

THE VOTE,
MARCH 8, 1918.
ONE PENNY.

Women and Reconstruction.

ANNA MUNRO.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1918

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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RALLY ROUND THE WOMEN TEACHERS IN THEIR

FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE!

Readers of "The Vote"—

REMEMBER THAT MANY OF

YOU ARE CITIZENS AND

HAVE POWER!

As we go to press the London County Council are considering the question of the salaries of teachers, and the scale before them is particularly unjust to women. Members of the Women's Freedom League are showing by their presence in the Public Gallery their support of the women teachers in their protest against this crying injustice.

Next Wednesday, March 13, the new Education Bill is down for its Second Reading in the House of Commons. Members of the League, with the able co-operation of Dr. G. B. Clark, have been lobbying vigorously and will continue to do so while the Bill is under discussion. They are concerned chiefly with the unequal standard of salaries between men and women doing equal work and equally equipped for it. They have been able to bring important facts before Members of Parliament interested in education, and are determined that they shall be well primed as to the women's case. Several Members have undertaken to introduce the question of equal pay for equal work.

In view of the dominant interest at the moment of this important subject, the following summary of the present position will be read with interest by all

who are fighting for the great principle of equal pay for equal work.

THE INJUSTICE TO WOMEN TEACHERS.

Two questions are occupying the minds of women who are teachers in what are called primary or elementary schools. One is the Report issued by the Government Department dealing with the principles on which salaries in those schools should be based. The Report applies to England and Wales, and was ably dealt with by Miss Emily Phipps in *THE VOTE* recently. It must be carefully noted that the Report declares that men are not to be paid the same salaries as women, but the maximum of one to the other is to be in the proportion of 4 to 3. This is what women call "The Three-quarters Principle," and it will, we fear, stereotype an unequal standard and endanger our hope that some day soon the principle of equal pay for women and men of the same professional status will operate with teachers as well as doctors. The Women's Freedom League is doing what it can in and out of the House of Commons to encourage members to discard the bad principle of unequal pay in the coming Education Bill.

The other question is nearer home to London women teachers. The London County Council has recently propounded a new scale of salaries; it made money last year on the "Fisher Grant," and must do something now. The scale, however, was so bad that it was uncompromisingly rejected by teachers, men as well as women. The result was a Round-Table Conference between the Education Committee of the London County Council and the London Teachers' Committee; some improvement in the scale of pay was made, but the disgraceful sex differentiation which was in no sense representative of the 10,000 women teachers and their grievance.

It was a significant fact that in the same building (the Memorial Hall) and at the time as the Conference was proceeding which left the women in this parlous state, at least 2,000 women teachers were protesting against the unequal treatment of men and women doing equal work in the great national service of education. A petition has been signed by 10,000 women against this sex differentiation.

In the accepted scale women are very badly used; most assistant and head mistresses gain little or nothing. The low standard even of the "Three-quarters Principle" is neglected, but so well, comparatively, are the men paid that assistant masters will receive up to £25 more than their own very responsible head mistresses, and more than most other head mistresses. A woman teacher entering the profession is now to receive £100 instead of £90 before the war, but with the £1 equal now only to about 10s. her position is serious. A man is to start with a 20 per cent. increase which rises as he attains a higher status; heads of third grade schools, whose salaries before the war were on the "Three-quarters Principle," are now to receive: Men, £500; women, £350.

It is hoped that, as a result of the dissatisfaction emphatically expressed by women teachers, heads, and assistants, in their thousands, the London County Council will refer the question back to their Education Committee for improvement in the salaries of women. H. S.

Cambridge Campaign at Easter.

We remind our readers of the Campaign at Cambridge which the Women's Freedom League is organising for Easter during the Conference of the National Union of Teachers. Miss Alix Minnie Clark will be in charge, assisted by Miss Anna Munro; other well-known speakers of the League will take part. Equal pay for equal work will be a battle cry in the Campaign.

Miss Clark appeals for £20 to carry out the campaign, and will welcome offers of personal assistance from members and friends residing in the neighbourhood, and all who can spend their Easter holidays in this important work. A "Teachers' Conference" number of THE VOTE will be issued on March 28, containing articles by eminent educationists.

Good News for Canada.

The Government have definitely decided to grant woman suffrage to all Canada, and it is likely that a Bill will be introduced in the coming Session of Parliament.

— and Nova Scotia.

A Government Bill has been introduced in the Nova Scotia Legislature to give votes to women.

Opposition in South Africa.

In the House of Assembly, Capetown, a motion in favour of incorporating Women's Franchise in the Electoral Bill was rejected on February 13 by 54 votes to 39.

IRISH WOMEN VOTERS AT WORK.

The sixth annual meeting of the Belfast Suffrage Society was held on February 28. It was decided to adopt a new name, fitted for the new conditions, and the society will henceforward be known as the Women's Political League, headquarters Belfast. The old statement of "Objects and Aims," setting forth that the Society worked for the vote on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men, and would work after enfranchisement through the power of the vote for the welfare of the country, needed very slight verbal alteration.

