

THE VOTE,
Oct. 15, 1920
ONE PENNY.

HOMES FOR THE NEW POOR.
Interview with Mrs. Oliver Strachey.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, OCT. 15, 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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CHILD OUTRAGE.

The State is bound to guarantee the child—its chief asset and the hope of the future—surroundings wherein satisfactory growth and development, physical, mental and moral, is probable. Public opinion assents to this theory, and the law partially recognises it, but our practice lags far behind. Property is cherished tenderly, whilst child injuries and assaults often go scot free because "this might have happened to any of us," as one Judge said, or receive the scandalously inadequate sentences which encourage repetition of the crime. At one Assize a man had six months hard labour for fraudulently acquiring 13s., and two others had six months in the second division for indecent assault on a girl of 15 and for criminal assault on a young half-sister!

It is common to find such sentences as a fine of 40s. and 6s. 6d. costs for indecent assault on a girl of nine by a man of 54, a fine of £3 for assaults several times repeated on girls of about 12, two months in the second division for assault on a girl of 11, and nine months for assault on another child of 11 by a Sunday school teacher. A more serious view is, however, often taken, such as two years hard labour for an offence against a girl of 13 by a professional entertainer, 18 months imprisonment for a priest for offences against several young girls. Many of these men are well educated, of good position, holding responsible places, and their conviction is the more difficult. Parks and cinemas hold special dangers, and children boarded out for

country holidays in the summer are often assaulted. A horrible but large class of cases are assaults by fathers, uncles, etc., upon infants and little girls.

During 14 years, 11,256 cases of assaults and immoral surroundings have been investigated by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children alone. With all the police cases and the offences which never come to light they form a hideous mass of child misery beneath our veneer of civilisation.

Certain pressing reforms are wanted at once. Women magistrates should sit upon every Bench; women judges and women lawyers are equally needed, but for these we must wait with what patience we may. Meanwhile the best guarantees for justice and humanity to the child are the six women who sit in the jury box, in whose presence every mother will rejoice.

A magistrate should have discretion to convict a man on the unsupported evidence of a child too young to take an oath. We want an age of consent of 16 instead of 13 for indecent assault, and 18 instead of 16 for criminal assault. We condemn the disgraceful and illegal practice of some magistrates who clear their Courts of women only, and the equally disgraceful exit of women who cheerfully leave a shrinking little child covered with shame and confusion alone in a Court full of men.

Every decent man and woman and every patriotic citizen must protect the child.

E. KNIGHT.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.**Oxford Honours Women.**

Women were for the first time in the history of the University of Oxford admitted last week to its membership by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Farnell, Rector of Lincoln College. The ceremony took place in the ancient Divinity School. About 110 women undergraduates attended in academic dress, soft square black caps of the shape worn by the members of the University in the sixteenth century, and scholars' or commoners' gowns worn over dark coats and skirts. The members of each of the recognised Societies of women students, Lady Margaret Hall, Somerville College, St. Hugh's College, and St. Hilda's Hall, were presented together by the Principal of the Society, and the members of the Society of Oxford Home students by their Vice-Principal. Women graduates and undergraduates will now take their place in the life of the University that has admitted them to its educational privileges (but not to its full membership) for more than forty years.

Lady Amherst of Hackney.

A Royal decree has been granted giving the late Lady Amherst of Hackney's daughter-in-law, Mrs. William Cecil, the rank she would have had had her husband, who fell at the Aisne in 1914, lived to succeed to the family barony. Lady Amherst of Hackney, whose eight-year-old son is the present Lord Amherst of Hackney, is Gladys, only daughter of Colonel H. C. Baggallay, of Frimley, Surrey. She is the Hon. Secretary of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Reform Association, and a member of the Sussex County Council. As the Hon. Mrs. William Cecil, members of the Women's Freedom League have on more than one occasion had the pleasure of welcoming her on our platform, and we are looking forward to hearing her again in the near future.

Woman's Responsible Post.

One of the most interesting episodes of next month's American elections will be the candidature of Miss Harriet May Mills, as the regular choice of the Democratic Party, for the responsible post of Secretary of State in New York. For nearly thirty years she has been an active campaigner for the suffrage. If Miss Mills is elected she will act as custodian of the New York State archives and of the State seal; she will have charge of the publication and preservation of the laws; she will countersign the proclamations and commissions issued by the Governor and keep a record of them; and she will issue certificates of incorporation to companies incorporated under the laws of the State. She will also be the head of the Election Bureau, which deals with election returns and expenses, and of the Automobile Bureau, which issues licences, registers owners and chauffeurs, and the rest.

A Timely Omission.

