

THE VOTE,
FEBRUARY 6, 1920.
ONE PENNY.

THE WEAVERS OF PEACE.
F. A. UNDERWOOD.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, FEB. 6, 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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DOES DR. MONTESSORI PREACH A NEW GOSPEL ?

The interest and enthusiasm which is now being evinced by women in matters educational was demonstrated at the Minerva Café on Friday evening, January 30th, on the occasion of a Debate arranged by the Women's Freedom League on the above topic.

Miss Agnes Dawson, President of the N.F.W.T., who occupied the chair, congratulated the League on having obtained two such gifted exponents of education, and the fact that many of the audience had been unable to obtain seats was sufficient evidence of the popularity of the subject. Some of them might be teachers, some parents, but all were citizens seeking after better methods for making the way clearer, brighter and purer for the younger generation to tread in.

Dr. Jessie White, Organising Secretary of the Montessori Society, who opened the debate, said the fact that Dr. Montessori was a scientific worker constituted her first claim to their admiration and esteem. To quote her own words: "I am not here to give you dogma, but to describe experiments," and it was for Dr. Montessori's method that

newness and originality

was claimed. With the advent of Dr. Montessori's teaching the school became the field of experiment, and one beneficial result had been the exclusion of children under five from the schools and the shortening of the lesson times. Instead of the old, unfruitful methods, Dr. Montessori had substituted her new method of providing stimuli and left the children free to react to them; the results of these reactions were recorded, and thus Dr. Montessori built up her system, learning from the children themselves what were the stimuli to which they reacted. The stimuli came from external objects, and the solid blocks with their replaceable cylinders constituted something corresponding to the "urge" of the child's nature, in the same way that particular kinds of flowers correspond to the "urge" of the bee towards honey. The bee seeks physical food and the child mental food to help it in developing and organising its mental powers. The immediate effect on the

child was that it exhibited patience and persistence and an ever-growing joy in its work, this condition being referred to as "psychical health," and if the other factors were present, food, fresh air and space, then the child's physical health was also improved. If this latter fact had been advertised, instead of the wrangling about fairy tales, and the spreading of the statement that Dr. Montessori's system was to allow the children to do what they liked, educational authorities everywhere would probably have enquired more thoroughly into the merits of the method.

Dr. Montessori believed that movement should serve the highest human functions, therefore movement should be used to develop the intellect and intelligence of the child and prevent fatigue; the quantity of work had been increased and fatigue lessened because of the part played by movement in the activities of the child. Schools were needed where teachers, having the necessary freedom from interference and knowledge, could form the correct environment, to which scientifically-trained observers might have access, so that a body of knowledge could be built up, and thus the technique of the method would be communicated.

Councillor Margaret Hodge said, although on the side of opposition, she wished to express her intense gratitude to Dr. Montessori for creating an educational revival. Dr. Montessori had preached no new gospel, but she had revived the work of

Pestalozzi and Froebel

at a time when we were tired of the reiteration of old truths and had begun to disregard the teaching which had meant so much in the middle of the nineteenth century.

It had been claimed that Dr. Montessori's method lessened fatigue, but the last thing the speaker would associate with infant school teaching was fatigue or overstrain. It was her opinion that the "insets" were intrinsically uninteresting and caused boredom in the child. Dr. Montessori had made the initial mistake of relying upon an apparatus and an extremely defective one, because it was originally devised by two doctors,

Messieurs Itard and Seguin, for the use of mentally deficient children. After the child had learned to put in the insets correctly there was no more educative force in the material; children should not be pinned down to concrete material, and particularly material capable of so little variety as the Montessori apparatus.

Froebel lived in an age when man had begun to reject the doctrine of original sin and to believe in the wonderful and infinite possibilities of the child, and Wordsworth wrote:—

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.

Surely when one starts with the idea that the child is divine more can be done for it than to begin with the subnormal child, and mould the work of the normal child on the same lines.