A programme was unanimously adopted which will certainly provide work for some years to come. It includes those familiar questions of social and moral reform which occupy so prominent a place in the programme of all women's organisations; it also emphasises the problems of maternity and child welfare, housing and education reform, which are so vital and urgent a necessity in Ireland. There is much talk of extension of shipyard work in Belfast, but no serious effort has yet been made to grapple with the problems of housing and school accommodation which such a large increase of the working-class population would involve in a city where the school accommodation fell short of the 1915 requirements by 8,000, and where at present both middle-class and working-class houses are almost unobtainable.

The annual meeting, further, made a strong recommendation to the committee to undertake immediate work for the return of a woman to the City Council. This will not be an easy task, as the elections to the Council have hitherto been run on strictly party lines, and there is not even a Labour representative on the municipal body which administers the affairs of the "greatest industrial centre in Ireland." An effort must be made. The Women's Political League will carry on its work on an absolutely non-sectarian and non-party platform. This has been its method during the old days of suffrage work, when party spirit was at its hottest, and it will be the task of the League to educate opinion in the true meaning of the word "political."

It is the earnest belief of the members of the League that unrest and trouble in Ireland, as elsewhere, can only be healed by removal of those real grievances which are seldom or never set forward by party politicians, but which keep the fires of social discontent smouldering, ready to burst into flame when fanned by some chance wind of agitation. Low wages, and housing, an education system which renders it possible for children of eleven to be set to farm work and children of twelve to be put into the wet spinning room, in pre-war days as well as under war conditions, a Poor Law system which seems designed to drive the widow and the children into the workhouse—these are some of the causes of Irish unrest. The Women's Political League has set itself to use the new power to lessen these old evils.

DORA MELLONE, Hon. Press Sec., W.P.L.

The Inevitable.

In connection with efforts now being made to break down the age-long prejudice and opposition of the Benchers of the Inns of Court to the admission of women to the Bar, Lord Justice Swinfen Eady clearly foreshadowed the inevitable. In his speech at the presentation of prizes at the Francis Holland Girls' School, Pimlico, on March 1, he said:—"I do not doubt that women will be called to the Bar and after that inevitably Parliament will follow."

Praise of the "Wrens."

A "Naval Officer" wrote to the *Times* a few days ago praising the efficient work and clever adaptability of the "Wrens."

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, March 8.—Croydon Political Meeting, 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle, on "A National Programme." Clapham Branch Meeting, 46, Lynette-avenue, 6 p.m. Business: Report of Conference.

Wednesday, March 13.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Helena Normanton, B.A., on "Women and the Bar." Chair: Dr. G. B. Clark. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café if desired (6d. each).



DARE TO BE FREE.

Saturday, March 16.—Jumble Sale, in aid of Headquarters Fund, in the Lecture Hall, Ladbroke-grove Chapel, Cornwall-road, North Kensington, W. Contributions to 144, High Holborn. Helpers wanted on day of sale.

Wednesday, March 20.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Mr. J. King, M.P., on "What the Liberal Party has to Offer Women." Chair: Miss F. A. Underwood. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café if desired (6d. each).

Friday, March 22.—Political Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 6 p.m.

PROVINCES.

Wednesday, March 13.—Southsea Work Party, 17, Lombard-street, 3 to 7 p.m. Hostess: Miss Mottershall.

Thursday, March 14.—Nottingham. Public Meeting, Friends' Adult School. Discussion on "The Need for the Protection of Women in the Courts of Law," to be opened by Miss Dorothy Evans, 7.30 p.m.

We draw special attention to—

Wednesday, March 13.—Public Meeting in Minerva Café, 3 p.m., when Miss Helena Normanton will speak on "Women and the Bar."

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Thursday, March 14.—BRITISH DOMINIONS WOMAN SUFFRAGE UNION. LUNCHEON to meet Dr. Helen Wilson, who will speak on "Law, Justice, and Morality," Moulin d'Or, 27, Church-street, Shaftesbury-avenue, 12.45 to 2.30 p.m. Tickets, 2s. 6d., from Miss Dorothy Pethick, 39, Meadway-court, Hampstead Garden Suburb, N.W. 4.

INDIAN TEA.—Mr. H. S. L. Polak will speak on "Indian Labour Emigration within the Empire," Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 to 6 p.m. Tickets 1s., including tea, from Miss Margaret Hodge, 13, Temple Fortune-court, Hampstead Garden Suburb, N.W. 4.

FREE CHURCH LEAGUE FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE.—PUBLIC MEETING, Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street, 8 p.m., "A Clean Peace." Speakers: Mr. A. G. Gardiner (Editor, *Daily News*), Prof. Gilbert Murray, Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, Rev. Thomas Phillips, Mrs. Strickland. Chair: Mrs. Sadd Brown.

Monday, March 18.—Home Workers' League, Oxford House, Mape-street, Bethnal Green. Mrs. Nevinson on "Women and the Poor Law," 3 p.m.

