

THE VOTE,  
MARCH 12, 1920.  
ONE PENNY.

## WOMEN IN THE PULPIT.

# THE VOTE

### THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 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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## WHERE WOMEN PREACH.

Interview with Mrs. A. L. Wheatley.

Recognising with John Gibson, in his "Emancipation of Women," that institutional religion is proving itself one of the most formidable, if not the greatest obstacle, in the way of woman's complete enfranchisement, it is nevertheless cheering to turn to the present position of women in the Free Churches and realise that, though full equality with men ministers has not yet been attained, yet a sympathetic and enlightened public opinion is beginning to prevail upon this subject, and women are being encouraged to come forward in large numbers in the Free Churches, especially as lay preachers.

A recent interview obtained by a representative of THE VOTE with Mrs. A. L. Wheatley (wife of the Rev. T. Wheatley, for 40 years a minister in the Wesleyan Methodist Church) and a member of the Women's Freedom League from its earliest years, has elicited much interesting information upon the ministry of women in the Free Churches. For many years Mrs. Wheatley has worked steadily for women's rights in every department of life, and three years ago she acted as Convener of a movement in the Free Church Suffrage League, known as the

#### Women Preachers' Association,

which had for its object the full equality of the sexes in their religious life.

Mrs. Wheatley, although not an actually ordained preacher, has herself frequently occupied pulpits, not only in this country but also in America, and usually at a moment's notice, which sometimes led to some amusing experiences. Once, when in Toronto, for purposes of temperance lecturing, she was driven by main force into the pulpit of the Carlton Street Methodist Church, her discourse being afterwards rather unsympathetically described by the *Toronto Globe* as "an interesting address rather than a sermon"! And again, on another occasion, when spending a few days in a Welsh mining village, again for purposes of temperance propaganda, it so happened that the minister of the neighbouring church was unavoidably prevented

from preaching on the Sunday morning, and Mrs. Wheatley was hastily ejected from the pew she was occupying in her own church and sent at a moment's notice to fill in the breach! Her many years temperance lecturing, however, both in England and America, have enabled her to bear these somewhat disturbing incidents with complete equanimity.

"There is no doubt," said Mrs. Wheatley, "that, taking the Free Churches as a whole, their attitude towards women in the pulpit is entirely sympathetic. I do not refer specially to the Society of Friends, because it is a well-known fact that the Quakers have stood solidly all down the centuries for equality between the sexes, and have translated their beliefs into everyday practice in a truly magnificent way. With regard to the Congregationalists, one has only to mention splendid pioneer women like Mrs. Constance Coltman, who is a fully qualified minister, holding a London Bachelor of Divinity degree, and an Exhibition from Somerville College, Oxford, and Miss Hatty Baker, late minister of Horsted Keynes Congregational Church, and now pastor of the Plymouth Conference. The Wesleyan Methodists have for some considerable time ordained numbers of women lay preachers. I call to mind more particularly in this instance Miss Ballard Dawson and Miss Isabella Brown. The Baptists I always consider a particularly enlightened community, for they believe in the principle of

#### equal pay for both sexes,

as regards their men and women ministers. In the other religious bodies this principle is by no means universal. Women preachers have to put in a definite claim for payment of their services, and even then they get less than men preachers. Speaking of Baptist women preachers, I must not omit to mention the splendid pioneer work of Mrs. Bonwick and Mrs. Kathleen Bishop. Amongst the Primitive Methodists, women lay preachers, as with the Baptists, are on the same equality as men, and the United Methodists are also tending in this same happy direction." Women would-be

ministers, however, have difficulties to contend against in the matter of training. Only two Free Church colleges, so far, have opened their doors to women on the same terms as men. These are New College, London, and Mansfield College, Oxford. The University, Bristol, also admits women who wish to become ministers or missionaries to the B.A. in Theology, and the Baptist College is affiliated to the University in the preparation of students for this degree. When greater training facilities are provided, therefore, the supply of properly ordained women ministers is bound to increase."

## WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

### Association of Service Women.

An Association is being formed to link up the various women's services enrolled during the war, so that the feeling of corporate life and *esprit de corps* maintained during that period shall be equally preserved in peace time. The preliminary council will be chiefly composed of the heads of the various women's services, Dame Katherine Furse (Women's Royal Naval Service), Dame Florence Leach (Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps), Miss Christobel Ellis (Women's Legion, Motor Transport Section), Mrs. E. F. Stewart (Women's Forage Corps), Miss C. Holmes (Army Pay Department), and Lady Londonderry (Women's Legion). The offices of the Women's Legion, 115, Victoria Street, have been lent for the time being to the new Association. Membership is open to all women who enrolled for whole-time service for not less than six months in a corps under the direction of a British Government Department. The objects of the Association also include a loan fund for training for civil work, with power to advance capital where necessary to set women up in business; a fund in connection with oversea settlement, to assist in outfitting settlers and to advance small sums for capital; a registry of employment; benevolent fund, clubs and hostels at moderate rates; and hospital accommodation and convalescent homes.

