., B.Sc., Parliamentary Candidate for Hendon, December, 1918; County Councillor for Middlesex.

This little pamphlet is dedicated "to the 58,978 electors who voted for women candidates at the General Election, December, 1918," and is an excellent statement of the case for women members of Parliament. It is brightly written, and contains a fund of information under prominent headlines which readers of THE VOTE will much appreciate. It gives a list of the women candidates at the last election, with their constituencies and votes polled, and another list of the countries where women are already sitting and voting in the councils of the nation, and concludes with a plea to voters—men and women—to give their full consideration to the case for women representatives in the House of Commons. How to get women returned to Parliament is a very important matter, and Mrs. How Martyn ably deals with it, as well as the vexed question as to whether women should stand as party or independent candidates. Her views, too, on the value of propaganda work to be done at bye-elections are very apropos at the present time, and we are confident that our readers cannot do better than immediately send us an order for copies of "The Need for Women Members of Parliament."

* Published by the Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1. Price 2d.; by post 2½d.

A RUSSIAN JOAN OF ARC.

The Autobiography of the Commander of the Russian Women's Battalion of Death.

This is the story of a woman who, by sheer force of character, rose out of a very hell of horrors, and in so doing wrought a notable work for her unhappy country. The state of affairs in Russia to-day is most perplexing, but amidst all the welter of blood and the terrible disorders of anarchy the life of Maria Botchkareva stands out with a noble self-sacrifice.

She was called "Yashka" by her comrades of the Fifth Regiment, and that has given a title to the present volume. It is written with an almost brutal frankness, and, we should say, admirably translated.

Throughout the book emerges on one side into what we should call the barbarous life and the intense religiosity of the Russian peasant, and into unconquerable yearnings and strivings after true freedom. Herein is revealed not so much the efforts of the intellectuals as the uprising of the workers.

Yashka had a terrible life. Seduced at 15, married before she was 16 to a drunken soldier, she later became the mistress of one Yasha, and went with him into exile. Escaping, she joined the Fifth Regiment of the Russian Army, and with that her true career may be said to have begun. She went into action against the Germans, and vividly describes some of her experiences.

All through the years of which she tells she was consistently on the side of law and order. After the Revolution she came into opposition with Kerensky, and steadily refused to have the regiment she commanded governed by a committee. But the forces of evil were too much for her.

She was arrested, imprisoned and condemned to be shot; but at the eleventh hour she was saved by a soldier whom she had befriended on the battlefield. She escaped to Vladivostok, thence to America, and thence to England. And as a result of her adventurous life, she has given to the world this autobiography, which displays her wonderful courage, her indomitable spirit, and her strange idealism. It is certainly a book to read.

G. J. H. NORTHCROFT.

* *Yashka; My Life as Peasant, Exile and Soldier.* By Maria Botchkareva. Translated by Isaac Don Levine. [Constable and Co. 8s. 6d. net.] (Can be obtained at this office.)

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

Dear Madam,—In order to become a member of the Middle Temple, a law student must complete the formalities, with the signatures of two householders.

When, at the request of an overseas officer, I presented myself a few weeks ago at that ancient foundation to help to fulfil their requirements, it appeared that I was not able to do so on account of sex disqualification.

I suggested that there was no question of sex when, as a householder, I was called upon to pay taxes, etc., and that now, having a vote, I was, in the eyes of the law, also a citizen with a citizen's responsibilities, and that the fact that a woman was non-existent in the minds of the Middle Templars was an anomaly and an anachronism that should call attention to itself, and that the barriers should be broken down—even, if necessary, windows might be included. Whether this was looked upon as somewhat in the nature of a threat that might be carried out then and there, I only know that there was no further delay, and the applicant's papers were all put in order straightaway.

About the same time the collector for the tax on armorial bearings called to say that steps must be taken to call in my belated guinea. I begged him to wait for my decision as to whether it were forthcoming or not till I had consulted the leading suffragists as to whether in the eyes of the law I was the legal possessor of armorial bearings, not being able to bear arms on account of sex disqualification.

Your readers may remember that the local magistrates, for a similar delay, fined me £10 and costs in 1908.—Yours etc.,

(Signed) OCTAVIA LEWIN, M.B., B.S. (London).

September 17th, 1919.

Correction.