REMEMBER!

THE INTERNATIONAL SUFFRAGE RALLY, Kingsway Hall, Saturday, March 9, 3 p.m. Tickets 5s., 2s. 6d., 1s. 3d., from Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

THE QUEEN'S HALL VICTORY CELEBRATION, March 13, at 8 p.m., organised by the National Union, in which the Women's Freedom League and many other suffrage societies are uniting. Mrs. Fawcett will preside. Speakers: Earl of Lytton, Sir John Simon, M.P., Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., and Miss Maude Royden. Tickets 24s., 12s., 5s. 9d., 3s., and 1s. 3d., to be obtained at the W.F.L., 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

The New Parliamentary Register.

The initial interest for the newly enfranchised electors is the new register on which the next General Election will take place. It is now considered that no General Election under the Representation of the People Act can be taken till after October 1, 1918.

Mr. Hayes Fisher, in the House of Commons last week, said, in reply to Mr. Gilbert, that it was proposed that the last day of the qualifying period for voters under the Act should be April 15 next, and that the first register under the Act should come into force on October 1.

The making of the new register will be an arduous piece of work, for, in addition to the enrolment of 8,000,000 new voters, the old register has lapsed since 1913, and the sorting out of present from past voters will entail considerable care. There will have to be a house-to-house canvass throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and women are urged to make sure of their qualifications and to see that their names are correctly inscribed on the Voters' Roll for their districts.

The life of Parliament under the last extending Act runs to the end of July, and the fact that the electoral register cannot by then be completed will necessitate a further short extension.

The Expected Happens.

The Prime Minister.

The March issue of *The Englishwoman* is an "Enfranchisement Number," containing interesting articles on the great victory by Mrs. Fawcett, Dr. Ethel Smythe, Miss Horniman, the Rev. Hugh Chapman, Sir William Bull, M.P., Dr. Scharlieb, and others, and also a message from the Prime Minister to the women electors of Great Britain and Ireland, in the course of which he says: "I need hardly say how much I welcome the passage of the Reform Act. I believe that responsible women voters can bring into public life a point of view and a spirit which will be of incalculable value to the progress of Democracy in these islands."

The Ex-Prime Minister.

Mr. Asquith, addressing Liberal Registration agents in London, said: "Whatever may have been our views in days gone by as to the expediency or in expediency of the enfranchisement of women, we are all now, as good citizens, prepared not only to acquiesce in it but to acquiesce heartily and with goodwill. We, as Liberals, are looking—and we shall not look in vain—for the active co-operation of the new women voters with those of our own sex in carrying on the great work of Liberal reform."

No Sex Differentiation.

The Speaker announced in the House of Commons, in answer to a question, that the restriction against women entering the Central Hall of the Houses of Parliament unless accompanied by a Member has been cancelled.

"VOTES FOR WOMEN AND AFTER." An International Suffrage Rally.

KINGSWAY HALL.

Saturday, March 9th, at 3 p.m.

SPEAKERS:

Councillor MARGARET ASHTON, M.A.

LADY BARRETT, M.D.

Mrs. BARTON

(Women's Co-operative Guild)

Miss LOUIE BENNETT

Miss CALINA

(Russia)

„ CZAPLICKA

Mrs. DESPARD

(Poland)

„ BICE DOBELLI Mrs. PETHICK LAWRENCE

(Italy)

„ CHRYSTAL MACMILLAN, M.A., B.Sc.

(Scotland)

„ MARGARET MACMILLAN, C.B.E.

„ EVA MOORE Mrs. ROY

(India)

„ EVELYN SHARP Mrs. H. M. SWANWICK, M.A.

(Chair)

For particulars apply to the Secretary,

Women's International League, 14, Bedford Row, W.C. 1.

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Reserved Seats, 1s. and 3d.

THE VOTE.

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To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

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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.

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WOMEN AND RECONSTRUCTION.

Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith, when advocating the granting of the vote to women, gave as their principal reasons the capacity and co-operation of women during the war and *when the war is over*, and the women's right to a say as to their place in the general redistribution of labour.

On both points the Women's Freedom League has much to do in championing, as hitherto, the voteless and overlooked, and continuing our old task of educating Cabinet Ministers and other powers that be. We must remember, in the first place, that the vote has not been given to the majority of the women whom the authorities eulogise so loudly—the young and unmarried. A second, and most important, point is the danger of delay. If we wait, as is suggested, until the war is over to get the practical organisation for the redistribution of labour into working order, the country may be faced with unemployment to such an unprecedented degree that starvation and chaos, resulting in mental and physical degeneration, particularly to women, will inevitably ensue.

We all remember the distress caused by the dislocation of affairs in August, 1914, especially to women, and already a slight echo is being heard. From many of the great industrial centres large numbers of women have been discharged, and last week it was stated in Parliament, we learn, that at least 8,000 women have been discharged during the last three weeks. The questions and answers in this connection are given on page 174. At present it may be true that the women can be absorbed in other branches of temporary war activity, but as peace comes nearer the problem of the unemployment of tens and possibly hundreds of thousands of women will be very acute.