### Progressing Backwards.

The Health Committee of the Borough of Portsmouth, on the report of its Medical Officer, has passed a resolution asking the Council to empower it to disseminate a knowledge of "prophylaxis" of Venereal Disease among the men of Portsmouth, and "to impress upon men their duty to the community in this matter." Portsmouth's women ratepayers will, we expect, take a saner view of men's duty to the community, that it is not to try to make clean what is essentially unclean, but to live up to the moral standard which they exact from their wives and sisters. A large number of women ratepayers in the public gallery will ensure the rejection by their Council of the Health Committee's reactionary proposal.

### Watching the Board.

A good many women are awaiting with interest the decision of the Welsh Board of Health as to the presence or otherwise of a woman member on the Board. Three men and one woman formed the Welsh Insurance Commission. When this Commission became absorbed in the Welsh Board of Health the lady was dropped. Women are wondering why. They wondered so much, in fact, that a question was asked in the House on the subject. The reply was, in effect, that there was no woman on the Welsh Board of Health, but that an increase in the number of members was being considered, and that this matter of including a woman would be borne in mind. Women are still wondering why there wasn't one there in the first instance.

### Queues at the House.

It is a sign of the times that so many people wait hours, often, for admission to the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Commons, and then stay for hours longer to hear the debates. In that long line of soldiers, country visitors, foreigners, Indian students, there are many girls, as well as older women. They listen to

the speeches with attention, and sometimes make notes. Women are being told that they need more education to use the vote properly, and these visits to the House are regarded as part of a training in public affairs.

### National Conference in April.

A national conference of women is to be held in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, on April 21 and 22, and is being organised by the Labour Party, with the co-operation of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations. Dr. Marion Phillips, the chief woman officer of the Labour Party, who is mainly responsible for the arrangements, states that it will be a thoroughly representative national conference of labour women, and quite the largest and most important assembly of the kind that has been held. Some 500 delegates are expected to be present, and probably more, including 100 women councillors from all parts of the country, and perhaps 100 women justices of the peace. The conference will be open to the public, and will deal with international, as well as national and home affairs. Miss Mary Macarthur will be in the chair, and Miss Margaret Bondfield will report on the Washington International Labour Conference.

### Miss Royden's Farewell.

The City Temple was crowded on Sunday for both morning and evening services, when Miss Maude Royden preached her farewell sermons. For nearly three years she has preached almost every Sunday at one of the services, and has also taken her share with the minister in conducting the Thursday midday service. Her next sphere of work will be at the Kensington Town Hall, in conjunction with Dr. Dearmer, their joint mission being the conduct of Sunday services on new and original lines.

### Women's Oxford Degrees.

The Statute providing that women may be matriculated and admitted to degrees in the University is to come before Congregation again this week, when two amendments have been entered. One protests against women sitting on the University Board and the other against women acting as public examiners, moderators, or mistresses of schools. These amendments are expected to get considerable support, but it is hardly likely they will be accepted.

### Women Freemen of the City.

An interesting sign of the times occurred at last week's meeting of the City Corporation. In the discussion as to whether any ceremonial was to be attached to the presentation of the Freedom of the City to sons of members who had served in the war, the Chamberlain suggested that the resolution to present the Freedom should apply to daughters, as well as sons, of members. Notice to amend the resolution to include daughters of members was accordingly given.

### Ideal Homes in Holland.

The successful "Ideal Home" Exhibition held by the *Daily Mail* at Olympia last month will be followed by an Ideal Home Exhibition at Amsterdam from May 1st to June 7th, in the "Paleis voor Volksvlyt."

The exhibition, which will be concerned with the interior only, is under the patronage of Queen Wilhelmina, and is organised by ladies belonging to the first families of Amsterdam, under the leadership of the wife of the Governor of the Province of Holland, and the wife of the Burgomaster of Amsterdam. Silver-gilt, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded, and an honorary distinction will be given to the best exhibit in labour-saving devices.

### Women M.P.'s in Council.

The mass meeting addressed exclusively by women M.P.'s from various countries will be one of the most interesting features at the Congress of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance at Geneva in June. Frau Furuholm, a member of the Finnish Parliament, was the only woman member of Parliament present at the last Congress. It is confidently expected that very many more representatives of various Legislatures, including our own Lady Astor, will meet at this year's gathering.

## NOTES FROM MARCH NUMBERS.

### The Englishwoman.

In an eloquent article on "Cities and Children," Miss E. A. Browning urges the reading public to make themselves acquainted with the Town Planning and Housing Act of 1919, which, amongst other provisions, enacts that working-class houses shall be provided with sufficient bedroom accommodation, a large living-room, as well as parlour, a bathroom with hot and cold water, and be conveniently arranged. She compares this with the miserable and too frequently indecent overcrowding which everywhere prevails, with its deleterious effect upon the birth-rate and upon national health and morality. Miss Beatrice Harraden contributes her third and last instalment of "In Devastated France," and Dr. Ethel Smyth an amusing tirade against "The Quotation Fiend." In an essay on "America and the Girls' Book," by Rowland Grey, it is interesting to note that Miss Abbott's "Little Women," the original title of which was "The Pathetic Family," was written to order, being suggested by a publisher, whilst its equally popular sequel, "Good Wives," was written in a month at the rate of a chapter a day.