Dr. Montessori believed in sense-training, but there was a point beyond which the sense training of the young child became absolutely valueless, because it went too far in one direction. Froebel believed in play and also in imagination. Dr. Montessori did not believe, at least in the encouragement of this faculty. Charles Dickens said "knowledge does not form the mind, but the mind transforms knowledge"; and the happiest time of the child's life was in that transformation of the actual world into the

Ideal world

of faery lore obtained from stories. Dr. Montessori's children might become precise scientists in after life, but they would have lost infinitely through not being able to indulge in those happy daydreams of childhood that come from free play of the imagination. The lively impulses of play in children were, as in animals, the preparation for life; to deprive children of plays and stories would be doing a cruel wrong to childhood. When Froebel was quite an old man children clung to his coat-tails, because he told them stories, and the child's delight in stories must mean something very important to it.

A large number of the audience put questions and also took part in the debate which followed, and after the speakers had made their closing remarks a vote was taken, which resulted in a victory for the opposition. Votes of thanks were then passed, amid applause, to Dr. Jessie White and Miss Margaret Hodge for providing such an interesting and instructive evening.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Women Solicitors.

At a special general meeting of the Law Society, last Friday, the President, Mr. W. A. Sharpe, in answering a series of questions by Mr. Edward A. Bell as to the extent to which advantage has been taken by women of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act in relation to the solicitor profession, said since the Act was passed twelve women had registered articles of clerkship to solicitors. Of these four had been granted curtailment of the period of their articles on account, in three cases of holding University degrees, and in one case on account of having passed first-class in the London University Matriculation Examination. At the present moment three women had enrolled as oral students of the Law Society's classes, and one as a corresponding student.

Prospective Woman, M.P.

Miss Margaret Bondfield, who was one of the British delegates to the recent International Labour Congress in Washington, has been adopted by the Northampton Labour Party as candidate at the next Parliamentary election. It was as an employee that Miss Bondfield gained her first knowledge of labour conditions, and ever since those days she has worked steadily for their improvement. She is reputed to be among the very best women speakers in this country.

Women and City Companies.

Although most of the twelve great City companies and the sixty-three minor companies were founded by women as well as men, interested in the industries they represented, it is apparently the exception in the present day to admit women to membership. A woman has recently been admitted to the Spectacle Makers' Company, one of the City companies which requires their members to have passed an examination; the Company of Turners, whose craft dates back to Roman times, have enrolled one woman, a master turner who did important work in munition factories; and Lady Wolseley is one of the women members of the ancient Gardeners' Company. Women, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, have always been entitled to the freedom of the Clothworkers' and Skinners' Company, although in the latter case the right goes by paternity. No woman is as yet a member of the Apothecaries' Society, in spite of the fact that a good many women doctors are licentiates of the Society, which carries with it a right of membership.

Women Clerks' Deputation.

The women clerks have at last been successful in their persistent efforts to see Mr. Lloyd George and lay their case before him. The Prime Minister has promised to look into the matter of differentiation in the treatment of women and ex-Service men other than those who were in the firing line. He thought it was possible that the practice of giving one month's notice to discharged clerks should be put into operation immediately, and has further promised that an inquiry shall be made into the question of equal rates of pay for men and women clerks.

Women as Builders.

The Women's Industrial League is organising all women in all occupations, and asks those whose need is not so great to become members for the sake of other women less fortunately placed. It is working to enlarge the field of women's activities. As the serious housing shortage is caused largely by a shortage of labour, the League is working to secure the admission and re-admission of women to the building industries, and so provide more labour to solve the housing difficulty.

A Comprehensive Bill!

A Bill which would place women on an equal political footing with men has been placed before the French Chamber by Deputy Jules Guesde, the prominent Socialist who became a member of the Coalition Government early in the war. Although far-reaching in its aim, the Bill is brief and to the point. "All legislative measures establishing the inferiority of woman in regard to man are forthwith abolished. Women are allowed all the advantages of those laws which heretofore have applied to men only. All future laws shall apply to the human being without sex distinction."

A Suffrage Pioneer.