That there is, and will be, ample work for all men and women if properly organised no one can question. The stagnation in some directions, the newly-awakened need in others, and the greatly diminished productivity generally, must be adequately dealt with if we are not to sink under or be permanently crippled by the inevitable burdens of war. The highest and most comprehensive co-operation possible, in the economic as well as the political world, will be necessary for successful reconstruction, and can only be attained by men and women applying the lessons which investigation and experience have taught them. Men must realise that the old days have gone and cannot be resuscitated, that in trades hitherto closed to them women have come to stay, just as in a previous generation they proved to the medical and other professions. To avoid bitterness and sex antagonism men must open their unions to women and strive side by side to obtain and maintain decent conditions of labour for all. We have learnt from direct Government investigations many important facts, to mention but a few: that women are as capable as their brothers even in

spheres of labour previously regarded as exclusively male; that remuneration must be sufficient to provide good food and freedom from the continual anxiety of trying to make two ends meet when they are really far apart; and that shorter working hours result in a larger output of more intelligent labour from women as well as men and a decrease in the insurance claims for sickness by women, although their work has been considered more arduous.

The report, too, from the London County Council that the number of poorly-nourished children attending the schools under their control in 1916 was only half that of 1913 disposes most effectually of the campaign of base and slanderous innuendo and accusation to which married women have been subjected by the proposals put forward some time ago, and energetically opposed by the Women's Freedom League, that the police should supervise the wives of soldiers, and, more recently, the present judicial encouragement of bigamy and murder.

It is therefore a matter of paramount urgency that in the Ministry of Reconstruction and on the Reconstruction Committees women have adequate representation, so that the work of organising the machinery for the transition of industry from that of a temporary character to permanent production be at once undertaken. Then, whenever the need arises, we shall not drift back to the old conditions of women's sweated labour, underpaid and overworked, their children underfed, ill-clothed, and badly housed.

For this reason we urge members of the Women's Freedom League, and friends interested in justice to women, to take steps immediately in their different localities to ensure that as many capable women as possible have seats on all bodies dealing with reconstruction. The Advisory Committee, just appointed by Dr. Addison, Minister of Reconstruction, sets a bad example in this respect. Out of a total of thirty-seven members only three are women: Lady Emmott, Miss Gertrude Tuckwell, and Mrs. E. Barton. The Women's Freedom League stands for equality between men and women in all spheres: equality in reconstruction work is imperative. ANNA MUNRO.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms-lane, S.W. 8.

We were very pleased to have a visit from two Conference delegates, Miss Petty, of Nottingham, and Miss Alix M. Clark, who, with their friend, Miss Afolter, showed practical sympathy by additional gifts of 2s. 6d., 4s., and 2s. to swell the Conference collection for our funds. This has reached the handsome total of over £12 by an anonymous donation of £5 for the General Fund and £3 for the Milk Depot, which we very gratefully acknowledge on behalf of our children; also £10 from Messrs. D. Delbanco and Co., 10s. from Mrs. Behrend, 2s. from Miss Riggall, 4s. from Dr. Südmersen (per Dr. O'Brien), handkerchiefs from Mrs. Bennett. Another sale of work has been promised us by Mrs. P. H. Miller in the middle of April; the Settlement stall will be stocked as far as possible by clothes for poor children, and we shall be glad to hear of readers setting to work to make us something; small garments are quickly and cheaply made from scraps of material, and if people prefer to send us pieces of stuff we can get some good helpers to make them up. Please remember in this connection that he gives twice who gives quickly!

The Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1.

It is very gratifying to know that delegates and friends attending the Conference, who stayed at the Despard Arms, expressed verbally and in other practical ways their appreciation of the accommodation available and the personal consideration they received from the staff. They will be welcome visitors whenever they are in London. The visit of the Nottingham delegate, Miss Watson Petty, was much appreciated, and the practical interest shown in the undertaking. Our warmest thanks to the generous donor of a most acceptable screen. Who will follow suit? Three more are urgently needed. Bed-sitting-rooms and bedrooms are available for long or short periods. Apply to the Manageress

JUSTICE.

We admire, while we cannot attain to the guileless faith of Mr. Justice Bray, of whom we read the following in the week-end Press:—

In sentencing nine prisoners who had pleaded guilty to bigamy, Mr. Justice Bray at Durham Assizes said that bigamy had become very frequent, and particularly so in the case of soldiers.

He did not think he was wrong when he said that there had been nearly 500 cases of bigamy during the last twelve months, and it was quite clear that something must be done if possible to stop this epidemic; and that could only be done by increasing the punishment for this offence.

Some cases had been imperfectly reported in the newspapers. These reports showed that men had been allowed to go without any sentence because they had been wounded in France, and were styled "Mons heroes." He could not believe that these cases had been fully reported; there must have been strong extenuating circumstances.