### Fortnightly Review.

"The Girl Page in Elizabethan Literature" is the subject of an interesting article by Miss Winifred Bryher. The girl-page, according to Miss Bryher's researches, was frequent in literature during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and was the only means in an age of feminine restriction by which enterprising young women could attain any degree of liberty. Elizabethan plays abounded in pen portraits of these girls following their lovers into unknown countries in page apparel. Shakespeare's girl-pages—Imogen, Viola, Rosalind, Julia, Jessica—are already well known. Others in the writings of Beaumont and Fletcher, Dekker and Middleton, Lyly, Ford and Massinger, are here described, and the perilous adventures in which each played a part, for the lot of these Elizabethan feminists was rarely a bed of roses. "High Birthrates and Low Lives," by Mr. W. L. George, is an eloquent plea to abandon the fallacy of the high birth-rate agitation, and to raise, by good wages and good housing, the physical and intellectual value of our population—in short, to base our quest for national prosperity on good births rather than on more births. Mr. George contends that "a number of people are agitating in favour of a high birth-rate—clerics in the name of morals, Imperialists in the name of colonial expansion, soldiers in the name of man-power, and various people in the name of nothing in particular. All are well intentioned, and all are deceived by block figures and percentages." A high birth-rate, says Mr. George, involves a high death-rate, as well as the necessity for emigration. It is inimical to social progress, and degrades the race towards the animal level because no time is left for education and culture.

### National Review.

The Countess of Selborne writes on some "Hindrances to Housing." She traces the decline of house-building from 1909 onwards, the chief causes in her estimation being the Land Taxes in the Budget of 1909, their object being that if the site value of a piece of land had increased between the time it was bought and the time it was sold, a portion of that increase should go to the public; and the Housing and Town Planning Act of the same year, which enjoined that every local authority should "cause to be made, from time to time, inspection of their district with a view to ascertain whether any dwelling house therein is in a state so dangerous and injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation." Both these enactments frightened the smaller builders, and considerably restricted their output during the ensuing years. Another deterrent, Lady Selborne believes, is the Restriction of Rents Act.

### The World's Work.

"The Lonely Servant," by Elizabeth West, is a sympathetic plea for servants' Evening Clubs. The "evening off" Miss West believes to be the rock upon which the whole servant question has split, and since the old-fashioned relation between servant and mistress—respectful devotion on one side, and benevolent despotism on the other—has entirely vanished, the writer urges that it is far wiser to bring domestic service up to date, and so help to retain the indispensable servant. Pleasure, contends Miss West, has been organised for all classes except that of domestic servants. She outlines a scheme by which a Servants' Club could be started in every town, supervised by a good, old-fashioned housekeeper, but not run in conjunction either with religious institutions or mistresses. Ordinary club rules would be observed, and each member proposed and seconded by other members. The writer estimates that a small annual subscription of 2s. 6d. for householders, and 5s. for servants, would furnish ample capital to pay the rent, light and heating, and the housekeeper's salary. D. M. N.

## OUR SOVIET SYSTEM.

Speaking on the above subject at the Minerva Café last Wednesday, the Hon. Mrs. William Cecil described the systems and institutions of Europe as now being half of them in the melting-pot, and it was impossible to foretell the eventual formation they would ultimately assume. The real meaning of the notorious word "Soviet" was only that of "Committee," or "Council," so that it was perfectly correct to apply it to our own British constitution. Our Parliament was in reality a super-Soviet, and although it was the fashion to attribute many shortcomings to this venerable institution, it was not the system that was at fault, but the individuals who composed it. Bills should be read and discussed by the electorate before they reached the committee stage, not pulled to pieces and criticised when it was too late to amend them. The 1920 Bastardy Bill, down for discussion on May 7th, was a highly important one for women and children. The new Insurance Bill, initiated by Dr. Addison, was another highly important measure. Instead of abusing the Government for its old-fashioned ways, men and women electors, especially branches of the Women's Freedom League, should be discussing these measures beforehand, and if necessary proposing amendments through their Members of Parliament.

It was not always realised, either, what enormous powers could be wielded by local authorities. A great many grievances could be redressed by local agitation. The Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909, for instance, enabled men and women electors to insist on increased house-building in their particular district, yet very few availed themselves of this power. Parents, again, under the Education Act, had power to send up suggestions, such as in the case of a new school building, but most of these were unaware that they possessed such rights. Local committees were furnished with very great powers if people would only realise the fact. Weights and measures, which included food inspection, agriculture, diseases of animals, housing and public health, midwives and maternity work, district nurses, tuberculosis, roads and bridges, small holdings and allotments, including settlement of soldiers on the land, care of the mentally defective, local asylums, open-air schools—all these important matters were managed in the last resort by local authorities, and not by Parliament.

ANOTHER WOMAN M.P.?—The *Surrey Comet* of last week stated that at a joint meeting of the Executive Committee of Richmond and District Men's and Women's Liberal Associations, Mrs. Corbett Ashby (who stood as a Liberal candidate for the Ladywood Division of Birmingham at the last General Election) was adopted as the prospective Liberal candidate for the Borough of Richmond.

## THE VOTE.

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### EDITORIAL.

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

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## THE UNMARRIED MOTHER.

