

THE VOTE,  
JUNE 4, 1920.  
ONE PENNY.

**DARE TO BE FREE!**

# THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 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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## A CALL TO THE WOMEN AT GENEVA.

Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Schofield Coates have gone as the Women's Freedom League's fraternal delegates to the women's Congress which meets at Geneva from June 6th to June 12th. They will give our greetings to the women of all countries represented there who are striving, as we are striving, to secure for women complete social, political and economic equality, and equal responsibility with men throughout all branches of their national life. Every resolution which aims at getting this equality for women will receive the wholehearted support of our delegates; and they will express uncompromising opposition to any attempt on the part of Governments to impose restrictions on the labour or activities of women which are not applicable to men. Women ask for a fair field and no favour; but they insist on it being a fair field, without special handicaps for women.

The women's cause has advanced rapidly since the last Congress, which was held in Buda-Pesth in 1913. At that time the women of no Great Power were enfranchised. Now, not only have women votes in many of the countries of Europe, but also representatives in Parliament. Our own Government is sending Great Britain's one woman M.P., Lady Astor, to represent it at Geneva, and other Governments are also sending official delegates. The position of women in all

countries will be considered and reviewed. The moral question will be discussed, and our delegates will press for the recognition of an equal moral standard for men and

women, because we realise that there can be no real equality of the sexes so long as this remains unrecognised. The enslavement of women in any country is a strong menace to the advancement of women in every other country; and the women in Geneva, representing the progressive women throughout the world, will do everything in their power to make such enslavement or barter of women impossible.

The meeting together of progressive women of all nations, irrespective of their race, or creed, or class, all united in their efforts to make the world realise that women must be the *unfettered* guardians of the race, cannot fail to be productive of universal good. Such a Congress will breathe the true spirit of internationalism, a discerning internationalism which will be the best possible foundation for the League of Nations of the future, and the surest safeguard for the lasting Peace of the world. Now that women have real power in so many nations the whole face of the political world



MRS. DESPARD.

has changed, so that we look to the women at Geneva to make a firm stand against the forces of prejudice, reaction and corruption, and to send our motto ringing through every Nation—DARE TO BE FREE.



## THE TAXATION OF MARRIAGE.

By Dr. Marie Stopes, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S.

Marriage is taxed to the tune of over twenty million pounds a year. This is a directly anti-social and immoral proceeding, not only an iniquitous injustice to individuals who marry, but against the best interests of the State, and an incitement to people to form illicit unions.

Intelligent citizens have been hoping that the Royal Commission on Income Tax would make the removal of this tax one of their most strenuous recommendations. Their report has just appeared, but amazingly advises the continuance of this direct attack on marriage and the family. The only woman on the Commission, however, drew up a reservation clearly showing the wrong done by this tax, which, as was pointed out in the *English Review* for August, 1913, penalises marriage. Her reservation was supported by only one man Commissioner. (See Report of the Royal Commission on Income Tax, 1920, pp. 151-160.)

### Public demand,

therefore, must be insistent to force our legislators to remit the tax on marriage.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Income Tax should be read by all. There you will find that the Commissioners' recommendations work out so that if a man and woman each have £150 a year, they are to be penalised as a result of their marriage by a tax of £6 15s. more than they would have paid if they had remained unmarried. If the man increases his income and the woman does not, until they have £800 a year the tax they pay for the legal ceremony of marriage is raised to £15 15s. But if the wife increases her income so that she and the husband contribute equal amount to the joint income of £800, then the tax of their penalisation is not £15 15s., but £47 5s., a direct tax on the woman's marriage certificate. Whereas, if this man and woman had lived together in life-long but illegal union they would have paid only as individuals, and saved £47 5s. per annum.

This middle-headed immoral legislation is based partly on the idea that a married pair save by living together in a joint household, but so do mother and daughter, brothers, sisters, and friends. None of these is taxed for living in the same house. For example, the Commissioners' recommendations work so that three sisters, each with £135 income, living together, pay no tax at all, but a husband and wife, with one child, living next door, with an equal income, would be taxed to the extent of £21 12s. per annum. Now the married pair provide a child for the benefit of the State; the unmarried persons do not. Yet the State penalises the child-producing pair—and then cries out for a higher birth-rate!

The paltry allowances suggested for wives and children involve immense clerical labour, and they do not correspond at all to the expenditure involved or equal the amount of the direct marriage tax, while they retain the

### sex injustice to women.

A proper allowance for children should be made to each parent on his or her individual assessment.