He did not believe that any judge could have said or done anything which could lead anyone to believe that men who had undoubtedly done good work in France, and perhaps been wounded, should be allowed to come home, and, with impunity, desert his wife and children and deceive, and perhaps wrong, some young girl.

Mr. Justice Bray is a just man, but appears to have little knowledge of the mind of his learned brothers of the Bench, whose own utterances condemn them utterly. While Mr. Justice Bray was maintaining this honourable position at the Durham Assizes, Mr. Justice Coleridge, at the Guildford Assizes, was adding to his already objectionable record by releasing on his own recognisances a bigamist who pleaded that he was at Mons and had been wounded four times. "Everyone who took part in that terrible and glorious tragedy must earn the respect and gratitude of the country," declared this guardian of justice, who a little time ago said of a murderer, "You must not judge a man accustomed to the grim side of war as you would an ordinary prisoner."

Mr. Justice Darling apparently feels that he has got himself into a false position, for in dealing with a prisoner guilty of fraud, who appealed on the ground of his military service, he is reported to have said, "This is a matter which has been discussed by the judges. The Court could not give any kind of countenance to the practice that military service gave an immunity to commit crime. Each case would be judged on its merits."

Mr. Justice Darling it was who gave a man twelve months in the second division for strangling his wife, saying that he "could not send a man of prisoner's character and record to associate with ordinary criminals." We note that the prisoner guilty of fraud had a sentence of three years' penal servitude—but then, he had made away with money, not merely a woman's life!

We realise, however, the significance of Mr. Justice Darling's statement that "this was a matter that had been discussed by the judges," and that they acknowledge that there is a "practice," which some of them "cannot countenance," of considering that military service gives immunity to commit crime—although he omitted to say that the crime must be committed against a woman or an alien before immunity is granted. If this discussion, and these conclusions, are in any way the outcome of the stern remonstrances and protests made by the Women's Freedom League, and by kindred societies of women, alone or in association, then something at least has been accomplished.

It remains for all such societies to approach the Chief Secretary for Ireland and to protest indignantly against the death sentence passed at Westminster on Margaret Travers for the murder of her illegitimate baby under circumstances that clearly point to an unhinged mind. Such forms of legalised brutality are revolting to any conception of civilisation.

MORAL AND SOCIAL HYGIENE. Protest Against Double Standard.

On March 1, in Caxton Hall, a large and influential meeting of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene expressed its shame and indignation at the attitude of the British Military Authorities in permitting tolerated houses for the troops in France. Dr. Helen Wilson, in moving the resolution of protest, marshalled incontrovertible medical evidence against a system which has been abandoned or rejected as ineffectual by most of the civilised nations—a system condemned not only by conscience and reason, but also by experience. Miss Maude Royden, in seconding the resolution, pointed out that in defence of this infamous system, which in the case of Cayeux-sur-Mer resulted in 15 girls being held in bondage and visited on an average by 360 men every day, it was held to be necessary to protect the innocent women, a defence which the speaker repudiated; she declared that any woman believing it necessary should herself volunteer, and that men believing it should send their own wives and daughters to fill the places of the 15 when they are worn out. The Rev. Dr. Orchard and Miss E. Picton-Turberville, O.B.E., spoke to a resolution calling for a single moral standard for men and women, and Mr. J. W. Williams referred to the alarming state of affairs he has discovered through his work as a lecturer in the Y.M.C.A. huts in France. Mr. Lees Smith, M.P., said he considered one of the most revolting pronouncements the House had ever heard was that of the Under-Secretary for War, when he said that human nature being what it is, he thought it was not altogether a bad thing that clean women should be provided to satisfy our troops without the risk of disease. "These are the very troops," said Mr. Smith, "every man of whom carries in his soldier's pay book the letter from Lord Kitchener telling them that respect for women is one of the first duties of a soldier." If the pronouncement was shocking, the speaker considered equally shocking the fact that it was received with cheers by a considerable proportion of the members of the House. Among those supporting the meeting were:—Lord and Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, Dr. Jane Walker, Mrs. Despard, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Lord and Lady Sydenham, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Bishops of Chichester, Ely, Kensington, Lewes, Lincoln, St. Albans, Peterborough, Southwark, Wakefield, Winchester, and Oxford, the Chief Rabbi, the Dean of Lincoln, Dr. John Clifford, Lord George Hamilton, General Smith Dorrien, Major Harrison, Sir W. Dickenson, M.P., Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P., Rev. Bernard Vaughan, Rev. Canon Ottley, Lady Barrett, M.D., Dr. Dickenson Berry, Dr. Louisa Garrett-Anderson, Dr. Flora Murray, Dr. Louisa Martindale, Captain the Hon. P. Allsopp, Capt. Griffin, D.S.O., Miss Elizabeth Robins, Mr. Wm. C. Dawson, Lady Yoxall, and Miss Norah March, B.Sc. M. F.

More Law Breakers!