Last week questions were asked in the House of Commons as to whether Boards of Guardians were within their rights in refusing to allow an unmarried mother to leave the workhouse without taking her child with her, and in refusing the necessary clothing for the child of an unmarried mother who would not remain in the workhouse with her child. Evasive answers were given to these questions by Dr. Addison, who, however, stated that the death-rate of children under one year of age during 1918 was 91 per 1,000 in the case of legitimate children and 186 per 1,000 in the case of illegitimate children. In the year 1918 the number of illegitimate births in England and Wales was 41,153; and statistics show that affiliation orders are obtained for only about one-sixth of these illegitimate children. Our Bastardy Laws have changed very little since 1873. In her time of distress the only refuge a girl can claim from the community is the workhouse, and if she wishes to get from the father a maintenance grant for the child she must ask for it through the Police Court. Much unnecessary suffering is thereby caused to both these mothers and their children, and we are not surprised to learn that not only is the mortality among illegitimate children more than twice as high as it is among children born in wedlock, but that the death-rate of the unmarried mothers is also much higher than of those who are married. Week after week we read in the Press the tragic story of one or more of these women who, in despair, try to end their own life or that of their child. Then follow the usual legal proceedings, sometimes a death sentence of farcical solemnity afterwards mitigated to penal servitude for life, imprisonment, appeals to the Home Office, resulting in a stereotyped reply that the Home Secretary "can find no sufficient ground to justify him, consistently with his public duty, in advising any further interference in this case."

We want this altered, and not along the lines of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's new Bastardy Bill, which proposes to penalise a woman if she refuses to give the name of the father of her child. Every encouragement should be given to her to divulge the name of the father so that he shall share with her the full responsibility of the child's upbringing, but we know quite well that in some cases nothing will compel a girl or woman to do this; and we object strongly to the infliction of a further penalty on the woman, who has surely already suffered sufficiently. In our view, these women and their children should be kept out of the workhouse and out of our Police Courts. Municipalities now have their Health Committees, their Maternity and Child Welfare Committees. It certainly ought to be possible to arrange that when a girl finds she is about to become a mother she should be able to apply to a member of the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, who would do her best to persuade this girl to give the name

of the father, and be empowered through the Municipal Authorities to secure from him some monetary assistance to help the girl over her confinement, the Affiliation Order to be obtained when the child's birth is registered. Such Committees should have a Maternity Hospital where all these girls could have proper attention at the time of the birth of their child, and should have control over Municipal Hostels in which the girls might afterwards live, at any rate for a time, with their babies, supporting them by going out to work, the children being cared for during the day in the hostel crèche. We are convinced that the elimination of the Workhouse and the Police Court from the lives of these girls would tend enormously to lessen their anxiety; and if they were enabled to live in decency for at least a few months after the birth of their child they would start life again with a fresh hope in the future, and their love for the child fostered in conditions other than sordid poverty would help to keep them morally wholesome.

## FILMS AND THE CHILD.

The Kinemas at the present time are exercising a most important influence on the lives of the children and young people of this country. Every town and every village have their picture palaces, and any early evening and almost any time on Saturday long lines of children and quite young people crowd in to see the various shows. Judging from some of the picture poster advertisements, we cannot feel at all sure that the audiences will not derive more harm than good from the performances, and we are assured that in many districts associations which run boys' and girls' clubs, and try to interest young people in other forms of recreation and give them some training for the future find that their work is undermined and rendered useless by the local kinemas. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the chief Film Censor, must, we admit, find many difficulties in judging what effect these films will have on the minds of children and young people, but we would suggest the appointment of men, and women, inspectors—men and women of equal status and responsibility with H.M. Factory Inspectors—to visit kinema shows and to report to the Chief Film Censor on questionable performances. We also strongly recommend that there should be a Woman Censor, sharing equal responsibility with the Chief Film Censor.

## WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT FUND.

We must have Women in Parliament, and if we want them we must send them there. The best of Candidates cannot do everything. Election expenses have to be met, and they are very heavy. Remember it takes several hundred pounds to run one election, but it has to be done. I must therefore call upon you who understand our aims and read our paper to send me your contribution (as much and as often as possible) so that our special Women in Parliament Fund will be all ready for immediate use.

E. KNIGHT,

Women's Freedom League, Hon. Treasurer,  
144, High Holborn,  
London, W.C.1.

## I.—RACE MOTHERHOOD.

### WOMAN'S PRIMARY POSITION.

It is not proposed to take up the time of the readers of THE VOTE in recapitulating the very revolutionary changes and modifications that have taken place in the position of women during the last 30 or 40 years, not only in our own country, but in all countries of Europe, and beyond its borders. The need is to emphasise in this series of three articles that these changes and modifications are part of a great cycle of change in the consciousness of the race, and that the full and conscious benefits of the changes can only be obtained when women understand what are their real evolutionary responsibilities towards the race. In other words, they must learn to take longer and broader views about their function of Race Motherhood, as an expansion of their function of Individual Motherhood; not only because of their increased opportunities and rights, but because, according to recent research and scientific theories, the whole basis on which woman's social subjection and economic enslavement rests is false; while riper knowledge is reversing the old traditional and accepted sex and social values, and is replacing them by values based on scientific knowledge.