The argument that the Exchequer cannot afford to lose the twenty million pounds and more which it is at present stealing from married persons—and women in particular—is a worthless argument. The Exchequer would not lose; it would merely have so to assess all individuals equitably as units (whereby much clerical work in the reckoning of joint assessments would be saved to the country), so that everyone paid their small share of this amount, and not the married persons only.

Elementary common-sense on the part of our rulers who cry out for the increase of the birth-rate, and our clergy who deplore the public failure to realise the sanctity of marriage, should make such an iniquitous tax on marriage and parenthood impossible.

As the men Commissioners are so blind as not to see the necessity for stopping the direct tax on

marriage, the women of the country must unite, bringing with them, we hope, their husbands, their lovers, and all lovers of the State.

I am prepared personally, and have already behind me several leading women who are also prepared to refuse to pay any tax based upon a joint assessment. We intend to pay no more than we should have paid as unmarried women, and hope so to arouse public opinion that the necessary change of law is made and the iniquitous and immoral tax on marriage is done away with; and we are prepared to serve the community in this way to the extent, if necessary, of going to prison.

## DINNER TO MRS. DESPARD.

Members of the Women's Freedom League had a delightful reunion at the Minerva Club last Friday, at the dinner given to Mrs. Despard before her departure as one of the League's fraternal delegates to the Congress at Geneva. It proved to be a genuine Women's Freedom League Reminiscences evening. Miss Gibson presided, and reminded those present of the earlier suffrage days, when Mrs. Despard had so much inspired those who were struggling for the enfranchisement of women, and had proved such an unflinching source of encouragement to every worker in our cause, especially perhaps to the sellers of THE VOTE. Miss Pierotti remembered the evening on which her mother had first attended a meeting addressed by Mrs. Despard, and announced that she had become a member of the Women's Freedom League. Her daughters were at first a little scared, but very soon afterwards they were announcing with pride to their school friends that "Of course, my mother is a suffragette!" Mrs. Tanner said she was always doubly proud of the fact that she was an Irishwoman when she found herself on the same platform with Mrs. Despard. Mrs. Thomson Price paid a touching tribute to our guest, who had been described as "a mere visionary," but had proved to be an immense power of inspiration to her throughout many years. Mrs. Mockford expressed her gratitude to Mrs. Despard for having first convinced her of women's wider interests. "If it had not been for Mrs. Despard," she said, "I should have been content to spend all my leisure time by the fireside darning or knitting my husband's socks!" Miss Steven told us that years ago, when she lived in a little place among the hills of Scotland she very much looked forward to receiving THE VOTE, and to reading Mrs. Despard's articles. It was those articles which had given her courage to face the world; and eventually to take up her present work in London. Mrs. Whetton brought greetings to Mrs. Despard from the National Executive Committee and the Portsmouth Branch, and expressed their warm appreciation of her work. Dr. G. B. Clark, a stalwart in the cause of women's enfranchisement ever since 1867, congratulated Mrs. Despard on being able to see the happy results of so much of her work. Much still remained to be achieved. He wished her many more years of work, and expressed the views of everyone present when he said: "May all your dreams, dear Mrs. Despard, come true!"

In replying, Mrs. Despard said she really did not know herself when listening to all the kind things that had been said. She loved the Women's Freedom League, and was quite sure it was working on the right lines. It had had splendid workers; some of them had passed away, but their spirit still lived amongst us. She referred with affection and deep feeling to Miss Annie Smith, who, until a year ago, had done so much for THE VOTE. Mrs. Despard paid a warm tribute to those who were now working for the League—Mrs. Fisher and her staff, Dr. Knight, Miss Underwood, Miss Clark, and all those who devotedly worked with them; and she urged that all members should support the officials of the League with all the means at their disposal. There was so much work to be done on behalf of women, and the Women's Freedom League must do it. The proceedings closed with short speeches by Dr. Knight and Miss Underwood.

## WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

### Women and Health.

The Women's Health Watching Council, composed of representatives of nearly 50 women's organisations, with a membership of many hundreds of thousands, which has been engaged for some time past in watching new legislation on health questions to make sure that woman's point of view was borne in mind by the Government, and which played an important part in negotiations preceding the establishment of the Ministry of Health, has now been dissolved, although the constituent bodies represented on the Council will individually still carry on the work.

### Citizenship Diplomas.

Westfield College, Hampstead has started a Citizenship Diploma course, which aims at giving girls who are not going to take up a profession a training to enable them to take an active interest in the questions of the day. The girls study modern social and municipal institutions at first hand, by means of visits to factories and health centres, children's courts, and Borough Council meetings. The subjects for the diploma are not studied in the technical sense in which they would be read by girls working for a London degree.