Newcastle Presbytery have decided, after a discussion on marriage vows, to delete the words in the Marriage Service dealing with the duties of husbands and wives wherein wives are enjoined to be in subjection to their husbands. The Rev. David Fyffe said that they were quite out of touch with modern times, while another speaker described the retention of such words nowadays as scandalous, and thought that they might well be superseded by the well-known passage from the 31st chapter of Proverbs. The recently published Prayer Book of the Congregational Union of England and Wales also omits the word "obey" from the Marriage Service.

Firewomen.

A team of women joined in the 17th Annual Fire Tournament of the London Private Fire Brigades' Association, at Stamford Street, London, last Sunday. In a businesslike uniform with top boots and "tin" hats, their display was very efficient. Enrolled during the war by a private firm, they now decline to be disbanded.

BOOK THESE DATES!**Votes for Women under 30.****Tuesday, October 19th.**

Arrangements for this meeting, particulars of which are recorded in Forthcoming Events, are well in hand. An attractive list of speakers has been secured, including Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Miss A. G. Hewitt, L.L.A., Councillor Jessie Stephen, Miss Haslett, Miss Dorothy Evans, M.A., Miss Richardson, Miss Weston. Chairman, Mrs. Despard. Other Societies co-operating are the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries; Women's Engineering Society, Federation of Women Civil Servants, Women's International League, National Union of Women Teachers, National Federation of Women Workers, Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, National Women Citizens' Associations, National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants.

Equal Pay for Equal Work.**Saturday, November 6th.**

Procession to and Mass Meeting in Trafalgar Square of women's organisations, in co-operation with the National Union of Women Teachers, to demand Equal Pay for Equal Work for men and women alike.

The proposed route is as follows. The women will form up at the Northumberland Avenue end of the Embankment at 2 p.m., starting at 2.30. They will march via Bridge Street, Whitehall, Pall Mall, St. James's Street, Piccadilly, Leicester Square, Charing Cross Road to Trafalgar Square, arriving at 3.45 p.m., when a Mass Meeting will take place, with five-minute speeches by men and women speakers from the different societies supporting the meeting.

OUR LITERATURE DEPARTMENT.

In view of the following extract taken from last Monday's *Manchester Guardian*, we urge our readers to send to us for a copy of Miss Lind-af-Hageby's "Unbounded Gratitude—Women's Right to Work," price 3d., by post 4d.

THE DISEMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

John Whelan writes in the course of a letter from 38, Goodman Street, Moston Lane, Manchester:—In moving a resolution on this subject before the City Council a few months ago, I made it plain that no woman should lose her job if there was a dependent upon her. The present Lord Mayor at that time opposed the resolution on similar grounds to those of Councillor Margaret Ashton. I wish to remind those interested that the march to London with which I was connected was fruitful in this respect. Sir Robert Horne permitted our deputation to make it known that all women under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour should be called upon to resign immediately, with the exception of those who had someone directly dependent upon them. That has been done. Many women were discharged from the Government Stationery Department in Manchester and ex-Service men substituted.

**Green, White & Gold Fair,
26th and 27th NOVEMBER.**

Have you begun any of those pretty things you are going to make for the Fair?

If not, begin at once, only Six Weeks left.

Please DON'T FORGET the WHITE STALL.

Work Parties are held in the Office on Wednesdays at 5 p.m., following the Afternoon Meetings.

The COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY INTO SEXUAL MORALITY.

(Continued from last week.)

Court Procedure.

All boys and girls under 17 should be excluded from criminal courts. In Children's Courts women may be excluded, and when children give evidence in the ordinary court women are sometimes excluded, whilst men remain. Such distinction is quite unjustifiable, but the best remedy is the pressure of public opinion and the influence of women magistrates and women on juries. It is an advantage to the child that a good many women should be present and make the Court more homely. The Committee heartily welcomes the plan of the Juvenile Courts (Metropolis) Bill, 1920, giving each Court a Police Magistrate and two justices, one of them a woman, and hopes it will be followed also outside London. The Press should not be excluded from any case. Incest cases should come under the general law, and not be heard in camera as at present.

Veneral Disease.

There is no evidence in the Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases of any increase in these diseases during the last 50 years. Statistics show a decrease. In the Army, admissions to hospital have declined from 27 per cent. in 1880 to less than 6 per cent. in 1912. The diseases are, however, very prevalent and serious, and some increase is due to the war, but the hasty adoption of new experimental measures after the style of the old C.D. Acts is not justified.

Cordial approval is given to the provision of the best treatment, convenient and attractive to the patient, but any coercive or ill-considered measures may endanger this voluntary system before it has been given a fair chance of success.

Prophylaxis.

The provision at the public expense of clinics, open day and night, with skilled male and female attendants, to carry out disinfection within a short time after exposure to risk, as tried by the Manchester Corporation, has been generally condemned as impracticable and undesirable.

The Committee hold strongly that no public authority should approve or encourage the policy advocated by the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease of distributing leaflets of instructions, with prescriptions, for self-disinfection at the time of exposure, and profoundly regret that the Manchester Corporation are advertising these leaflets, by means of posters in the public lavatories.