It was an American sociologist, Professor Lester Ward, who first propounded in his book, "Pure Sociology," his theory that

### the Female in nature is the Race,

the Male only a variant. This, of course, being absolutely the opposite theory to that taught in the old Cosmogonies, where Man is the central and supreme figure, while Woman exists to fulfil her one function of the carrying on of the race, and of being a "helpmeet" to Man. (Readers are well aware that the old Cosmogonies did not take into account the evolution of the human race from protoplasmic life through the animal creation; they merely gave traditional and symbolic stories, derived from the childhood of the race, about the origins of things.) Briefly, to state the theory that the Female is the Race and the Male the variant, it is necessary to put before the reader the two contending theories, and, for the sake of brevity, to give them their scientific names, of Greek origin.

The Androcentric theory is "that the male sex is primary and the female secondary in the organic scheme; that all things centre, as it were, about the male (andros), and that the female, though necessary in carrying out the scheme, is only the means of continuing the life of the globe, but is otherwise an unimportant accessory, and incidental factor in the general result."

The Gynæocentric theory (for the first time stated, and supported by scientific data, by Professor Lester Ward) is "that the

### female sex is primary

the male secondary in the organic scheme; originally and normally all things centre, as it were, about the female, and that the male, though not necessary in carrying out the scheme, was developed under the operation of the principle of advantage to secure organic progress through the crossing of strains."

These two theories are purposely placed quite baldly side by side, so that readers may see at a glance how absolutely opposed to one another they are, and how completely the gynæocentric theory, if it can be proved to possess scientific value, sweeps away the endless traditions, maxims, prejudices and sanctions of what is, or is not, woman's sphere.

In support of the androcentric theory the main evidences, Professor Ward admits, are both weighty and numerous.

"In all the principal animals, including the classes of mammals and birds, at least, the males are usually larger, stronger, more varied in structure and organs, and more highly ornamented and adorned than the females." When we leave the regions of zoology, and begin to compare things in the human race, we find many of the same facts somewhat emphasised; and as regards mental powers, Mr. Ward adduces evidence to

prove that women have but little inventive faculty; and adds: "As invention is the great key to civilisation, and as the inventive faculty is the primary advantageous function of the intellect, this is a fundamental difference and has great weight." Her lack of creative genius in the fine arts, or of speculative genius in the realms of abstract truth are also urged against her, and the Professor states: "A glance at the history and condition of the world in general is sufficient to show how small has been, and is, the rôle of woman in the most important affairs of life. . . . From a certain point of view it almost seems as if everything was done by men, and woman was only a means of continuing the race." And yet in spite of what, on a superficial judgment, appears to be overwhelming testimony that the female is secondary in the organic scheme, Professor Lester Ward holds, and expounds on evidence which will be given in the next instalment of this article—that "Woman is and remains the human race," because life having begun as female from what are known scientifically as "mother-cells" and "daughter-cells," this "female sex, which existed from the beginning, continues unchanged, but the male sex, which did not exist in the beginning, made its appearance at a certain stage . . . but never became universal."

D. B. MONTEPIORE.

## WOMEN LAY PREACHERS.

Readers of THE VOTE who are deeply interested in the position held by women in all spheres of life, including the Church, have been disappointed to read of the recent action of the Lower House of Convocation of the Church of England concerning women and the lay ministry, although it is some slight consolation to know that the matter will be brought up at the Lambeth Conference in July. Nonconformists, as well as Anglicans, are watching the progress of women in the Established Church with great interest and sympathy, and it should give satisfaction to both, if they are true feminists, to find that in the Free Churches conditions are becoming increasingly hopeful.

In face of the indignation that has been aroused by the dismissal of thousands of women from work that they have done well during the last few years of the nation's great need, it is encouraging indeed to find that the Free Churches are welcoming women to their pulpits. Some are ordaining them as ministers, while the Wesleyan Methodist Church, having gladly accepted the services of women lay preachers during the years when the ranks of men preachers were sadly reduced, has now made their position legal and permanent, having, in July, 1918, passed the following resolution: "The Conference declares that women are eligible to become fully accredited local preachers on the same conditions and shall hereafter enjoy the same rights and privileges as men who are local preachers."

The Church is ready for women preachers; the demand for them is greater than the supply. They must come forward to meet the need.

Speaking from five years' experience as a lay preacher, I can say truly that, both among my fellow-men preachers and in every congregation to which I have spoken, I have met with courtesy and goodwill. In one place I visit regularly, a labourer said to me: "I have been telling the people that the lady preacher is coming to-night; I think we shall have a good congregation." And at a business meeting I attended a few months ago a man from another village got up and volunteered the information that when the deaconess (not myself) preached the congregation was twice as big as at other times. Of course, it is not rivalry that we desire, nor do we wish to suggest for a moment that the congregations that assemble when women preach will always be larger than when men preach—we know of churches that are always crowded when certain men preach in them—but we do claim that in the Church, as in the home and the State, co-operation is essential if we are to secure complete expression of thought, and to meet the varied needs of humanity.

M. BALLARD DAWSON.

## NO MORE HOMES!

Homes must go! Wives must go! Husbands must go! The maternal spirit must go!