Dear Madam,—In my article, "The Vote in Sweden," in last week's VOTE, you make me say:

"... Subject to the not very stringent property qualification of an income of 50,000 kronor... we shall be able to take our seat in the Upper House. . . ."

What I wrote was:

"Subject to the not very stringent property qualification of an income of 3,000 kronor or a capital of 50,000 kronor. . . ."

Yours faithfully,

LEOPOLD SPERO.

14, Stratford Place, London, W. 1.

September 10th, 1919.

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FOUR LECTURES

BY
MRS. ANNIE BESANT.

SUBJECT:

THE WAR AND THE FUTURE

On SUNDAY MORNINGS, at 11.30.

- October 5th. The War and the Builders of the Commonwealth.
October 12th. The War and its Lessons on Fraternity.
October 19th. The War and its Lessons on Equality.
October 26th. The War and its Lessons on Liberty.

Seats, numbered and reserved, 7s. 6d., 6s., 5s. 6d. Admission 1s. 6d., and a few free seats.
Applications for tickets (accompanied by stamped square envelope), should be either to The Theosophical Publishing House, 1, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.; 169, Piccadilly, W.; The Order of the Star in the East, 314, Regent Street, W.; or at the door of the Hall.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, September 19 (weather permitting—if wet, September 24).—"Picnic-Concert," Petersham Park (entrance Richmond Park or Petersham Road), in aid of the Children's Guest-House. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Tea, 4.30 p.m. Concert, 5.30—7 p.m. Tickets, 2s., may be obtained from Miss Wells, 4, Friars Stile Road, Richmond Hill, S.W.

Wednesday, September 24.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 25.—Open-air Meeting, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, October 1.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe. Speaker: Miss Abadam. Subject: "Flouting Women—the Divided Faggot."

Wednesday, October 1.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park, 7 p.m.

Thursday, October 2.—Open-air Meeting, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, October 8.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Clara Andrew. Subject: "Adoption in Relation to the Unwanted Child" (the work of the National Children Adoption Association).

Wednesday, October 15.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Lind-af-Hageby. Subject: "The Re-valuation of Women."

Wednesday, October 22.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe, 3 p.m. Speaker: Mr. William Aird. Subject: "The Food of the Future."

Provinces.

Wednesday, September 22.—Portsmouth Work Party, 17, Duncan Road, Southsea, 3 to 7 p.m. Hostess: Mrs. Speck.

Monday, September 29.—Westliff. Social, Crowstone Congregational Hall, King's Road, 7.15 p.m. Music and sketches by Mrs. Newberry and friends. Refreshments provided; 1s. each.

Other Societies.

Wednesday, October 1.—Women's Social Hour, 141, Portland Road, Norwood, at 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Dorothy Evans.

Subject: "Fair wages for Housewives."

Saturday, October 4.—North Kensington I.L.P., 8, Bonchurch Road, Ladbroke Grove, at 8 p.m. Speaker: Miss Dorothy Evans.

Subject: "Fair wages for Housewives."

Monday, October 6.—Shoreditch Herald League. Open-air Meeting, Hoxton Church, at 8 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Nevinson.

Subject: "The Need for Women on Public Bodies."

Branch Notes.

Portsmouth.

Activities were resumed on Wednesday, September 10th, when a work party was held, by kind invitation of Mrs. Slatter, at 14, Festing Grove. There was a very good attendance, and plans for winter work were discussed. It was decided to hold our monthly public meetings on the third Wednesday afternoon in each month, commencing in October. Fortnightly work parties will be held from now until the Green, White and Gold Fair. Great enthusiasm was shown, and schemes proposed for raising money for our local election fund for women candidates for the Town Council. A committee was appointed to carry these proposals into effect. Mrs. Speck invited the work party to meet at her house, 17, Duncan Road, on Wednesday, September 22nd, from 3 to 7 p.m.

Ashford.

Mrs. Nevinson's address, "Women, and the Law," was listened to with close attention last Wednesday at the Women's Club. Owing to the exceptional heat the meeting was held in the Co-operative Hall instead of the Guild Room. We were rather lost in such a big hall, but it was pleasant to be in a cool place. Mrs. Bankes presided. The committee were busily arranging tea, selling THE VOTE, etc. A committee meeting is being arranged for next Wednesday, when the winter programme will be discussed. We are again trying to get Miss Janet Gibson for the October meeting.