The death is announced from Berlin of Henriette Goldschmidt, the champion of the emancipation of women. In 1865 she organised the General Association of German Women, and in 1872 she founded the first high school for the training of teachers in the kindergarten system.

Egyptian Women.

A women's local Committee of the Egyptian Delegation has been formed to work for the independence of Egypt and the emancipation of Egyptian women.

THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY.

MRS. DESPARD

will Lecture on

"The Ethics of Diet,"

At the Prince Henry Room, 17 Fleet St., Wednesday, February 11th, at 7.30.

Admission Free.

Grand Dance and Whist Drive at Holborn Hall, February 27th. Tickets (3/6), and particulars of Maurice Webb, 8 John Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.2.

AFRICAN HEROINES.

Mrs. Christine Forsyth, who died last week at Rothesay, Bute, aged 76 years, was the subject of a recent biography by W. P. Livingstone (Hodder and Stoughton), which described her as the "loneliest woman in South Africa." Born in 1844, she volunteered for mission work in South Africa in connection with the United Presbyterian Church, and was appointed as teacher at a girls' school at Emgwali, Kaffirland. Three years later she returned to Scotland and married Allan Forsyth, a mining prospector, but, curiously enough, went back again with him to South Africa, where they resided at Lydenburg, a mining town in the Transvaal. A year later Mr. Forsyth met his death by drowning whilst trying to ford a stream on horseback, and his widow offered herself again to the Presbyterian Church. At her request she was appointed to Xolobo, an isolated mission station in Fingoland, South East Africa, there to work amongst a

wild and dissolute tribe

whom no civilised person had yet been able to tame. Here she lived for thirty years in a two-roomed cottage, carrying on her educational and missionary work, and living the same life in many respects as the Fingoes themselves. During all this time she never moved outside a radius of 20 miles from her mission house, seldom saw a white face, and was practically unknown to the majority of South African missionaries, even to those of her own church. When, owing to increasing age and ill-health, she returned home to Scotland in 1916, she left Xolobo a civilised community of sober habits, and a fully organised mission station with a fine church building and day school.

The indomitable spirit which had carried her through 30 years of loneliness and uphill fighting against untoward conditions was paramount to the last. An operation becoming necessary, she was removed to the local hospital, where it was thought inadvisable to proceed as it was feared she could not stand the chloroform. Mrs. Forsyth, however, insisted on the operation being carried out

without anaesthetics,

and this was done. She survived the ordeal, but died later in the hospital.

Her name, together with that of her equally great missionary contemporary, Mary Slessor of Calabar, deserves to be commemorated in the roll of women pioneers in the upward history of the race.

Mary Slessor, also a Scotswoman, worked in early womanhood in a factory, and first went out to Calabar in 1876, where she undertook the solitary supervision of the Okoyon people. From the first hour she set foot in the country she constituted herself the fearless champion of the women, sheltering and protecting them throughout every incident of their cheerless lives. Barbarous customs connected with the gross inequality between the sexes were gradually dropped under her vehement opposition. Wife-beating collapsed. The ordeal by burning oil, a favourite test of alleged infidelity, was abolished. Sickly children, contrary to African usage, were coaxed back into life.

Girls and women

eventually received the same secular and religious advantages as the men and boys, and under Miss Slessor's direction were encouraged to develop themselves to their utmost capacity.

A few years after she had settled amongst the Okoyon, Miss Slessor heard rumours of the expected appointment of a Vice-Consul for the district. Fearing that the people were not ready for this development, she begged Sir Claud Macdonald, then Governor of Southern Nigeria, to rescind the order. His reply was brief but practical. He made Miss Slessor Consul instead. She held this position from that time onwards,

and for many years was the only woman Consul in the British Empire. When, later, native courts were established, she was given the charge of the one in the Okoyon district, and some years afterwards occupied a similar position in the Court House at Ikotobong, on the Cross River. Her unique powers of arbitration have already been told; and now that these were officially recognised, her fame as a dispenser of justice spread far and wide. People came long distances for advice, and even the Government applied to her in moments of perplexity.