Notification.

The Committee is convinced that compulsory notification and treatment cannot be enforced impartially and universally, and partial application to particular classes, e.g., to prostitutes, prisoners, or men or women whom poverty forces into hospitals or institutions, would be both unjust and ineffective.

Penalising the Transmission of Venereal Disease.

The infection of children by neglect or by criminal assault is already punishable under the Children Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1885, etc., and infection in marriage should be met by a decree of nullity, a separation order, or a divorce. Promiscuous sexual intercourse, the usual source of infection, is in itself essentially unhygienic. The most rigid systems of control of prostitutes cannot give security, still less can similar measures as applied to the general population. Persons indulging in this conduct should understand clearly that they deliberately expose themselves to infection at their own risk. The State cannot protect them, but they can protect themselves by refraining from such conduct. The sooner this is recognised the better. Any laws or administrative measures which tend to obscure this fact by offering a false security, are likely, instead of diminishing the disease, to increase it by increasing the amount of indulgence. Besides this, charges would be almost impossible to prove, and compulsory medical examination would be forced upon the accused, as the only means of refuting the charge.

The Real Remedy.

Parliament and police cannot do much to mend public morals by penalisation, but the State can prevent prostitution and promiscuity by recognising and grappling with their root causes, economic, social, political and moral. Women's low rate of pay contributes to prostitution, though it is not the chief cause, as some people have supposed. Some progress has already been made, and now that women have the vote the pace will probably be quickened, and with the economic independence of women this cause will disappear.

Vigorous Housing Reform, about which we talk so much and do so little, must be taken in hand. As things are now it is quite impossible for a large section of our fathers and mothers to give their young people the safeguard of a happy home life, and in the thousands of families who have to sleep all together in one room it is very difficult for boys and girls to be decent and moral, and prostitution is the result.

Temperance Reform, with healthy recreations for young people, is an essential part of the campaign against prostitution.

Standing armies must be reckoned with. While militarism persists there is little hope of abolishing prostitution.

The most serious and the most difficult causes of sexual promiscuity are ignorance, self-indulgence and an absence of high ideals. They can only be met by the spread of knowledge, and of a high moral standard throughout the community. We must teach a single standard of morals for both sexes, and insist that continence for either sex is compatible with health and well-being. It is better to appeal to honour than to fear, for even if venereal disease could be stamped out, uncontrolled sexual indulgence would still be a denial of manliness and womanliness, a blot on the scutcheon of motherhood and fatherhood.

(All who are interested in the above should study the full report of the Committee, "The State and Sexual Morality," including a summary of all the legal provisions dealing with women and children in this respect. Price 1s. 8d., post free, from 144, High Holborn.)

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING FOR NURSES.

A special adaptation of the Public Health Course at King's College Household and Social Science Department has been made to meet the requirements of a scholarship scheme just founded experimentally by the League of Red Cross Societies in Geneva. The object is to give trained nurses in various countries benefit of the work that is done at this Department in Kensington. Nineteen women scholars have arrived—two from America, and one each from Britain, Canada, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Sweden, Venezuela, Peru, Greece, Italy, Denmark, Roumania, Czechoslovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Russia. The scholarships cover fees and full residential maintenance for personal expenses and travelling during the vacations, when they will visit centres of public welfare work. After their course the nurses will return to their respective countries with a view to raising the standard of public health work which there prevails.

The following resolution was adopted at the meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday, October 5th, 1920:—

"The League of the Church Militant cordially welcomes the Report of the Committee of the Lambeth Conference and the resolutions founded thereon, relating to the place of women in the councils and ministrations of the Church. In so far as laywomen are concerned the proposal practically sweeps away all distinctions of sex. The position in the Ministry accorded to women marks a tremendous advance on anything the present generation has known, and though failing to correspond with the ultimate aims of the League, gives women at once a really valuable and honourable position in the Ministry of the Church."

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 WOMAN WORKER.