### Women Police.

In the report recently issued to the Home Office by H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary on the county, city, and borough police forces of England and Wales, for the year ended September 29th last, there are some interesting statistics of the work of women police. During the past five years or so the employment of women on definite police work, says the report, has been an accomplished fact, 144 being now on ordinary duty throughout the country, besides 213 police matrons or women upon office and telephone duty. Juvenile crime and prostitution are the two chief evils cited in the Report, wherein valuable preventive work can be better accomplished by police women than by men.

### Dr. Alice Masaryk.

Dr. Alice Masaryk, daughter of the President of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, has come to London to assist in the "All British" matinee, which, jointly with Mr. Richard Fletcher, she has organised in aid of the Czecho-Slovak Fund for Babies. Dr. Alice Masaryk speaks English fluently, is a Doctor of Philosophy, and has studied medicine, history, and sociology, spending two years in America as a social worker. During the war, when suspicion fell upon her in connection with the leakage of naval secrets, she was incarcerated in Austria, and was compelled to endure imprisonment under deplorable conditions for nine months. Professor Masaryk, who, during the war, was attached to King's College as lecturer in Slavonic Sociology, has been unanimously elected, within the last few days, to the presidency of the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia. The new Government includes 15 women M.P.s.

### The V.A.D.'s Club.

Marshall Thompson's Hotel in Cavendish Square is being transformed into a club for the V.A.D.s, and is to be ready in the middle of June. Hundreds of applications for membership have come in. The club is to be run on the usual lines of a woman's club, but will be almost entirely staffed by V.A.D.s. Moderately-priced meals are to be a feature of the club. Princess Mary, who had her own V.A.D. detachment, is taking a great interest in the club, and visited the building before the alterations were begun.

### Portia Left Out.

The Public Service Section of the Forum Club is holding a reception this week to meet representatives of the newest professions for women. Among those who will be present will be Dr. Alice Bentham (doctors), Miss Champneys (women police), Miss I. Dixon (Civil Service), Mrs. Scott Gatty (Parliamentary candidate), Mrs. How Martyn (Middlesex County Council), and a woman justice of the peace. What about Portia?

### Votes for Greek Women.

M. Venizelos has received the Committee of the Greek League for the Protection of Women's Rights and expressed his satisfaction at the serious suffragist movement, begun by the recently constituted League. He said he hoped Greek women would soon be in a position to receive political rights, which the Liberal Government would have no objection to recognising in due course. He assured the committee that the vote would be granted after the next municipal and communal elections, beginning with local administration. The committee, under Mme. Negroponti, the president of the League, will participate in the forthcoming International Woman Suffrage Conference at Geneva.

### Frenchwomen and Bachelor Tax.

Not only are French women ready to take their share of the taxpayers' burden, but they are anxious to pay the bachelor's tax, or so it appears from a letter addressed to M. Francois Marsal, Minister of Finance, by the French Union for Woman Suffrage. In this letter the Union congratulates the Government for having rejected the proposal put forward by several Senators suggesting that the extra tax to be paid by bachelors should not be extended to spinsters, on the ground that the latter did not, as a rule, remain unmarried by choice. The letter urged that women should be considered the equals of men in every case, and that, therefore, all taxes applicable to men should also be applied to women.

### Jewish Women and Suffrage.

An association for women's political rights in Palestine is making steady progress, thanks to the efforts of Jewish women. The society has branches in, amongst other places, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa and Tiberias, and several women have already been elected to the National Assembly as well as to the City Councils. A woman has recently been appointed a member of the Board of Education in Jerusalem. The President of the Association, Dr. Rose Straus, reports that even the Arab women are taking courage from their Jewish compatriots and struggling to improve their position.

### Florence Nightingale Medal.

On the occasion of the centenary last month of the birth of Florence Nightingale the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva decided to award about fifty medals to nurses throughout the world. The Florence Nightingale Medal, created by the ninth Conference of the International Red Cross at Washington in 1912, had not hitherto been awarded. This distribution includes nurses belonging to 15 different countries.

## MRS. KINETON PARKES.

It is with very deep regret that we learn that our old member and friend, Mrs. Kineton Parkes, died from heart failure in New Zealand a fortnight ago. Mrs. Parkes was one of the earliest organisers of the Women's Freedom League when we initiated Tax Resistance as a policy against the Government which denied enfranchisement to women. Later, she became the Secretary of the Women's Tax Resistance League, and when this suspended operations during the War, Mrs. Parkes threw all her energy into the Women's Emergency Corps. She afterwards went to New Zealand on a visit to her son, and from time to time we have received exceedingly interesting accounts of lectures on the struggle of British women for political liberty which she has given at meetings in our Overseas Dominions. Mrs. Parkes was a delightful lecturer and speaker, and extremely popular with every possible kind of audience, who always loved her breeziness and good humour. We had been looking forward to seeing and hearing her again in London in a short time. Now we can only offer her two sons and their families our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement.