So said Mr. W. L. George to the large and critical audience which last Monday evening was fortunate in hearing his charmingly provocative lecture at the Minerva Café on "Women Under Socialism." Miss Pierotti made a very efficient chairman. Most trades, said the lecturer, would be regulated by industrial guilds in which women would share on equal terms, and where men would be excluded from nursing, and women from carting coal. Education was going to fall almost entirely into the hands of women, because men had not the patience to drum the necessary grounding into the heads of children.

Home was rather a disgusting place, where a man was a gloating king in Babylon, and his wife an Eastern slave who staggered to her death under the repulsive burden of the home. Socialism would free the wife; each person would have one bedroom and a common dining-room and nursery for the children; the measles complication which is always given to one's own child by other people's children must be reckoned with. All housework would be performed by members of the household guild (another feminine preserve, because men are not patient enough for this work). Socialism would replace the edifice erected upon the unwilling, inefficient service of one young woman, by a dwelling based upon efficiency and choice.

The old capitalist idea of a woman as a chattel still survived—"his ox" and "his wife" were referred to together, a woman was "given away" by a male relative, a husband claimed damages for the theft of his wife. We saw it, too, in prostitution, and in the marriage by purchase of many countries and at home where a "good match" was nearly always a bad one. A husband expected his wife to be at once companion, best friend, lover, and housekeeper, and paid her by her "keep." She might be overpaid; usually she was not. Under Socialism woman would be no longer an appendage, but an independent citizen. Every woman would work and earn her living, the State would see that she did. She would marry when she wished, but she would still go on working, because no man would be sufficiently well off to be able to "keep" her. The wife might work in the household guild and so do her own housework, or she might prefer some other kind of work. Mothers would receive allowances from the State. Maternal instinct was against civilisation. Shared with many other species, it was once a necessity for the continuance of the race, but now it was only an anti-social disadvantage. Antiseptic hygiene defended the baby better than mother love, so the maternal instinct must go.

Can it ever be got rid of? No; but what was looked for had a way of happening. Years ago the Women's Freedom League took a policeman's lamp and flashed it on the book in which was written "Votes for women," and kept the light there till Britain read the words; and just so Socialism held its lamp and turned the light upon the book of fate till the world at last would read its message.

A lively discussion followed. Mothers maintained that babies thrive better in the warm nest of a mother's love and care than upon antiseptic efficiency. Illogical and foolish as the habit of marrying and living in homes might be, something in human nature called for it. A woman would never be satisfied without her home, where she could bang her door and shut out intruders; and though, as the lecturer insisted, the measure of the goodness and justice of a system was the measure of the faith of its adherents, still Socialism might not prove a universal remedy for the ills of the State.

We learn with pleasure that Miss M. Ballard Dawson is being nominated for the Swanage Urban District Council as an independent candidate, one of her nomination papers being filled up by women and another by men. We wholeheartedly wish her every success in this candidature.

## BOOK REVIEW.

*Somewhere in Christendom.* By Evelyn Sharp. (George Allen and Unwin.) 5s. (Can be obtained at this office.)

This fascinating little book shows what resulted when a nation bent all its energies for 25 years to the worship of an Idea. Michael, king of the commonplace little mid-European country of Ethuria (bounded on the east by Hygeia and on the west by Tritonia) stood at his palace window and awaited the end. The Nine Years' European War had just been terminated by a process of universal exhaustion; little Ethuria was a heap of ruins; the remnants of her people were busily engaged in killing one another, the House of Lords had been blown up and the Cabinet hanged, and the King stood ready to kill the Queen and baby Prince and then to die. Summoned by the King, a woman Prophet entered (women had lately been admitted to all the professions) alert and smiling. The palace gates were battered down, and amid the crash of falling doors and the yells of the mob, "faithful John" announced "the Revolution is here," and awaited instructions in his usual discreet manner. "Stand out of the way, man, and let the Revolution come in," commanded the Prophet. "John was only just in time; even as he stepped aside the foremost of the rebels hurled themselves into the room. The Revolution had come in." Confronted by the Prophet, Peter the Ploughman, head of the mob, "swore a particularly unpleasant oath to show that he really believed men and women to be on the same footing," but upon the vision and sincerity and inspiration of the Prophet violence dashed in vain. Fired by the Idea, one by one the women dropped their pitchforks or their scythes, the men stacked their bayonets in the middle of the marble floor, and John dusted the King's sword and placed it on the top. All other ambitions were set aside for the worship of the Idea, and Ethuria became a model of health, happiness and efficiency. Peter the Ploughman was elected Minister of the Department for finding the Right Job for the Right Person, Michael took to farming, Anna, the ex-Queen, became Mother-in-Chief to the Baby Department, and the Throne Room the chief Metropolitan Crèche. Twenty-five years passed quietly away, then Europe again began to take an interest in the affairs of the little State. Delegates were invited to an International Babies' Conference, and were astonished to find childhood "treated as a disease." Horrified at the misery of the world, Ethuria decided to send one thousand of its best young men and women to spread the knowledge of its Idea. During the next five years the Idea steadily penetrated all classes and all nations, and gathered adherents in every land.