There is an agitation on foot in Manchester to secure the replacement of "pin-money" girls in the Corporation departments by ex-Service men. This has led the Lord Mayor to make a statement to the effect that women who are dependent upon their situations for their livelihood shall be allowed to retain their positions, and each department has been asked for a return showing the number of women, on either permanent or temporary engagements, whom it employs, and when all the figures are collected they are to be embodied in a public statement. We have always maintained that any man or woman who was engaged temporarily in place of an enlisted man should be expected to resign on his return; but we protest against an inquisition into the private needs of women workers as apart from men workers, even in the interest of ex-Service men. It has never been held that men who have independent means, whether small or large, should be debarred from seeking paid employment; for work, even paid work, has never been considered to be the monopoly of the necessitous; and we claim that women, whatever their economic position, should have an equal right with men to every kind of labour and to an equal reward for their services. We want no restrictions at all on any work undertaken by women, believing firmly that they themselves are the best judges of what is suitable or unsuitable for them; and in this respect we disagree entirely with a statement made last week by Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., in a woman's magazine, that "women should be excluded from dangerous occupations" and that "married women should not work at all; that is, outside their own homes." "Dangerous occupations" ought to be made as little dangerous as possible for both men and women; workers should be given every safeguard in their work; but if women choose to run an equal risk with men we see no reason why this means of gaining a livelihood should be denied them by their male competitors. In Japan there is a law to prevent women working in any employment "beyond their strength." Who is to judge what is beyond a woman's strength? Her male competitor? It is not so very long ago that some men strongly opposed educational facilities being granted to women because, they said, woman's brain was not strong enough to stand the strain! We learn that women's right to work is restricted in Germany as well as in Japan. According to the *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung*, a discussion took place in the Prussian House of Assembly at the end of last month on the question of the present exclusion of married women from employment as teachers or public servants. It seems curious that both in Germany and in England the public should be willing to welcome married women as Members of Parliament, but it is also apparently quite willing to acquiesce in depriving the community of their services as teachers. This policy of restrictions has no claim either to logic or common-sense; and we repeat our demand that women shall have an equal opportunity with men in all kinds of work, and that they shall suffer from no restrictions which are not also imposed on men.

"ADULT SUFFRAGE."

Speaking at Llandudno last Friday, Mr. Lloyd George made the following curious statement: "In 1914 we were struggling to carry the Plural Voting Bill. It was regarded as being so subversive of the whole fabric of society that the House of Lords threw it out twice. It is buried now under the Adult Suffrage Act."

Does Mr. Lloyd George know the meaning of words? When was an *Adult Suffrage Act* placed on our Statute Book? Or, is he persuaded that men become Adults at twenty-one but that women are adolescents until they arrive at the ripe age of thirty? In any case, we are urging him to see that a measure for the granting of the suffrage to women on equal terms with men is foreshadowed in the King's Speech. If it should not be mentioned, we ask our friends in the House of Commons to move an equal franchise amendment to that Speech. We cannot think that such an amendment would find serious opposition among our representatives, the great majority of whom, we believe, agree that it is high time that the differentiation of the suffrage as between men and women should cease. Until women secure this measure of political equality with men, it is ridiculous for our Prime Minister, who ought to know the provisions of Acts of primary importance, to talk about an *Adult Suffrage Act*; and we take this opportunity of once again urging readers of THE VOTE to send for Petition Forms calling upon the Prime Minister to bring in a simple franchise measure which will ensure that women will have equal voting rights with men. These Petition Forms are to be signed solely by young women of over 21 and under thirty years of age. Copies of the Petition can be signed at any time at this office.

WOMEN ELECTION OFFICERS.

Prior to 1918, says the *New York Times*, all election officers in New York City were men; but in the first year in which women had the vote the district captains of the two political parties, being desirous of reaching the woman voter, appointed a woman assistant in most of their districts to be present at the polling booths. The men who held similar positions were, of course, paid; but the women were not at first offered any remuneration. However, unsubstantial political honours do not pay for house rent, dresses, shoes, hats, gloves, handkerchiefs or travelling expenses, so the women suggested that a salary would be acceptable as well as the honour. So it came about that these women were designated inspectors, and they received an honorarium of seven-and-a-half dollars a day. There are at the present time, roughly, 5,000 women election officers, inspectors, poll and ballot clerks in New York City, and they will receive, collectively, one-quarter of a million dollars in salaries this year. It is recognised that the presence of women inspectors has had as its primary effect the maintenance of good order, such as never before existed; and that the mere reminder, "there are women present," has proved sufficient to curb the jostling, the profanity, and the uproar which marked the voting at other times in many districts. It is universally agreed that women election inspectors have been an aid to honest voting, fair counting and decorum in and about the polls; and no one now suggests that women should do this work in a "voluntary" capacity. American women are to be congratulated not only because they have secured equal voting rights with men, but also on the fact that there are so many women in such varied ways who are already taking an active part in the political life of the community.

HOMES FOR THE NEW POOR.

Interview with Mrs. Oliver Strachey.

The Housing problem, as is well known, forms one of the most pressing necessities of the present day, both in our own and in other countries. Few people nowadays are exempt from the difficulties of obtaining adequate house room for themselves and their belongings, and all classes of the community are suffering alike. But whereas the very rich frequently possess more than one residence, or at the worst can afford to pay a high price for accommodation in some other direction, whilst the very poor have been accustomed for generations to makeshifts in the matter of homes, the house shortage presses with most vehemence upon the unfortunate "middle man," generally known nowadays as the new poor. Forced by circumstances to keep up a certain standard of living, dogged relentlessly by high prices, and in many cases the unlucky possessors of fixed incomes totally inadequate to the demands of the times, these new poor are suffering incredibly from lack of reasonable accommodation at a moderate price.