## THE VOTE.

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 To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders,  
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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.

At Home and Abroad ... Post free, 6/6 per annum.

## THE GOVERNMENT AND WORKING WOMEN.

Working women are under no debt of gratitude to the present Government, and it is to be hoped they will recollect this fact at the next General Election. During the past week the Minister of Labour has issued an order confirming minimum rates of wages fixed by the Dressmaking and Women's Light Clothing Trade Board for male and female workers, which come into force immediately. The principal rates are:

General Minimum Time-Rates.—Female workers other than learners, 8½d. per hour; correspondingly lower rates have been fixed for learners. Male workers of 22 years and upwards, 1s. 2d. per hour. Correspondingly lower rates have been fixed for workers under this age.

Piecework Basis Time-Rates.—All female workers, 9½d. per hour; all male workers, 1s. 3½d. per hour.

Readers of THE VOTE will remember that under the Pre-War Practices Act women are excluded from the better-paid engineering and other trades—those trades in fact where men can now easily earn between two and three shillings an hour; while in the dressmaking and allied trades—essentially women's trades—men can come and work with the Government's sanction at much higher wages than are given to women. Is this another sop to the vanity of men?

The Home Secretary is responsible for a Bill which will shortly be read a second time in the House of Commons, to "carry out certain conventions relating to the employment of women, young persons and children, and to amend the law with respect to the Employment of Women, and Young Persons in Factories and Workshops." It is curious that the Government cannot yet consider that women are grown-up persons, as much able to look after themselves as men are. Before the enfranchisement of women over 30 years of age, women were generally classed with children; but now the Government legislates for them in connection with Young Persons and Children! One of the clauses of this Bill prohibits night work for women, without distinction of age, in industrial undertakings. We would agree to the prohibition of all unnecessary night work for both men and women, but we strongly oppose a special restriction on the labour of women which is not also applicable to men. How can women secure equality of opportunity and remuneration with men when they are handicapped at the start by a restriction of this kind? Such a restriction can only lead to the degradation of women's labour and force women into the sweated or less remunerative trades in which men do not care to compete. We hope that working women will fiercely resent this uncalled for interference with their liberty, and insist upon their right to work under the same conditions as men, and for equal pay. Let women judge for themselves whether certain conditions of labour are suitable to them or not. We claim for all women in industry the same right of way that men enjoy. All "protective" legislation for women can only lower their status in industry, and should be effectively resisted by working women.

## GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS.

Colonel Greig has introduced a Bill "to amend the Law relating to the Guardianship and Custody of Infants," the chief object of which is to make the father and mother of every legitimate child its joint guardians, with equal authority, rights, and responsibility in regard to it. At the present time the married mother has no rights over her child. The father can, if he chooses, decide where and how it is to be brought up, what its religion is to be; and he can also deprive the mother of the custody of this child. In addition to making married parents joint guardians of their children, this Bill also makes them jointly and severally liable for the cost of their maintenance and education, according to the means of each parent. At present such parents have no legal financial responsibility for their children beyond preventing their destitution, although, if the parents are separated, the father can be made to contribute to their support under a Maintenance Order. This new Bill marks an advance in the position of married women, and in view of the fact that the present Government is pledged to remove all existing inequalities as between men and women, we hope that it will afford facilities for its early passage into law. That a married mother is not considered as the legal parent of her own child is an intolerable position for her, and we cannot think that any opposition in the House of Commons will be found to the alteration of such an anomaly. The Bill is being backed by Lady Astor, Sir James Agg-Gardner, and Major Hills, which will ensure for it much powerful support. We urge our readers to write to their Member of Parliament asking him to give this Bill every possible support; and to see that a flagrant disability of married women is removed with the least possible delay.