Miss Slessor, before her death in 1915, completed nearly 40 years of unparalleled physical and mental labour in Southern Nigeria.

D. M. N.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

Based on the Bill drafted by Mr. Clarke Hall, two Bills are now ready to be brought before Parliament—a "Bill to make provision for illegitimate children" of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and the "Bastardy Bill, 1920," of the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child. The provisions of these Bills are very similar.

The mother is required, under penalty, when registering the birth of her illegitimate child, to fill up a form giving the name of the father, with the names of witnesses, to prove facts. The Registrar then serves upon the putative father a form, which he is required, under penalty, to return, either denying paternity or admitting it and agreeing to provide for the child. The form returned by the father is then given by the Registrar to the Collecting Officer appointed under the Affiliation Orders Act, 1914, or to the Clerk to the Justices or other person approved by them. The Collecting Officer then acts in the interests of the child, and either helps the mother, or himself takes out a summons against a putative father who denies paternity or neglects adequate provision for his child. If paternity is proved the Court will make an order against the father, and the amount to be paid till the child is 16 is left to the Justices' discretion. If paternity is not proved and an order cannot be enforced against the father or mother, the child may be maintained and educated by the State. If paternity is admitted and a satisfactory offer of maintenance made by the father an order may be made by the Court without the attendance of either parent. When a mother, before the birth of her child, takes proceedings against the putative father and he admits his paternity, the Court may order maintenance of the mother and the expenses of her confinement.

The Collecting Officer may start proceedings at any time after the birth of the child. When paternity has been proved the name of the father is forwarded to the Registrar and added to the register. Subsequent intermarriage of the registered father and mother legitimises the child. All illegitimate children to be considered wards of the Children's Court in the area in which they are for the time being resident, who may appoint guardians and make any arrangements for their welfare.

The most contentious point in these Bills is the compulsion upon the mother to disclose the name of the father. Much may be said for and against this obligation, but, on the whole, the interests of women and children will be best served by leaving it open to the mother to give or to withhold the father's name.

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THE VOTE.

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EDITORIAL

The Editor is responsible for unsigned articles only. Articles,
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THE WEAVERS OF PEACE.

WOMEN AND THE PEACE TREATY.

In olden times the chief occupation of women among the different branches of the Teutonic race was weaving, and in our own early poetry the metaphor usually employed for a woman is "a weaver of peace." Woman is the great constructive force, and after five years of unexampled horror and destruction her work must lie in the direction of weaving a lasting Peace which alone can safeguard humanity from ever-increasing destruction. In most countries women are now a political force, and they must use their power for international as well as national aims. For good or ill, Great Britain can no longer maintain a "splendid isolation" from European or world politics. In signing the Treaty of Versailles, Great Britain has made herself responsible for the future conditions of Europe. Every woman in this country, and especially every woman voter, should make herself familiar with the provisions of this Treaty, which certainly should be, and probably will be, the chief point at issue at the next General Election. Our foreign relations and foreign politics must no longer be the monopoly of members of the diplomatic service; the average man and the average woman must gain a proper knowledge of them and take an intelligent interest in them, if we are to do away with

secret diplomacy

and the first thing they have to master is the Treaty which has just been signed, and the probable effect which its provisions will have on the future Peace of the world. They cannot learn these matters from the British Press; they must study the draft of the Treaty itself, and they should also agitate for an easy access in all our principal towns to the newspapers of all countries. In this way they would get first-hand knowledge of the point of view of men and women in other countries.

In the Election manifesto signed by Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law on November 22nd, 1918, we read: "Our first task must be to conclude a just and lasting Peace, and so to establish the foundations of a New Europe that occasion for future wars may be for ever averted."