At long last, however, a solution has been found to this vexed question of combined durability and cheapness! The enterprising originator is

Mrs. Oliver Strachey,

who, for months past, has been experimenting in pisé-de-terre in a specially constructed dwelling near Haslemere, and who is now prepared to place her scheme upon the market, and launch a substantial building company in the New Year.

"It was through my cousin, Mr. St. Loe Strachey, the Editor of the *Spectator*, that I first became interested in pisé-de-terre for house building," Mrs. Strachey told our representative. "He rediscovered this old form of building and published a good many articles on the subject in the *Spectator*. There is also a very interesting book on Earth Building by Mr. William Ellis, published by *Country Life*. You know, of course, the idea is not a new one. Earth houses are common in France and Spain, and also in India, but nothing much in the way of actual rammed earth has been attempted in this country before. The nearest approach in the past has been sundried bricks, which have been used in several parts of England, and the Dorset 'cob,' compounded of a mixture of clay and straw.

"It is not every kind of earth, however, that is suitable for house-building. Pure clays should always be avoided, as they absorb damp. The best to use is a loamy soil, or one mixed with sand. We are using a mixture of sand and clay at the house I am building at Haslemere. The great point is, of course, the

Wonderful Cheapness of Earth!

as compared with bricks, stone, cement, or concrete, since the earth obtained when digging out the foundations forms the chief part of the house. My own house cost between £700 and £800, and I am quite proud of the fact that I have saved £200.

"I am employing women as well as men at Haslemere. The work is well suited to either sex, provided, of course, they are strong and healthy and not suffering from any internal trouble. No particular training is needed either, which is another advantage. Common-sense and physical strength, however, are essentials, for the work occupies eight or nine hours daily, and the earth not only has to be shovelled up, but when the second storey is reached it has to be thrown up from below.

"Women equally with men, too, will be employed in the pisé-de-terre building company which I am contemplating starting in the spring. Preference will be given to ex-Service men and Land Army girls. I have not decided upon the title of the company as yet, though I see *The Times* has already anticipated events by giving the enterprise the name of 'Women Builders'!

It is a misnomer, however, for women will not be employed exclusively. This is an age when we want the sexes to work together as comrades, not as competitors.

"The necessary capital of the company has already been subscribed, and the enterprise will be run on a profit-sharing basis. Although we are not actually in existence until the New Year, we are open to enter into contracts for houses from now onwards. Small bungalows containing five rooms can be built for about £500. Larger houses, containing three bedrooms, two living-rooms and a bathroom, will cost between £700 and £800. Already we have received orders to build houses in Devonshire, Hertfordshire and Kent. All houses built by my company will be furnished with labour-saving devices—hatches from kitchen near sink and stove, round corners, etc.

"The Ministry of Health is taking a great interest in my project, and is giving us all possible facilities in every direction. We, of course, benefit by the Government grant on each completed house, just like any other house builder. The Ministry, however, has made it a sine-qua-non that all pisé-de-terre houses, which are State-aided, shall be faced on the outside so as to be absolutely weather-proof. Tar, distemper, or grease paint can be used for this purpose, and is advisable in a climate which is proverbially sunless.

"Personally, I believe that when our company is really launched we shall be in for a big thing. The housing shortage is so terribly acute for one reason, and for another this earth substitute in which I am specialising is so much cheaper than the ordinary housing materials. The interest of the public in my new enterprise is enormous! I have received endless letters upon the subject since I began to build my own house and to contemplate forming a company."

WOMEN AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The Women's Local Government Society is preparing for active work during the coming autumn. The Town Council Elections take place on November 1st, and although the list of women candidates is far from complete, there will be few large towns without women nominees. In Glasgow, where up to the present women have failed to secure election to the City Council, thirteen have already signified their intention of standing. The position of Scottish women in local government is not satisfactory, as only twelve women are serving on Town Councils, and no County Council has a woman member.

On November 16th the Society is arranging an important Conference of women Town, Metropolitan and Urban District Councillors. The Metropolitan Asylums Board is kindly lending its Council Chamber for the Conference. At the morning session, when the chair will be taken by the Rt. Hon. Sir Willoughby Dickinson, one of the vice-presidents, the subject for discussion will be "Economy in Local Government Expenditure." Alderman Sir William Glyn-Jones, of the Middlesex County Council, will open the debate. In the afternoon Miss Smee, Chairman of the Acton Urban District Council, will speak on "The Woman Councillor and Committee Work." Women councillors from all parts of the country have notified their intention of attending the Conference.