## "A MISCHIEVOUS POLICY."

We are glad to say that we have received a letter from Dr. Mearns Fraser, Medical Officer of Health for Portsmouth, pointing out that we were incorrect in stating in THE VOTE of May 14th that Portsmouth Borough Council had "decided to provide the means of prophylaxis of venereal disease at the expense of the ratepayers." We are glad to hear from Dr. Fraser that his Council are not providing, and have no intention of providing, any means of prophylaxis against venereal diseases, and to that extent our censure was undeserved. They do, however, propose to take steps to spread a knowledge of the means by which men may protect themselves against venereal diseases after exposure to infection. We have pleasure in taking the earliest opportunity of correcting the false impression which our article must have conveyed to our readers. But the distinction is more apparent than real. The Portsmouth Borough Council "rightly" (in Dr. Fraser's opinion) consider it as much their duty as a sanitary authority to endeavour to protect the inhabitants of their district against venereal diseases as against any other dangerous infectious disease. We agree as to the "rightness" of this object, but differ from him and from the Borough Council as to the "rightness" of the means employed. It is impossible to "disseminate a knowledge of self-disinfection among the male population of the Borough" without introducing the powerful and dangerous element of suggestion to the boys and young men that immorality is not only excusable in them, but necessary and expected. A public body which lends its authority to this view incurs a heavy weight of responsibility for the future. There is very little public gain in a diminution of venereal disease, even if it can be so brought about, which we deny, accompanied by a proportionate increase of immorality.

## WOMEN AND TOWN COUNCILS.

### Local Government Responsibilities.

On November 1st a third of the members of town councils will be elected, and women must see that the number of women on these bodies is increased. Last year 199 women were nominated for town councils in England and Wales, and 62 were returned.

Women's organisations interested in the participation of women in local government should be prepared with suitable candidates, and should not delay in evolving the necessary machinery. If a candidate is to be successful, preparatory work is essential. In selecting a candidate an organisation should take care to choose a woman who has already had experience of public work, and who is accustomed to working on mixed Committees. It is an asset for a candidate to be a fluent speaker, but the gift is not essential for a councillor—in fact, the too talkative councillor delays the work of a Committee, and is often a source of annoyance to the other members.

A candidate for a town council must be 21 years of age, either married or single, and must be qualified either as a local government elector, as an owner of property within the area of the local authority, or as a resident in the borough for the twelve months preceding the date of the election. Boroughs are divided into wards, and the number of councillors vary from

### three to nine

according to the number of the electorate to be represented.

Town councils are of two classes, namely, county borough councils and non-county boroughs. The former has practically all the powers of a county council, in addition to those of a municipal council; the non-county borough, like the urban district council, shares its authority with the county council. The County Borough Council is the most complete local government authority, and when Boards of Guardians are abolished will be the sole authority in its area.

Town Councils, through their public health departments, are responsible for the good health of their area. They are responsible for the drainage and for a good and sufficient water supply for private and business purposes, for the collection of refuse, the treatment and notification of infectious diseases, and the establishment of hospitals and, in the case of county borough councils, also of sanatoria.

The Councils have ample powers in regard to food, and their inspectors can take samples for analysis and destroy anything that is unsound. Women are particularly alive to the importance of a pure milk supply, and they should press that the provisions of the Milk and Dairies (Consolidation) Act of 1914 should now be put into force. Impure milk and bad housing are two of the chief causes of tuberculosis, and it is estimated that at least 60,000 persons die from this disease each year. Sir Kingsley Wood said, when speaking at Brighton the other day on the

### treatment of tuberculosis

"A great deal of the ill-health of the country to-day was due to tuberculosis. Competent authorities estimated that over 50,000 people in England alone were affected by it. He believed one of the best means towards arresting the disease was to ensure a pure milk supply."

Town Councils are the Housing Authorities for their area, and there is urgent need in every locality for more housing accommodation. Owing to the increased cost of all building materials and labour, the housing problem is one of great difficulty, but it is essential, in order to satisfy the demands of health and morality, that a sufficient number of houses shall be built. Women want to help in this work, and no Housing Committee should be without women members. This is now possible as the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919 made provision for the co-option of members outside the Council to such Committees. Unfortunately, the local authority is not compelled to appoint women, and

many have not done so, including such an important county borough as that of Leicester. Local Housing Authorities have also power to establish Advisory Committees of women, on which the various women's organisations in the locality should be represented.

Town Councils administer the Education Acts, and their educational work has been increased by the recent Act. The county borough council is responsible for elementary, secondary and higher education within its area, whereas the town council which has a population of 10,000 deals only with elementary education. A town whose population is under 10,000 is not an Education authority, and the county council is responsible for education within such a district.

Under the Acts relating to Notification of Births and Maternity and Child Welfare, Town Councils have power to establish Lying-in Homes, baby hospitals, and to provide for help and nursing for expectant mothers.