The enemies of the Idea were alarmed, and planned a European war to, incidentally, wipe out the little country from whence it emanated. The delightful intrigues of the Foreign Secretary of Tritonia and the President of Hygeia recoil harmlessly from the Ethurian Idea. War is declared, chiefly by the exertions of Cousin Hilderic, the world newspaper king. From either hand a hostile army invades Ethuria, but by a stroke of genius no shot is fired, and in five hours the war is brought to an end amid rejoicings. This thoughtful little book abounds with humour and daintily drawn sketches—Peter, good-tempered, astute and dogged, the Foreign Minister who, without an established code, was lost, and who instinctively plotted for the destruction of whatever he recognised as new, the President who could not understand Ethuria, and the Ethurian children, to whom the rest of the world seemed mad.

E. KNIGHT.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS, W.F.L.  
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7 p.m. Admission 1s. A few free seats. Chair: Miss Gibson.

**Saturday, March 20.**—National Executive Committee, 144, High Holborn. 10 a.m.

**Wednesday, March 24.**—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Speaker: Miss Haslett (Sec., Women's Engineering Soc.). Subject: "Women and Engineering." Chair: Miss Newsome. 3 p.m.

**Wednesday, April 14.**—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Speaker: Mrs. Tanner. Subject: "The New Education Act."

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

## PROVINCES.

**Wednesday, March 17.**—Ashford. Speaker: Mr. E. Hannan. Subject: "Proportional Representation." 3 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 17.**—Portsmouth. Public Meeting, 2, Kent Road. Speaker: Miss Prewett. Subject: "Woman—Past, Present, and Future." Chair: Mrs. Abbott. 3.15 p.m.

## OTHER SOCIETIES.

**Monday, March 15.**—Uxbridge. Women's Suffrage Society. Speaker: Miss F. A. Underwood. Subject: "The Need for Women Members of Parliament." 7 p.m.

**Monday, March 29.**—Redcar. Mrs. Schofield Coates will address Women's Section of Labour Party on "Mothers' Pensions." 3 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 31.**—Thornaby-on-Tees. Mrs. Schofield Coates will address Women's Section of Labour Party, on "Mothers' Pensions." 3 p.m.

## BRANCH NOTES.

## EDINBURGH.

The usual monthly Social Meeting was well attended by members and friends, and several new members joined the Branch. Mrs. H. Moore-Nisbett, who, during the war, acted as police-woman in Edinburgh, addressed the meeting on "The Need for Women Police." Her experiences with regard to the conditions in our streets after nightfall were of the utmost value in bringing home to those present the terrible evils to women and girls in the unchecked continuance of the laxity in dealing with the present conditions. She urged very earnestly the need for women's co-operation in the campaign against the unequal moral standard as between men and women, and emphasised the absolute indispensability of women police in larger numbers in our cities to tackle the many problems arising out of the situation at the present time. Hon. Sec.—G. H. JACOB, 44, Geo. IV. Bridge.

## MIDDLESBROUGH.

The Whist Drive and Social held in the Suffrage Café on Wednesday, March 3rd, was a splendid success. Everybody had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Twenty tables were filled with whist players, whilst non-players and late-comers sat around and watched the play. The musical programme was greatly appreciated. Miss Freda Claxton, one of our young sympathisers, sang beautifully Tosti's "Good-bye" and "My Air Home." Mr. Frank Lyness won great applause with his rendering of "Mother of Mine," "The Pagan," and a pianoforte solo. Miss Dorothy Barrs and Mr. Walter Robinson contributed by giving pianoforte duets. Councillor Schofield Coates gave a short address when distributing the prizes, and hoped the Women's Freedom League would continue holding social gatherings, as they proved so successful. In her closing remarks she thanked the artists, the M.C.'s, and all those who had helped to make the evening the success it had been. The refreshments were served quickly and easily, thanks to the faithful few who are always ready to give their services at all our functions.

MISS D. BARRS (Hon. Sec.), 237A, The Arcade, Linthorpe Road.

The Women's Freedom League Settlement,  
93, NINE ELMS LANE, S.W. 8.

We have to record our grateful thanks to Mrs. Despard for jumble goods, Miss Turton for work done, Miss Kathleen Holmes flowers, Miss E. M. N. Clarke £1 and a welcome parcel of eggs, Miss Joan Riggall a parcel of her outgrown clothing (which exactly fits a small Guest child at present in the Guest House), some dried milk from Mrs. Brown, towels from Mrs. Delbanco, jumble goods from Miss Vere Foley, Mrs. Riggall is. We have so many Guest children now and in prospect that our house linen is very short, and we do hope our friends will remember us when turning out cupboards, beds, etc., for old bits of blankets and towels would help us very much just now, and we would gladly welcome anything that would turn into cot sheets. We would gladly welcome some new workers, either in restaurant or Guest House, or an offer to write letters would be very gratefully received.

## IN PARLIAMENT.

## Pensions for Widows and Children.

MAJOR MACKENZIE WOOD has given notice that next Tuesday he will call the attention of the House of Commons to the question of pensions for widows and children, and will move a Resolution on this subject.