A protest was made in the pulpit at Wembdon Church, Bridgwater on Sunday by the vicar, the Rev. James Boyle, against the refusal of the Bishop of Taunton to allow a Congregational minister to preach in that church.

Ecclesiastical laws, the vicar said, were broken every week in many other parishes by the wearing of vestments without any action being taken. "While hitherto I have accepted Church laws," he added, "I do so no longer, because it is forced on me that revolution is the only path to progress, and to break the law is the only way to mend it."

How often has Mrs. Despard said, "The law must be broken before it will be mended?" It would almost seem as if every canon advanced and adhered to by the Women's Freedom League is gradually being accepted as ethically correct and practically valuable. And so we come into our own.

IN PARLIAMENT.

In view of the importance of the following questions and answers with regard to the employment of women in munition and other national service, we advise our readers to consider them carefully, and to keep up pressure on their Members, and those in authority, to see that justice is done to women who have answered the call for service faithfully and well. Readers will note that only by persistent questioning was any definite statement wrung from Mr. Kellaway, and constant watchfulness is imperative.

Women Workers (Dismissal).

February 26.—Mr. ANDERSON asked the Minister of Munitions how many women munition workers have been dismissed or received notice of dismissal during the last three weeks as a result of the termination of certain contracts; what notice was given to the Employment Exchanges in the districts affected; whether he is aware that hardship has been inflicted upon women whose services to the country have been the subject of many Ministerial eulogies; and whether he is prepared to authorise the payment of a month's wages and railway fare home?

Mr. KELLAWAY (the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions): The number of women munition workers who have been dismissed or received notice of dismissal during the last three weeks as a result of the termination of certain contracts is about 8,000. It is not possible without inquiries from each Exchange to say what notice was given to the Employment Exchanges in each district. Firms were requested to give the Employment Exchanges a fortnight's notice of the numbers, and a week's notice of the individuals, to be discharged. Fresh instructions are being circulated emphasising the necessity for the longest possible notice. The Minister regrets that a certain amount of hardship is inevitable, but everything that can properly be done will be done to reduce the hardship. There are openings for a considerable number of women in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, in agriculture, in shipyards, and in other occupations. The machinery of the Labour Exchanges and of the National Service Department is being utilised to its fullest capacity in order to bring the women who may be displaced into these other forms of national service. The possibility of giving priority in employment on war work to these women is under discussion. The suggestion that the Minister should authorise the issue of free railway warrants home is receiving sympathetic consideration. Other suggestions, e.g., the payment of wages for a certain period, are being examined by the departments concerned in conjunction with the Treasury. An inter-departmental Conference is being held this afternoon by my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, the Chairman of the War Cabinet Committee on Unemployment, to consider these and other aspects of the problem.

Mr. ANDERSON: Is the figure given of 8,000 right up to date, and does it take in certain dismissals due to the termination of contracts now being discussed?

Mr. KELLAWAY: It covers all the notices of dismissals for a period of three weeks up to Saturday.

Mr. HOGGE: Can my hon. friend assure us that the girls, of whom there are a large number in the 8,000, will not be stranded in different parts of England and will be returned to their relatives in Scotland?

Mr. KELLAWAY: That point is dealt with in my answer, in which I state that the suggestion that they should be given free railway warrants to their homes is receiving sympathetic consideration.

Mr. HOGGE: It wants more than that.

Mr. G. FABER: In view of the importance of not discouraging the efforts put forward by the women of this country during the war, will the hon. gentleman be especially zealous and careful to find places for these women at the earliest possible moment?

Mr. KELLAWAY: One of the considerations taken into account in deciding on the termination of these contracts is the possibility of replacing the displaced labour in that particular area.

Mr. T. WILSON: Are there no arrangements in existence now for transferring women doing certain work from the place where they are discharged to other places where their services may be utilised?

Mr. KELLAWAY: If the hon. gentleman will refer to my answer he will see that that point is dealt with.

Sir C. SEELEY: How long is the notice that is given to these women?

Mr. KELLAWAY: I have already said in my answer that the notice given to the Employment Exchanges is a fortnight as to numbers and a week to individuals.

Sir C. SEELEY: I mean the notice to the women themselves?

Mr. KELLAWAY: In that case they are entitled to a week's notice.

Sir R. ADKINS: Would it not be possible, in view of the obvious difficulties, to give a longer notice, because the De-

partment would surely be in a position to know its own mind longer than a week before a factory would be closed? Will the hon. gentleman see that longer notice will be given?

Mr. KELLAWAY: In stating the period of the notice I said that fresh instructions are being circulated emphasising the necessity for a longer notice.

Discharged Women Workers (Fares).

February 27.—Mr. WATT asked the Minister of Munitions whether it is the intention of his Department to pay the fares of the munition female workers discharged from Southampton controlled establishments and from factories in other districts to their homes in Scotland and elsewhere, in view of the facts that these women have not funds to pay the fares themselves and were induced by advertisements of his Department and otherwise to leave their homes and help the country in its need for munitions?