In any article dealing with the work of town councils, reference must be made to that of the Watch Committee. County Boroughs and some non-County Boroughs with a population of over 10,000 maintain their own police force. The Watch Committee, on which only councillors may serve, consists of not more than one-third of the members of the Council and the Mayor. Three members form a quorum. With the approval of the town council, the

### Watch Committee

fixes the number and salaries of the police, and can dismiss or suspend any constable from duty. The expenses of the police are paid either out of the borough fund or in some places out of a Watch rate. Half the cost of the pay and clothing of the police is met by a grant from the Exchequer, provided that the requisite degree of efficiency is attained. The Watch Committee is the "custodian of civic order and well-being," and no Watch Committee should be without a woman member. At present only in seven towns are women serving on such committees, and women electors at the approaching municipal elections would do well to remember this fact when asked to support candidates. The late Mr. Alex. Coote, of the National Vigilance Society, more than once affirmed that "the morals of a borough lie ultimately in the hands of the head constable," and urged the need for the Watch Committee to strongly back the Chief and his subordinates in waging continual war on suspicious houses, questionable shows, etc. Women members should form a part of every police force, and this point should not be omitted from any woman candidate's programme.

There is time before the autumn to find

### suitable women

who are willing to help in local government administration, and to arrange for their candidature. In many large towns, town council elections are run on party lines, but in the majority of places this is not the case. Party politics ought not to come into the administration of local government, and if a sufficient number of men and women were ready to stand as independent candidates an advance would have been made, and their success, if not immediate, would be assured in the future. It is not as easy to evolve the necessary machinery as to use that of a party, but there is no better way of educating the woman elector than by a contested election. There are difficulties to be faced, including that of expense, but with willing helpers the latter can be greatly reduced. Help and advice as to the conduct of an election, together with suitable publications, can be obtained from the Women's Local Government Society, 19, Tothill Street, Westminster.

MARIAN BERRY.

### OUR ADVERTISERS

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



## MRS. DESPARD'S BIRTHDAY FUND.

### An Opportunity to Help the League.

Dear Fellow Members,—On Friday, July 2nd, at 7 p.m., at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, we shall meet to celebrate for the ninth year in succession the Birthday of our beloved Mrs. Despard. The idea of the Annual Birthday Party is to show our appreciation of, and gratitude for, our association with this splendid pioneer woman, in many ways the most outstanding figure of the century. It is impossible to over-estimate what the Women's Freedom League owes to our dear and honoured Lady, for so many years our President, and bound to us in closest ties of affection and esteem. Irresistibly attracted to the unpopular Cause and on the side of the oppressed and injured, Mrs. Despard stood for Votes for Women when it was a term of opprobrium and contempt, calmly ignoring insult and calumny, stoned and mobbed, happier inside than outside prison, with untiring perseverance speaking and working for us all over the country.

Then when the terrible War came, and many Women's Societies hastily collapsed or transferred their activities, she stood firm with the League for the Freedom of Women, and together we fought for that Ideal of Women's Equal Value, which is even more essential in War than in Peace.

At the

### Birthday Party

we present Mrs. Despard with the Birthday Fund, and I am sure you will this year send me a larger contribution than ever before, so that we may have the full £1,000 to present. The money, as you know, is given back to the League, and is our chief means of paying our way. We cannot make any return for the inspiration and enthusiasm and hard work that have been given so lavishly to us, but all our members are very glad to have the opportunity of giving their annual thanks for all, in this way, by contributing very freely to the Birthday Fund.

We have much work before us. Bills like the objectionable Bastardy Bill must be defeated, we must get the Age of Consent raised to 18 by the Bishop of London's Bill, and frustrate attempts to combine it with clauses which would reintroduce Regulation 40D, and the shameful provisions of the C.D. Acts. We must get more women M.P.s; we rejoice over our real live one, and she begs for companions. We want many women J.P.s; many women have been approved, but these are not so far being appointed, indeed, most of the existing women J.P.s are of good position, but can hardly be called representative. Women on juries must be made a common everyday fact. All this your League is busily pushing forward, and we hold a unique place, and are doing what nobody else will do. In the Elsie Smith campaign we acted alone, and led the demand for her release, which did so much to educate public opinion on the whole question of equal morality.

Now, may I remind you that

### living expenses

are to-day enormously increased, and we must expand our income accordingly, as we long ago economised to the utmost limit, and the work must go on. Your friends will, I am sure, like to help too if you will give them the opportunity, and I shall be glad indeed if I may send you a Collecting Card with this object. I shall hope to see you, if in London, at the Birthday Party, which we intend to make a great success, and, with very many thanks for all your kind help in the past, will rely on you to support us again as generously as you possibly can. With best wishes.—Yours sincerely,

E. KNIGHT, Hon. Treasurer.  
144, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

VOTER AGED 103.—Among the voters at the Nenagh (Tipperary) elections was a woman aged 103, who walked to the polling booth with her son.