After the Election Mr. Lloyd George went to the Paris Peace Conference, and, later, was one of the signatories to the present Treaty. There is a growing feeling in the country that this Treaty ought to be revised because its provisions cannot possibly be carried out. Mr. J. M. Keynes, C.B., who was temporarily attached to the British Treasury during the war, and was their official representative at the Peace Conference up to June 7th, 1919, maintains this point of view in "The Economic Consequences of the Peace,"* which is a striking analysis of the Treaty and a scathing commentary on some of its provisions. His pen pictures of the Council of Four—Clemenceau, who had one illusion (France), one disillusion (mankind, including Frenchmen and his colleagues), the Prime Minister, and the slow-minded President who "was like a Non-conformist minister, perhaps a Presbyterian," and Signor Orlando—are full of interest. His statement

that Clemenceau alone amongst the Four could speak and understand both French and English, Orlando knowing only French, and the Prime Minister and the President only English; and that Orlando and the President had no direct means of communication is astounding; and we wonder that, under those circumstances, any agreement was arrived at.

We recommend, unreservedly, that this book should be read and re-read by every woman who has at heart the cause of the future Peace of Europe, not because we believe that some of the views Mr. Keynes expresses cannot be challenged, but because this book is the work of an honest, well-informed and cultured thinker who makes no statement of fact without advancing chapter and verse for his authorities. He dedicates it "to the formation of the general opinion of the future." His purpose is to show that what he calls the

Carthaginian Peace

is not practically right or possible; that Germany has not the capacity to pay what is demanded by the Reparations Commission; that for a long time to come her imports must exceed her exports; that her productivity is less and her standard of life lowered; and that for many years the whole country will simply be in the position of bankrupt estates administered by her creditors. He warns his readers that "Men will not always die quietly. For starvation, which brings to some lethargy and a helpless despair, drives other temperaments to the nervous instability of hysteria, and a mad despair." He reminds them that before the war we sent more exports to Germany than to any other country, except India, and bought more from her than from any other country, except the United States. The plain fact is, in Mr. Keynes' opinion, the world cannot afford to have a prostrate Germany, a dying Austria, and a blockaded Russia torn with civil strife. The currencies of all countries are precarious. Germany owes a large sum to the Allies; the Allies owe a large sum to Great Britain—France owing her Allies more than four times the indemnity which in the defeat of 1870 she paid Germany—and Great Britain owes a large sum to the United States.

At the General Election candidates maintained that Germany must pay the whole costs of the war—pensions and separation allowances included. Mr. Keynes' view is that this is a wild impossibility; and that it would be sheer madness for any country to place any dependence upon such a claim being made good. He is evidently of the opinion that the Council of Four made a chaos and called it Peace, and suggests

the following remedies

for clearing up the present difficulties: (1) Revision of the Treaty; (2) The settlement of Inter-Allied indebtedness by its mutual cancellation; (3) An international loan and reform of the currency; (4) The revival of trade relationships between the Central Powers and Russia.

The important thing is not that women should endorse Mr. Keynes' views; but that they should make themselves fully acquainted with the provisions of the Treaty and should give consideration to the criticisms of this writer and of all other well-informed critics. British women are now electors, and are responsible for these provisions and their effect upon the Peace of the world. The old order of things has ended in chaos and ruin, and women must use their brains, energy, and sympathy to alter the course of events which led humanity to the brink of despair. A new order can only be founded on intellectual conviction. When women have that conviction we feel sure they will weave the lasting Peace of the World. F. A. UNDERWOOD.

*"The Economic Consequences of the Peace." By John Maynard Keynes, C.B. (Macmillan.) Price 8s. 6d. net. (postage 6d.). Can be obtained from this office.

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HOUSING REFORM.

Some suggested remedies.

Let us hope that the judge quoted in last week's VOTE was right when he complained that "It is the woman who is always the difficulty in the working of this (Housing) Act. She wants this, that and the other, and is never satisfied." The trouble in the past has been that women have been too easily satisfied, or their discontent too inarticulate where housing matters were concerned. When one reviews the housing of the past, numberless inconveniences spring to mind. The miners' houses in the North, consisting of a "but" and "ben," each occupied by separate families, the man or men of necessity having their daily bath on return from their grimy work, in a tub in the only living room; the long dark passages with the odd step in the darkest corner to trip the unwary and tire out the initiated; the basement house with its constant artificial light, and attic with its treadmill of steps, and a host of

similar grievances.