OUR ADVERTISERS

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

WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING SOCIETY, LTD. ELECTION EXPERIENCES IN AUSTRALIA.**Self-Contained Flats for Professional Women.**

A Women's Public Utility Society has now been formed with the object of providing small flats for professional women at reasonable rents—to be called the Women's Pioneer Housing, Ltd.

Public Utility Societies are recognised by the Government as contributing to the solution of the Housing Problem and are eligible for State assistance; the State will lend three-quarters of the necessary capital and grant a very substantial subsidy as well. This opportunity is being very generally taken advantage of by men to provide houses for themselves and their families, and it will be a very grave mistake if women do not also make use of the Government's offer and provide themselves with suitable dwellings.

The many housing schemes now being prepared by Urban and Rural Authorities must necessarily provide in the first instance for those with families, and private enterprise is getting busy with "High Class Service Flats" at big rents; but unless some special effort is made the self-supporting woman of small means, who at present is in great housing difficulties, will be hampered in her career for want of a proper home, and will see her standard of life and comfort reduced to vanishing point. It is, therefore, felt that a Public Utility Society formed in the interests of women will meet a very pressing need.

This Pioneer Housing Society intends ultimately to undertake the building of new houses, but as a beginning it is proposed to purchase large houses and convert them into flats conveniently fitted up from the labour-saving point of view. Some of these flats will contain only two rooms and offices, and others three or four rooms; so that friends can join together, or professional women can have their relations living with them. The object of the scheme is not only to provide house room, but also to make it possible for women of small means to possess homes.

It is intended that the flats shall be fitted with pantries or kitchen (according to the size of the flats) so that cooking facilities will be available. At the same time a common dining-room will be provided in the basement where meals will be served at cost price. There will also, of course, be up-to-date hot water arrangements, and where space allows a small room will be fitted with simple laundry appliances.

The development of work before this Pioneer Housing Society is unlimited. Cottages can be built entirely according to women's ideas, or communal dwellings, or small homes at Welwyn Herts, the new Garden City where sites are available at a moderate rent, where low rates will offset railway fares, and where women could enjoy outdoor games and gardening, and possibly even farming on a small scale.

To be the "First" always implies an effort, and the courage to meet and overcome difficulties, but no difficulties should deter women from helping practically to solve the housing question. By building themselves, as it were, and not waiting for others to move and build for them, women will be taking one more step towards their rightful place in the human economy.

E. A. BROWNING.

A HOUSEHOLD DEGREE.

At the end of last Session the Senate of the University raised the status of the diploma given by the King's College Household and Social Science Department into that of a full diploma—a significant recognition of the value of scientific training for the elementary requirements of life, such as managing a household. A solid basis of chemistry, physics, economics, history, biology, and their broad application to such problems as flies, mosquitoes, weevils, cooking, laundry, housewifery, also physiology, bacteriology, hygiene, and their bearing upon nutrition, fuel, cleaning, furnishing, water, etc.—this sort of training has a particular value in the present unhealthy condition of Europe.

In an address given last Wednesday at the Minerva Café, High Holborn, Miss Vida Goldstein described herself as the pioneer woman parliamentary candidate for the British Empire. Women obtained the Federal vote in her native State of Victoria in 1902, the State vote being obtained later. Miss Goldstein was in America at the time, but on her return was unanimously proposed as woman candidate for the Federal Parliament. Miss Goldstein preferred to stand for the Senate rather than the House of Representatives, believing that by this means she could do better work. The prospect of a woman candidate for Parliament provoked immense excitement and interest all over Australia. Her programme included equal Marriage and Divorce; raising the age of marriage; equal nationalisation for men and women; equal pay in industry and in the Civil Service; abolition of the White Slave Traffic; international suffrage, as well as general political questions. In spite of a strong opposition party she polled 51,000 votes, 25 per cent. of the whole. In 1910 Miss Goldstein stood again for election. This time both men and women showed a greater interest in politics. The opposition was also much more violent because the political parties were getting more and more welded together into two opposing camps, Labour and Anti-Labour. On the second occasion Miss Goldstein polled 54,000 votes. The third election was in 1913. On this occasion Miss Goldstein stood for the House of Representatives, and polled 10,000 votes out of a necessary 17,000. In 1914 an extraordinary election took place, when Miss Goldstein stood again for the same place. War had just broken out, and Miss Goldstein on this fourth occasion stood as an anti-militarist. In spite of this she polled 11,000 votes. In 1917 she stood for the Senate a third time, again as an anti-militarist, and polled 8,000 votes. She was the only candidate who put the fundamental principles of militarism and the proper basis for peace before the electors. If the system of Proportional Representation had been in operation in Australia Miss Goldstein would undoubtedly have been elected long before. Miss Hodge, who helped Miss Goldstein in some of her elections, presided.

THE PUBLIC TRUSTEE.