## BOOK REVIEW.

*An Adventure in Working-class Education.* By Albert Mansbridge, Hon.M.A.(Oxon.). Longmans, Green & Co. 6s. od. net. (To be obtained from this office.)

This book is primarily the story of the Workers' Educational Association from 1903—1915, written by its Founder and General Secretary. The struggle of men and women of the working classes for Higher Education is full of romance and the spirit of adventure. Mr. Mansbridge relates that in 1859 the classroom of the Sheffield People's College was a ghostly, whitewashed, unplastered garret, and that working men in winter time used to walk for miles through the snow to receive instruction there at 6.30 a.m. This college was closed in 1879, but it became the nucleus of Sheffield University. He also tells us that the Head of an Oxford College, when lecturing at Durham, came across a working man who had been studying the philosophy of the Schoolmen for twenty years, and had never met anyone else who had studied it until this Oxford man passed that way. The founders of the Workers' Educational Association were not, Mr. Mansbridge points out, educationalists in the scholastic sense of the word. They knew the keen desire for knowledge among working people, and the generous attitude of those men and women who had been fortunate enough to receive an advanced education. These founders wanted an association of Trade Unions and the Universities, in order that labour and scholarship should be no longer divorced. Their aim was to secure for the workers something more than the bread and butter education of mere technical training; it was not an effort to transplant the cleverer working men and women into the middle classes, but to give every working man and woman the chance of enjoying the fruits of scholarship. They urged members of Trade Unions to discover their own needs, organise in their own way, study as they wished to study, and secure the best lecturer possible. Branches were established in the country, classes formed, lectures given, and essays written. Members of a Carters' and Lorrymen's Trade Union were asked what they wished to study. After some minutes of perplexity one of them said: "We're always behind a horse; we don't know much about him. Let us have a class on a horse." One hundred and twenty carters attended a class for two successive winters on that subject; and it is said that the horses in that town had a much better time ever after. At Canning Town a successful class was held throughout the winter, attended by casual labourers, on the Industrial History of England. One enthusiastic member exclaimed: "Can't our wives have a chance?" and an equally enthusiastic afternoon class was held for them on "How to Read Books." Another class of charwomen of advanced years studied history with enthusiasm for four years. Economics seems to be the favourite study among men; but classes were held on philosophy, the history of religions, and citizenship. After working seventy hours in a week working men attended these classes, and wrote papers, which drew from Mr. A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol, the declaration that 25 per cent. of these essays were as good as the work done by men who obtain First Class Honours in Final Schools of Modern History at Oxford, and that he was astonished not so much at the quality of the work as at the quantity of the quality!

Mr. Mansbridge dedicates his book "To the Memory of those Gallant Souls who shared the Adventure of the W.E.A., and died fighting for their Country in the Great War, 1914—1918." He says that "stories began to filter home of students trying to carry on their work by organising classes behind the lines. The weariness of long waiting in the trenches was alleviated at times by debate and discussion on the old lines, and a steady demand for books such as scholars love began to make itself felt." We wholeheartedly recommend this book to our readers.

F. A. Ū.

## Women's Freedom League.

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



DARE TO  
BE FREE

Wednesday, June 9.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park. 7 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Nevinston. Subject: "Women and the League of Nations."  
Thursday, June 10.—Public Meeting, Mortimer Street, W. 1. Speaker: Miss Leila Lewis. Subject: "Opportunities for Women in the Film Business." Chair: Miss Helena Normanton, B.A. 8 p.m. Tickets 5s., 2s. 6d., 1s.  
Wednesday, June 16.—Open-air Meeting, 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, June 23.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park. 7 p.m. Speaker: Councillor M. Hodge. Subject: "The League of Nations."  
Friday, July 2.—Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party. Council Chamber, Caxton Hall, Westminster. 7 p.m. Tickets, 1s.  
Saturday, July 3.—Jumble Sale, Morris Hall, Old Town, Clapham. 3—6.  
Saturday, October 2.—Dance, Caxton Hall, Westminster.  
Friday, November 26 and Saturday, November 27.—Green, White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

### PROVINCES.

Wednesday, June 9.—Portsmouth. Members' Meeting, 89, Festing Grove. 3 p.m.  
Tuesday, June 15.—Ashford. Mock Election in the Parish Room. 8 p.m.  
Wednesday, June 16.—Portsmouth. Public Meeting, 2, Kent Road. Speaker: Mrs. Sawyer. Subject: "The Health Insurance Act." 3.15 p.m.