THE CITY TEMPLE.

Dr. Fort Newton will preach at both services—11 and 6.30—next Sunday (September 21st). Evening subject: "Jesus and George Eliot."

AN ORANGE BOX COMEDY.

How to raise funds for the League.

It was not even a good solid Tate sugar-box, but a small flexible fruit-box which the speaker had been forced to abandon owing to instability.

The crowd was a typical English crowd—that is to say, it was inclined to be argumentative, but could appreciate a good joke. So, when, at the conclusion of the meeting, the speaker—Miss Phoebe Rickard—put up the scrapped platform for auction, bidding began in a sportsmanlike spirit.

The box possessed "points," and Miss Rickard was far too good an auctioneer to let it go for a song. The box was undeniably small, and somewhat light, but in view of the present-day price of wood, it was not dear at anything it would fetch. Bidding rose to 1s. 11d., and competitors showed signs of excitement. The hammer came down at 2s. To the joy of the crowd the fortunate one presented his prize to the Women's Freedom League to be re-sold. This time the hammer came down at 1s. 6d., and again the League was presented with the box. The excellences of the box were once more pointed out, bidding began again, and once more the highest bidder returned the box.

After the platform had been sold and re-sold numerous times, 1s. was offered for its bottom—unfortunately, it did not possess a lid! The offer was accepted, and the bottom of the box successfully disposed of. The sides and ends remained. These were sold and re-sold, but still hung on the auctioneer's hands.

As the bidding became slack, a wit in the crowd offered 1s. if enough pennies were forthcoming from the crowd to line one side of the box. There was a generous response, and in less than two minutes twenty pennies lay 3de by side. A wager, that this achievement could not be repeated, was taken up. The Women's Freedom League won with 5d. to the good!

Further sums were realised on the remaining portions of the box, but as no one seemed really to want them, several expectant youngsters were only too happy to receive the precious pieces. A collection was then taken which amounted to 1d., but auction sale and collection together realised 13s. 3d.!

E. A. H.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT.

93 Nine Elms Lane, London, S.W. 8.

Mrs. Despard will be very pleased to see any of our friends on the occasion of the picnic-concert to be given—weather permitting—at Petersham Park on Friday, September 19th. Miss R. Wells, 4, Friars Stile Road, Richmond Hill, is very kindly organising the entertainment, which promises to be very successful. Tickets, including tea and concert, are two shillings each, and the greater the number present the more will our Treasurer rejoice when she receives the resulting cheque. So please do come, every one who is able. From those unable to be present Miss Wells will not refuse to receive cheques!

And may I repeat that our towels (bath towels especially), tealochs, etc., are a week nearer to being absolute rags, and everything is so dear to buy.

We have received this week children's new little garments from Miss Greenville and Miss Davis, material for pinafores is coming from Miss Riggall, sweets for the children from Miss Turton, boots, pocket handkerchiefs and shoes from Miss K. Holmes, 31s. from Miss Riggall, sweets and fruit for the children from Mrs. H. Brooks.

We are more than usually anxious to make our stall at the Green, White and Gold Fair a great success financially, so hope that our friends will make every effort to send goods. Anything will do, but household things, such as tea and traycloths, pillowslips and children's clothing (especially vests), are perhaps the most asked for.

SPECIAL PROTEST FUND.

We are now raising a special fund to defray the cost of the action that must be taken to secure Elsie Smith's release from Holloway. Public Meetings and the organising of the big widely signed Petitions we have in hand are all expensive, but the wave of indignation, all over the country at the girl's cruel fate, and the unequal treatment of father and mother, will send us all the money that we need.

144 High Holborn,
London, W.C. 1.

E. KNIGHT.

Hon. Treasurer.

FRIDAY,
September 19,
1919.

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Mrs. Elizabeth Abbott is the new editor of *Jus Suffragi*, in place of Miss Sheepshanks. She is one of the ablest of our suffragist speakers, and did remarkable work during the war in connection with the Scottish Women's Hospital. She travelled in India and Australia on behalf of this work.

SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND.

This organisation is arranging a collecting day, Saturday, September 27th, and appeals for volunteers for collecting and clerical work, who will be welcomed at "Save the Children Fund" offices, 329, High Holborn, W.C. The Government has promised another £1 for every £1 collected.

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