## Income Tax.

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the work of many women journalists and others compel them to be from home most of the day and often far into the evening, he will undertake that in any alteration in the Income-Tax the relief provided for a man in similar circumstances shall be extended to a working woman who, being entirely responsible for the upkeep of her home, has a female relation residing with her in the capacity of housekeeper?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN replied that the consideration of this question must be deferred till the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Income-Tax.

## Small Pox.

SIR ALFRED YEO asked the Minister of Health if his attention had been called to a very serious state of affairs in connection with the ex-Government stores being dumped at Bell Wharf, Bromley-by-Bow, E., and the reported death of one woman working in the wharf and the isolation of five other persons from the same place, one of whom is in the service of the Medical Officer of Health of the Poplar Council, and what steps he proposes to take, if any, to rid the neighbourhood of the cause of the outbreak, as the matter is causing much alarm to the inhabitants.

DR. ADDISON replied that he was aware of this case, and that the Ministry of Health, together with the sanitary authorities, had been taking active steps in endeavouring to check the spread of infection from the different centres to which it had been traced from the source indicated. Sir Alfred Yeo asked if this dump could not be burned to prevent further outbreaks; but Dr. Addison explained that the value of the stores dumped was about a quarter of a million, and that as the smallpox had now spread to various other places, burning this dump would not remove the danger. Sir Alfred further enquired if the life of this poor woman was not worth more than a quarter of a million pounds, and to Dr. Addison's reply that "It would not restore the woman to life to burn the dump," retorted: "But it would save others from being buried!"

## Women Jurors.

In reply to a question put to the Home Secretary by Mr. CHADWICK, MAJOR BAIRD stated that in boroughs where the panel of jurors is drawn from the burgess list women whose names appear on those lists are now qualified and liable to be summoned to serve on juries in the same way as men. Elsewhere the jury lists which are made this year for every parish will include women, and will come into force next year, and women whose names appear on those lists will then be liable to service on juries.

## A Wife's Allowance.

MR. ALLEN PARKINSON asked the Secretary of State for War if nothing more can be done to assist the wife of Private J. Wilding, Tank Corps, than the allowance of 9d. per day from his pay; if he is aware that Mrs. Wilding has two children to support, and has a Court Order against her husband for £1 12s. 6d. per week? The regimental paymaster states that only the amount mentioned can be paid to her from his Army pay; can the War Secretary make arrangements for this man to be compelled to pay more for the support of his wife and children, or that they shall be put upon the strength of the married establishment, she being at present a charge upon the Poor Law?

STR A. WILLIAMSON: Under the Army Act the maximum amount that can be stopped from the pay of a private soldier for the maintenance of his wife and family is 9d. a day. The question of increasing this amount is under consideration. Private Wilding is not eligible under the terms of his enlistment to be placed on the married establishment.

We repeat that soldiers who so desert their wives should either be sent back by the Army authorities to civil life, when they would be compelled to shoulder the responsibility of the maintenance of their wife and family; or the amount of this maintenance should be deducted from their pay, and debited to them in the future if their pay is not sufficient to cover it. F. A. U.

FRIDAY,  
MARCH 12,  
1920.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

## CINEMA NECK!

Speaking at the Minerva Café recently on the subject of "Cinema Neck," Dr. Octavia Lewin traced the prevalence of adenoids, tonsillitis and eyestrain, especially amongst children, to those ill-considered and unhygienic arrangements, not only in picture theatres, but also in schools and public buildings, whereby children and adults were constantly forced to look at objects in front of them but considerably above the eye level. By means of a model showing the veins and arteries in the head and neck, Dr. Lewin explained to the audience how, in constantly gazing upwards, the head was forced backwards, the muscles of the throat were strained, the circulation at the back of the neck became congested, and mouth-breathing resulted with all its attendant evils, not the least of which was mental and moral loss of vitality. Cinema neck diseases began from the day the child first attended school. The little rosy faces on the infant forms were replaced by pale and listless figures in the higher forms. The teacher, the blackboard, the pictures, etc., all towered above the class. Modern classrooms were now, fortunately, being built on a more hygienic plan, viz., with tiers of seats raised one above another, and so arranged as to converge towards that portion of the room where the teacher was seated. Speaking of neck wear, the lecturer said she had been struck

by the number of cases in which people who were taken ill in the street succumbed because they were wearing high collars. At the children's clinic in the Harrow Road it was no uncommon thing for a child to be brought to her wearing a thick reefer coat, a khaki scarf, such as that used in the trenches, a wad of thermogene wool, two or three sweaters, and two or three shirts. And she found it difficult to convince the mothers that they were making their children susceptible to cold by dressing them in this fashion.

Mrs. Montefiore, who presided, said though she had not realised the dangers of cinema neck until she had heard Dr. Lewin, she had for long been aware of the dangers of "cinema soul," produced by an age of constant restlessness, and the tendency to take knowledge in snippets rather than in the bulk.

Many questions were put by the audience at the close of the meeting, and followed by a discussion.

## MINERVA CLUB.

Our new departure will be formally opened next week, on March 20th, by a public dinner at 7 p.m. As the accommodation is limited early application for tickets (2s. 6d. each) is advisable, to Miss E. Mitchell, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square. Further particulars next week.

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