### OTHER SOCIETIES.

Monday, June 7.—Home Workers' League, 33, Blythe Street, Bethnal Green. Speaker: Mrs. Mustard. Subject: "The Work of the Borough Councillors." 8 p.m.  
Wednesday, June 23.—Garden Party and Concert (in aid of Nine Elms Settlement) at Buccleugh House, Petersham Road, Richmond. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Tickets (including refreshments), 1s. 6d. If wet at Ormond Lodge, Ormond Road, Richmond.  
Monday, June 28.—Uxbridge Woman's Suffrage Society. Speaker: Mrs. Tanner. Subject: "The New Education Act."

### BRANCH NOTE.

#### PORTSMOUTH.

The Whist Drive and Dance in aid of the Local Election Fund was very successful, and Mrs. Speck, who organised it, is to be congratulated. Thanks are due to the members and friends who gave the prizes and some of the refreshments. Mrs. Abbott presented the prizes, and Mr. Wing was an excellent M.C. for the Whist Drive and the Dance. A members' meeting will be held on June 9th, at 3 o'clock, at 89, Festing Grove, Southsea, by kind invitation of Mrs. Whetton. Tea at 4.15; 6d. each. Proceeds to be given to the Birthday Fund. The last public meeting of the season will be held on Wednesday afternoon, June 16th, at 3.15 p.m., at 2, Kent Road. Mrs. Sawyer, secretary of the Local Insurance Committee, will speak on "The Health Insurance Act."

### IN MEMORIAM.

On May 26th, 1919, at Lewes, Sussex, Annie A. Smith, journalist, of Harley Road, Hampstead, for many years Editor of THE VOTE, and a devoted member of the Women's Freedom League.

### FELLOWSHIP SERVICE.

Kensington Town Hall.—Sunday, June 6th: Dr. Percy Dearmer, 3.15 and 6.30.

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

### A.

We offer a year's subscription to THE VOTE for the best original Essay on "Where Women Sit as M.P.s."

### RULES.

- 1.—Essays must not exceed 1,000 words, and should be typed or written clearly on one side only of the paper.
- 2.—The coupon, giving the name and address of the sender, must be fastened to each Essay.
- 3.—Replies should be addressed to the Editor, THE VOTE, 144, High Holborn, W.C., and must reach the office on or before June 30th, 1920.

### B.

We offer a prize of a book to any reader who obtains during June six new subscribers to THE VOTE for one year. The names and addresses of new subscribers thus obtained, together with their annual subscriptions, should be forwarded to the Editor, THE VOTE, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Names of successful competitors will be published in THE VOTE. These will be offered a choice of three books from which to select their prize.

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Name.....

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## THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 93, NINE ELMS LANE, S.W. 8.

We heartily thank all those who were so kind as to help us with the Jumble Sale last week, and shall be glad to hear from friends who may be going to the Garden Party which Miss Rachel Wells is kindly arranging for June 23rd at Petersham. Acknowledged with many thanks, flowers from Miss Riggall and Mrs. Delbanco; clothes from Miss L. Walford and Mrs. Allen; kitchen furniture from Miss K. Holmes. Miss Riggall, 2s.; Mrs. Lloyd, some old lace for Sale of Work; bazaar goods, Miss Riggall; lace for Sale of Work, Mrs. Despard; goods and bananas from Mrs. Delbanco and Miss Pinchen; and a cot and fittings from Mrs. Despard. We are still hoping for Guest House linen—our need is great.

## CATHOLICS AT GENEVA CONGRESS.

We are asked to state that, by the kind permission of Monsieur le Curé, Mass will be offered Sunday, June 6th, at 9 o'clock, at Notre Dame, Geneva, to beg divine guidance on the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. This service is arranged at the special request of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, and all Catholics are asked to attend.

## MISS MAUDE ROYDEN.

Miss Royden preaches in Calvin's pulpit at Geneva Cathedral at 1.15 p.m. on Sunday next, June 6th.

## WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

The procession of animals on April 30th was not a very long one, as we had all been very busy with the Conference just before. The next White Elephant Sale has been arranged for

### EARLY IN JUNE.

We shall also have some Jumble Sales, so that no animal will be too decrepit to receive a welcome. Please turn out all your cupboards and drawers during

### THE NEXT FORTNIGHT

and send the contents to Mrs. McLeod at the office, who will be grateful for everything.



FRIDAY,  
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1920.

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