The following letter, with which we find ourselves in cordial agreement, appeared in last Saturday's *Manchester Guardian*:—Why is there not a capable, businesslike, efficient woman, not wholly lacking in sympathy, in the office of the Public Trustee (and that of the Deputy Public Trustee in the northern area)? I ask this question as the result of my own experience. The majority of the cases dealt with by the Public Trustee obviously concern women and children, and although the relation is primarily financial it is not, and cannot and should not be, entirely so. The emoluments of the Public Trustee are derived from funds provided by the public, consisting of women as well as men, and why should they not have an official capable of appreciating and understanding their point of view? Very often matters are left to the discretion of the Public Trustee in which a woman's knowledge, experience, and intuition would be of the utmost value in saving an immense amount of unnecessary worry—I might almost say misery and also expense. There are, as every person of common sense must recognise, cases in which it is difficult to discuss details with a man. There are also circumstances to be weighed in connection with outlay on educational and social equipment in which a woman would certainly appreciate the values involved more readily than a man. The type of person I should suggest would be a woman of experience whose ideas have been broadened by contact with the world, with experience of life, considerable business ability, and, other things being equal, a married woman.—Yours, &c.,

JESSIE M. DRESCHFIELD.

Women's Freedom League.**Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.**

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General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS, W.F.L.**LONDON AND SUBURBS.****Tuesday, October 19.**—Public Meeting, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 8 p.m.**"Votes for Women under 30."**

Speakers: Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Miss

A. G. Hewitt, L.L.A., Miss Haslett,

Miss Dorothy Evans, M.A., Councillor

Jessie Stephen, Miss Richardson, Miss

Weston. Chair: Mrs. Despard.

Admission free. Reserved seats 1s.

Wednesday, October 20.—Public Meeting,

Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn,

W.C. 1. 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. M. W.

Nevinson, L.L.A., J.P. Subject: "The

League of Nations." Chairman: Miss

F. A. Underwood.

Wednesday, October 20.—Working Party for the "Fair,"

5 p.m. "Fair" Committee, 6 p.m. Minerva Café, 144, High

Holborn, W.C. 1.

Wednesday, October 27.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144,

High Holborn, W.C. 1. 3 p.m. Miss Lind-af-Hageby. Subject:

"Should Women Citizens Pursue Special Politics?" Chairman:

Mrs. Clarke.

Saturday, October 30.—144, High Holborn, W.C. 1. National

Executive Committee, 10 a.m.

Monday, November 1.—Halloween Party, Minerva Café, 144,

High Holborn, W.C. 7 p.m. Admission 1s.

Wednesday, November 3.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144,

High Holborn, W.C. 3 p.m. Speaker: Councillor Margaret

Hodge. Subject: "Popular Fallacies."

Saturday, November 6.—Procession to and Mass Meeting

in Trafalgar Square of Women's Organisations to demand

Equal Pay for Equal Work. See special notice.

Wednesday, November 10.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144,

High Holborn, W.C. 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss K. Raleigh.

Subject: "What St. Paul Really Said to Women." Chairman:

Mrs. Northcroft.

Saturday, November 13.—Clapham Jumble Sale, at Morris Hall,

Clapham. 3 p.m.

Friday, November 26, and Saturday, November 27.—Green,

White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

SCOTLAND.Friday, October 15.—**Edinburgh.** Public Meeting in Usher

Hall, organised by Women's Organisations, on "Child Outrage,"

to Protest against the inadequacy of the sentences on offenders,

and to demand a revision of the law on the subject. Speakers:

Commissioner Cox, of Salvation Army; Lady Rhondda, William

Graham, Esq., M.P., J. M. Hogge, Esq., M.P., and others.

Chairman: Councillor Mrs. Millar. Admission free.

WALES.Saturday, October 16.—**Newtown, Montgomery Boroughs.**

Gigantic Jumble Sale. Proceeds towards Branch and Head-

quarters Fund. Congregational Schoolroom. 2 p.m.

PROVINCES.Monday, October 25.—**Westcliff-on-Sea.** Purcell House (School

of Music), London Road. Speaker: Mrs. Cattell, on "Citizenship

and its Responsibilities." Chairman: Mrs. Newberry.

Monday, November 8.—**Westcliff-on-Sea.** Purcell House

(School of Music), London Road. Speaker: Dr. Maude Kerslake.

Subject to be announced later. Chairman: Miss Burnes.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday October 20.—Central London Parliament will meet

at Holy Trinity Hall, Kingsway, W.C. (adjoining Holborn

Restaurant) at 7.30 p.m., and every Wednesday.

Monday, November 1.—**Bethnal Green Women Citizens' Association,** 33, Blythe Street, E. Speaker: Miss Newsome. Subject:

"Equal Pay for Equal Work." 8 p.m.