Mr. KELLAWAY: Representations on this matter have already been made to the Ministry of Labour. I understand that the Minister of Labour is now in consultation with the Treasury in regard to it.

Female Workers Discharged (Payment of Fares).

February 28.—Mr. WATT (by private notice) asked the Minister of Munitions whether it is the intention of his Department to pay the fares of the munition female workers discharged from Southampton controlled establishments and from factories in other districts to their homes in Scotland and elsewhere, in view of the facts that these women have not funds to pay the fares themselves, and were induced by advertisements of his Department and otherwise to leave their homes and help the country in its need for munitions?

Mr. KELLAWAY: This matter has been submitted to the Treasury, and it has now been agreed that the women who left their homes to undertake munitions work, and who have been thrown out of employment in consequence of a reduction in the munitions programme, shall be provided with free railway warrants to return to their homes. In making this announcement I would earnestly appeal to these women, whose work in the munitions factories has been of great value to the State, readily to undertake one of the other forms of National Service now open to them, and in which there is most urgent need for labour.

Sir S. ROBERTS: Will the communication be made to the women appealing to them to give their service in other directions?

Mr. KELLAWAY: I have no doubt the question and answer will give the necessary publicity. If anything more is necessary we will do that.

Speaking in the House of Commons on February 26 in reference to the discharge of munition workers, Mr. Kellaway (the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions) said:—

"The discharges so far have particularly affected women. I do not think any man in the country has done more to express the public sense of gratitude for the work of the women than I have done. Nobody appreciates it more than I do; nobody has had greater opportunity than I have had of seeing to what extent the magnificent women munition workers of this land have enabled us to resist the overwhelming onslaught by Germany upon this country. They have in a very real sense saved this country. They have armed our men, they have helped to make our armies the best equipped Army fighting in this great struggle, and I should be the last man, by a soulless application of our policy, to do anything to put hardships upon these women, because I recognise the splendid work they have done. Our reserves of ammunition are so enormous that we can face this necessary reduction forced upon us by the limitation of material without fear as to its military effect. So far as I am able to influence the policy of the Ministry it will not be guided exclusively by financial considerations in dealing with this problem, and we certainly shall not forget the debt of gratitude we owe to the women munition workers of this country."

Why, then, if Mr. Kellaway and his colleagues in the Ministry of Munitions believe all this, do they not grant the 12½ per cent. bonus which is accorded to men munition workers?

Women's Auxiliary Army Corps.

On March 4 Mr. SNOWDEN asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office if the dependants of women in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps are entitled to dependency allowances?

Mr. MACPHERSON: The answer is in the negative.

Considering the Government's urgent appeal to women to join the W.A.A.C., the fact that they have to join it for the duration of the war, and are subject to military discipline, why does the Government stupidly persist in differentiating between men and women, always to the disadvantage of women, whenever the question of status or emolument is involved?

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A NEW WAY TO HELP.

THE LAST CHANCE FOR THE GREAT MEETING.

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Miss Linda Catmur	...	4	0	
Mrs. Catmur	...	4	0	
Mrs. Palmer	...	4	0	
Miss Annie Dawson	...	2	6	
Mrs. Wheatley	...	2	6	
Mrs. Beatrice Gilbert	...	1	0	
Friends of Armenia ("Fair," rent of stall)	...	1	10	0
Tickets	...			4
Collections	...			3
Office Sales	...	14	12	1
Branches—				
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Chester	...	1	6	0
Letchworth	...			5
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Cheques to be made payable to the Women's Freedom League, and crossed "London and South-Western Bank, Ltd."

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OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

We had a crowded meeting in the Minerva Café on February 27, when the speakers explained the policy which the Women's Freedom League had decided upon at its recent Conference. Mrs. Mustard declared that as enfranchised women we should not cease to work for the interests and assistance of our fellow women. We were out for the complete freedom of women, and for equality of opportunity of women with men throughout life. With the Parliamentary Vote women would be better able to protect their homes, they would secure better housing accommodation for the 50,000 families now living in one room; they would aim at getting better and equal educational facilities for girls and boys, and would demand equal parentage and trustee rights over their children. Further, Mrs. Mustard said it was not sufficient to work for equal voting rights for women and men; the Women's Freedom League believed that the reforms which women most earnestly desired could only be carried through effectively when women secured seats in Parliament. Miss Evans said that women had a high standard of efficiency and liberty; and in discussing the possibility of the conscription of women urged that we should oppose any attempt to conscript the work of women. In matters of morality, women demanded a higher and an equal standard of morality for both sexes.

The chair was taken by Miss F. A. Underwood, who briefly summarised the most important resolutions passed at the recent Conference, and, in appealing for new members, declared that we were still a fighting League in the interests of women, and that the Women's Freedom League should attract an ever-increasing number of progressive women.

Women's Committee on Housing.