The difficulty of obtaining even such hovels by the woman with a large family is notorious, and the following true story illustrates this dilemma. A woman called at many agencies, but could not get a house as she had a large family. On one occasion there was a churchyard opposite an agent's premises, so she sent the children in to it. "Have you any children?" asked the agent. "Yes," replied the woman, "but they are all in the churchyard." She got the house. Such conditions even the learned judge might admit warrants some dissatisfaction.

But all this now is a tale of the past. To-day we are building houses fit for heroes, and making ample provision for the big family, whilst in regard to labour-saving devices the working woman housewife will soon have nothing to do but twirl her thumbs after a quarter-of-an-hour's daily housework! We have had the *Daily Express*, and now the *Daily Mail* Exhibitions; speeches by Premier and statesmen; Commissions and Committees; shoals of literature from Government departments; Acts and amended Acts of Parliament; and, most important of all on the practical side, we have a Minister of Health who has issued model plans of houses as guides for the future. A contemplation of some of these plans makes one realise the vital necessity not only for women architects, but for compulsory measures to force local authorities to have women on their Housing Committees. No intelligent woman could have passed, not to mention designed, some of these "model" plans. In the largest permitted under the subsidy, with four bedrooms, there is no lavatory or conveniences for washing, or clearing away waste water upstairs; all water has to be carried up and down, as in the most primitive conditions.

Six-foot bedrooms.

without fireplaces and no cupboard room worthy of the name are usual. Downstairs, the same type of "model" planning prevails. Six foot by eight is considered large enough for a working kitchen containing cooking stove, sink, copper for week's washing, etc.; doors are placed so that when one is opened you are in grave danger of being "bumped into" by another, and on one of the plans the architect is 300 ft. out in his floor space. The defects in the houses containing two bedrooms—a size that most local authorities have refused to pass for some time—are even more gross.

The Minister of Health has failed, his architects have failed, his local Committees and machinery have been found wanting. What, then, is the remedy? It is easy to condemn and criticise, but no useful purpose is served unless we can at least point a way out. There is but one answer. Give the women a chance. Do not confine women's energies to inspecting and reporting after the houses are completed. Appoint a woman Minister of Health, or, if that office is already overburdened, a woman Minister or Director of Housing;

increase the supply of women architects; see that women, in at least equal numbers with men, are on all Housing Committees. Part of the duties of such Housing Committees, when new houses or rearrangement of old ones was under consideration, should be to send a deputation of women to inspect where similar buildings are in occupation, and so find out what works out best, both in practice and theory. If there is a shortage of material, open up all brickfields, even if they interfere with a squire's hunting; stop all less important building of business premises and factories where present accommodation is adequate for their needs; and in training schemes fit men and women for spheres of labour where there is a real shortage, instead of crowding already superfluous occupations. Until then women will remain filled with that Divine Discontent which is seeking the highest for all, and peace cannot come until it is accomplished.

ANNA MUNRO.

MR. ASQUITH & WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

It is pleasing to record that Mr. Asquith, our erstwhile opponent, endorsed a full equality programme for women at a women's meeting at Paisley last week. He stated that after the experiences in the war he became satisfied that it was impossible to refuse women the vote upon the same terms and subject in all respects to the same conditions as they gave it to men.

Further, "there ought to be a complete opening of all callings, professions, businesses, trades, including our Civil Service, to women upon the same terms as men. It is impossible to justify the erection of artificial obstacles to the entrance of women into professions and trades for which they are qualified as compared with men, and we may be quite sure in the long run the community will benefit. What we are asking for is the open door, free entrance into the arena, and then free competition within it."