Monday, November 22.—**Penge Congregational Church Women's Meeting.** Speaker: Miss Underwood. Subject: "The Need for Women Members of Parliament."**OUR HALLOWEEN PARTY.**

On Monday, November 1st, we are holding a Social Evening,

in the form of a Halloween Party. We expect all our Scotch

and Irish friends to turn up in full force, and we hope our

English friends will come and see what it is like. There will be

"dookin'" for apples, Halloween games, champers to eat,

fortunes to find, and all sorts of fun. The charge for admission

is only one shilling, and the fun starts at 7 o'clock in the

Minerva Café.

BRANCH NOTES.**WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.**

The opening Meeting of the session was held at Crowstone Hall, Westcliff, on Monday, October 4th, and took the form of a social. A very enjoyable musical programme had been prepared. Miss Brinson and Miss L. Davenport delighted their audience with well rendered solos, and Dr. Alastair Gibson gave some Scotch recitations and songs, which were very much enjoyed by all. The programme concluded with an amusing sketch by Mrs. Newberry and members of the Dickens Fellowship. During the interval refreshments were served, and the members present were invited to make purchases at the Literature and "White Elephant" stalls.

The Branch has decided to run a candidate for the Chalkwell Ward at the forthcoming election, and have nominated their Hon. Sec., Mrs. Stafford Bailey, as candidate. Mrs. Stafford Bailey was present at the Social, and spoke for a few minutes on the need of women on Municipal Councils, and asked all present to support her. This the audience enthusiastically promised to do.

A vote of thanks to the artistes was proposed by Miss Burnes, and seconded by Mrs. Nichols. The success of the gathering was largely due to the President, Mrs. Elvin, and to Miss Angrave, who acted as M.C.

Hon. Sec.—Mrs. STAFFORD BAILEY, 48, Argyll Road, Westcliff.

On Monday, October 11th, a meeting of the above Branch was held at Purcell House (School of Music), when Mrs. F. A. Underwood spoke to an enthusiastic gathering on "The Need for Women on Municipal Councils." Miss Underwood, in a very clear and helpful way, told us of the many different ways that women would be so useful on the Council, and several questions were asked before the proceedings closed. Mrs. Stafford Bailey, the Women's Freedom League prospective candidate for the Chalkwell Ward, said a few words in connection with her work in the forthcoming Election. Mrs. Elvin, our indefatigable President, was in the chair, and told us she had recently attended some of the Council meetings, and urged all women who could spare the time to be present at these meetings and make themselves acquainted with the work of their local Borough Council. New members were made, a quantity of Literature and VOTES sold, and a collection taken.

G. M. TELLING, Hon. Treasurer.

THE CENTRAL LONDON PARLIAMENT.

The opening sitting of the Autumn Session of the Central London Parliament was held at the Holy Trinity Hall, Kingsway, on Wednesday last. After the introduction of new members to the Speaker, the King's Speech was read. Never before has such an idealistic, revolutionary King's Speech been produced. As the Leader of the Opposition remarked later, the Government (a Labour one) is not modest, and it will have a session of hard work if it is to achieve all it has set out to do. It is proposed to give effect to the desires of Ireland, India, Egypt and Mesopotamia for independent government; arrangements are to be made for peace with Russia and the resumption of full trading facilities; a better educational scheme is to be introduced; the questions of housing, unemployment and the growth of injurious trade monopolies are all to be dealt with; the workers of the country are to be given a share in the management and control of industry with a view to the ultimate elimination of profit-making. In fact, anyone with a grievance should come to the Central London Parliament and obtain there the redress denied him at Westminster. Members of the Women's Freedom League are especially urged to join as, at present, the women in the Parliament are outnumbered by men.

THE DANCE.

Although it is still early in the year for dancing, a number of people came to the dance at Caxton Hall on October 2nd. Very few appeared in fancy dress, but a small parade was held, and prizes of boxes of chocolates were awarded for the best costumes, to Miss Freeman and Mr. G. van Raalte. From a social point of view, the dance was undoubtedly successful—the programme was well arranged and the music and refreshments delightful—but in order to make it as great a financial success as it was a social one, we are appealing to all members who were not able to be present to send 1s. each towards the expenses. We are very grateful to all the people who worked so hard in organising the dance; to Miss Ibbotson for painting posters to advertise it and for decorating the Hall; to the Minerva Café for the refreshments; and to the M.C., who is always harried on these occasions to change old dances for new, and new for old.

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

The League of the Church Militant has arranged a meeting to be held on October 22nd, at 3 p.m., in the Kursaal Hall (2), Southend, when Miss Maude Royden will speak on the Lambeth Resolutions on the Ministrations of Women in the Church. The Rev. E. A. Welch, the Rector of Southchurch, will be in the chair.

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Saturday, October 30th, at 2.30 p.m., Mortimer Halls,
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A. Yusuf Ali—"Educational Ideals in India"; Miss
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Evening: "The Maharani of Arakan"—One Act
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