It is officially announced that a women's Subcommittee of the Advisory Council has been appointed by the Minister of Reconstruction to collect information and to give advice on house plans from the point of view of the housewife. It is felt that in the preparation of plans for working-class houses in the past sufficient consideration has not been given to the comfort and convenience of the women who are to live in the houses. It is hoped that no considerable scheme of house-building will be undertaken in the future without careful attention being given to the saving of labour for the wife and the convenience and health of the family generally. The members of the Committee are:—

Lady Enmott, chairman; Mrs. E. Barton, Women's Co-operative Guild; Mrs. Victor Branford, Housing Organisation Society; Miss A. Churton, Rural Housing and Sanitation Association; Dr. Janet Lane Claydon, Dean of the Household and Social Science Department King's College for Women; Mrs. Sanderson Furniss, National Women's Labour League; Mrs. G. S. Guy and Mrs. C. S. Peel, of the Ministry of Food; Miss Leach and Miss Waley, Ministry of Reconstruction (secretaries).

The official notification points out that though most of the members are connected with different departments and organisations, they have been appointed in their individual capacity, and not as representing any organisation. The duties with which they have been entrusted are thus defined:—

To examine specimen houses and to advise on house plans received from the Architects' Committee; and to report on such questions as internal fittings, position of doors and windows, size and number of rooms, gardens, communal arrangements, and the arrangement of new districts in so far as it may affect the well-being of homes and the convenience of housewives.

The Committee have already begun their duties, and last week they inspected houses on the Kennington estate of the Duchy of Cornwall.

FRIDAY,
MARCH 8,
1918.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

BRANCH NOTES.

Nottingham.

A meeting was held on February 28 at 7 p.m. in the Theosophical Hall, 1, Park-street, kindly lent for the occasion. Miss De Hersant presided. Miss Watson Petty, who represented the Branch at the Conference, gave an account of her experiences and hospitality enjoyed, and spoke on some of the resolutions passed. She also made an urgent plea for improved VOTE sales.

Miss Dorothy Evans, outlining the new policy of the League, said that it might be covered by the principle of equality in the political, social and industrial world. Yet women by no means asked for merely such liberties as men have secured; they had their own standard of liberty and were determined to maintain it. There was an animated discussion, during which schemes were mooted for a "Watch the Courts" committee to protect the interests of women in the Courts, and for an "equal pay for equal work" committee, representative of all organisations dealing with the labour of men and women. These schemes have since taken form. A public meeting will be held in the Friends' Adult School on Thursday, March 14, at 7.30 p.m., for the discussion of the need for the protection of women in the Courts, to be opened by Miss Dorothy Evans. Delegates from a number of women's organisations have been invited. All who are interested will be warmly welcomed. Before the meeting the "equal pay for equal work" committee will meet to draw up its scheme. Readers of THE VOTE in Nottingham who support our policy are urged to communicate without delay with the hon. sec., Miss Watson Petty, 43, Bingham-road, Sherwood. Membership annual subscription, minimum 1s.

Croydon.

On March 20, a demonstration of thanksgiving for the enfranchisement of women will be held. The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and the Women's Freedom League (Croydon Branches) have united to carry through a commemorative programme, including a service at the Parish Church, procession to the Town Hall, reception by the Mayor, and a public meeting at the Public Hall, to be

addressed by Mrs. Fawcett and Miss C. Nina Boyle, and presided over by the Mayoress, Mrs. H. H. Houlder; further particulars will appear next week. Members are asked to keep the day free, so as to take their share in the celebrations, and also to make known the plans, so that as many women as possible may join the procession. On March 8, at 3.30 p.m., Miss Nina Boyle will speak at 32A, The Arcade, High-street, on a "National Programme." Subscriptions towards the expenses of the demonstration on March 20 will be most welcome, and should be sent to Mrs. Terry, 9, Morland-avenue, who is appointed hon. treasurer of the joint committee to carry out the above programme. Annual subscriptions to the Croydon Branch of the Women's Freedom League are now due from members.

Thanksgiving Service in Edinburgh.

A united service of thanksgiving for the enfranchisement of women was held under the auspices of the various Edinburgh suffrage societies in the Synod Hall, Edinburgh, on February 15. Rev. Dr. R. J. Drummond, Moderator-Designate of the United Free Church, presided over a large gathering. The Lord Provost was represented by Bailie White, and other Councillors present were Messrs Bruce Lindsay, Crawford, and M'Michael. The societies represented were:—National Union, Women's Freedom League, Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise, United Suffragists, Northern Men's Federation, University Graduates, Churches League. The chairman addressed the audience as "fellow electors"; the meaningless distinction between a lad of 19 in khaki and a woman who supplied him with munitions would have to go. Miss Eunice Murray expressed the thanks of suffragists to the men who have championed the woman's cause. She said that women were coming fresh into the political world. They had not the same discouragements and tired feeling that men experienced. They came in with their convictions bright and their own ideals lighting the way for them, and they felt no difficulties too great for them to tackle. Rev. Dr. Wallace Williamson declared the enfranchisement of women to be "a right act of rational confidence."

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