After referring to the fact that we have now a woman Member of Parliament, Mr. Asquith said it was more than absurd that there should be any difficulty in women attaining places upon the bench of Justices, and, if necessary, upon the judicial Bench itself. He thought there was one thing which was perhaps of even greater importance to the working women of the country, and that was the conditions of employment.

"I venture to lay down as a sound rule," he said, "and one as certainly in accordance with Liberal principles, that with regard to employment, the same conditions and the same occupational rates, whether it be in public or private employment, should be given entirely irrespective of sex. Where you have employment in which men and women can equally take their part it is absolutely impossible to justify a discrimination as regards employment and rates of wages in favour of one sex or the other."

We admit without hesitation that we could not have stated our case more clearly; and we do not mean to be ungenerous when we say that we wish Mr. Asquith had arrived at these conclusions at a somewhat earlier date. But, "better late than never"; and if Mr. Asquith succeeds in his contest we shall look forward to his championship of the Rights of Women on the floor of the House of Commons!

MASS MEETING

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The Viscountess Astor, M.P. The Rt. Hon. Sir Donald Maclean, K.B.E., M.P.
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THE VOTE

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Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

OUR WEDNESDAYS.

On January 28th, we were indebted to Miss Raleigh for a most interesting lecture on "Animals in Ancient Times," as a preliminary to a further lecture on "The Rights of Animals in Modern Times." The speaker said that the question of the rights of animals in the present day was a crucial one; to understand its significance we must adopt a sensitive mental attitude towards animals, and this could best be attained by a study of their lives in ancient times. Folk tales showed the estimation in which animals were held by primitive man, who was in closer contact with them than we could be. "Fairy" tales laid stress on the intelligence of animals. "The Four Musicians," "The Frog Prince," and "Puss in Boots" all displayed great sagacity, while the "White Cat" was even so enterprising as to have her household services performed by hands without bodies! What modern housewife would not welcome this innovation? Their moral qualities were highly developed; gratitude for the least service was constantly shown, and the "Beast," in his behaviour towards "Beauty" and her father even rose to heights of generosity.

Animals were frequently represented as guardians of treasure, and as being powerful in magic. These qualities (which made an obvious appeal to primitive folk) probably led to animal-worship. The worship of animals in early times was extremely widespread, and was found as a part of many religious systems; it existed in some forms to the present day. In Greece, Demeter was identified with many animals of the fields—the horse, cow, pig, etc. Examples were found in India, Africa and America, the totems of the North American Indian tribes being particularly well known. The sacred animal was safe from attack by members of its tribe, except on special occasions, when it was killed and eaten sacrificially. This existed in a debased form even in our own day in country districts where the harvest supper consisted of cakes made in the shapes of animals.

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BRANCH NOTES.

ASHFORD.

We had an excellent meeting at the South Ashford Adult School last Tuesday, when Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck gave an address on "Russia." A good number turned up, in spite of the pouring wet afternoon.

RYE.

It is not often that a pouring wet night will produce as many people as turned up at the Tea and Lecture held at the Baptist Schoolroom last Tuesday evening. Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck gave an instructive address on what is going on in Russia at the moment. We warmly thank all those who helped with the tea, particularly Mrs. Blackman, Mrs. Southerden, Mrs. Spears, Mrs. Joiner, Mrs. Hook, Mrs. Wells, Miss Ellis, and Mrs. Cory. The Organiser is glad to be able to report that the weekly sale of THE VOTE has been very kindly undertaken by Mrs. Joiner. A Committee Meeting will be held at 4, High Street next Tuesday, when arrangements will be made to have a Mock Election in February.

BEXHILL.

It is with very great regret that we report the resignation of Mrs. Winter Perry as hon. secretary. She has been a real friend to the cause, and we are sorry to hear that she is unable to "carry on" owing to ill-health. A General Meeting will be called shortly, when we hope to find someone willing to take her place.

HASTINGS.

The Organiser has been away from this Branch lately owing to pressure of work elsewhere. She is going back to it now, and hopes that members will help in the scheme of work she is going to lay before them.

Organiser—Miss WHITE, Magazine House, Winchelsea.

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