

THE VOTE,
APRIL 30, 1920.
ONE PENNY.

OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 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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OUR OPEN COLUMN.

WOMEN AND INTERNATIONALISM.

Interview with Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby has been adopted as a prospective Liberal candidate for the borough of Richmond. She has already stood for the Ladywood Division of Birmingham in the Election of 1918, where she contested a Chamberlain as opponent, and though defeated, gleaned considerable political experience, which is being carefully garnered for the future.

A representative of THE VOTE, who recently obtained an interview with Mrs. Ashby in her pretty home at Putney, during an all too short interval between her opening of a Women's Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Richmond, and preparing for a political dinner, found her full of enthusiasm over women's future prospects all the world over. "Internationalism is the keynote of the politics of the future," said Mrs. Ashby. "I have had perhaps somewhat unique opportunities of realising its importance with regard to women for I have come into contact with so many nationalities in all parts of the world. I have attended as a delegate at nearly all the meetings of

suffragist leader. It held its first meeting at Berlin—a memorable gathering which I well recollect was the means of rousing my earliest interest in the subject of internationalism—and was followed by others of equal

significance for the Women's Cause, at Copenhagen, Amsterdam, London, Genoa, Stockholm, The Hague, Budapest, Rome, etc. The last of these gatherings was held in 1914, just before war broke out, and I am now looking forward to the first reunion, in peace time at Geneva next June.

"Besides acting as delegate to these various countries, I have also toured Holland as a Suffrage Lecturer under the auspices of the Dutch Suffrage Society, visiting Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Liège, and other important cities. I attended the famous dinner given at Paris to Maria Véronne, the first woman barrister, and, with the Countess of Aberdeen and Miss Margery Fry, I was one of the three British women delegates at the Peace Conference appointed to put the case of women before the Inter-



national Labour Commission and the League of Nations."

"What do I think of the women of the countries

I have visited? Well, of all those I have met in my travels I feel I must award the palm to the Swedish women. As you know, the countries of Scandinavia are in front of all the other European countries with regard to social and political progress, and though Norwegian and Danish women can hold their own anywhere, the Swedish women, to my mind, lead the way, not only in absolute efficiency in domestic matters, but in their keen interest in outside affairs, and high standard of living. German women, too, have made enormous progress since the war, but everything over there is just now in such a seething commotion that it is difficult for other countries to distinguish what is really permanent in the new constitution, and what is merely window-dressing. Time only can determine what part German women will play in the politics of the future. The women of France are somewhat disappointing I feel. The Napoleonic system of bureaucracy has ruined individual political life in France. Local government there is in the hands of permanent officials, so that it is impossible for the French people, either men or women, to take any active share in local or central politics, however personally eager they might be. That is why the question of Women's Suffrage in France hangs fire so to-day. Frenchwomen's political societies can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and I do not believe that any one Suffrage Association in France contains more than perhaps 300 members.

"As regards my own interest in politics, this began at a very early age, when I helped my father, who stood as Liberal candidate for East Grinstead, Sussex. After that I went to Newnham, where I took the classical tripos, and from there passed on to the secretaryship of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. I am still connected with this Society as a member of their National Executive, and am also honorary secretary of the London branch of the National Council of Women. I have done a good deal of political speaking on the Education Act, and various Liberal measures. I am very interested in Poor Law work, and am Vice-Chairman of the Wandsworth Board of Guardians. I have agreed to stand for Richmond because I feel that it is so very important there should be as many women as possible in Parliament to push the interests of women and explain their point of view. I call myself an Independent Liberal because I agree with this particular party on the whole, and I do not believe in women standing as Independents only. But first and foremost I am out to further the interests of my own sex, so I do hope other women, besides those of definitely Liberal views, will be willing to vote for me."

VOTES FOR YOUNG WOMEN—SHELVED.

The Amending Bill to the Representation of the People Act, by which it was proposed to secure votes for women on the same terms as men, has been "shelved" by the Standing Committee, and has now no chance of being considered by Parliament this session. When the Committee assembled last week Sir Frederick Banbury moved its adjournment. Sir George Younger seconded this adjournment, advancing the novel reason that as the Government were unable to find facilities for private Members' Bill it would only be waste of time to proceed with this Bill. Why, we ask, in the name of common-sense, did not the Government say so sooner, and prevent what we must call fooling with the Members' time and the country's money on so many Committee meetings and reports? The least that all women suffragists can now demand is that the Government itself shall immediately bring in a Bill to enfranchise women on the same terms as men and to pass it into law without further delay.

PLUMAGE BILL.—The Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Bill comes up for its second reading in the House of Commons on April 30th. As women are the principal wearers of the plumage affected by the Bill, it concerns the credit of women to make it clear that they heartily approve of and entirely support the movement to put a stop to this cruel traffic.

IN PARLIAMENT.

The Budget and High Prices.

In 1895 Mr. Gladstone apologised for his National Budget of £100,000,000, which financed vast schemes of social reform, many of which were thought to be ahead of the times. This year Mr. Austen Chamberlain presents us with a Budget for £1,400,000,000, imposing new taxes to the amount of £198,230,000. The Budget proposals were discussed in the House of Commons last week, but none of the speeches convinced us that we were likely to get good value for our money. We agree with *Ways and Means*, which says: "Prices rise and continue to rise, and there is no apparent cessation in the rate. The Budget perpetuates these evils, and brings us nearer to the day of the inevitable crash." It further reports: "The new Food Controller has visited the London Docks and found mutton which has been in store for eighteen months, and other classes of food with which we are equally over-stocked. Not only are the dock warehouses crammed full of food which we cannot eat, but the rivers and docks are full of ships which cannot be unloaded. A charge of £3,000 or £4,000 for demurrage upon a ship which cannot be dealt with is a usual everyday item in the shipper's accounts in these times. All this money goes on to the price of commodities. If our 18-months-old mutton were in the hands of a private merchant it would be dumped upon the market at any price that it would fetch. It would bring down the price of all other mutton, and the price would certainly not be more than sixpence a pound. But now Mr. McCurdy, instead of protecting the consumer, has to protect the State, and so he is blocking up our ports with unwanted nationalised food and, following the example of the worst of the trusts, dribbling it on to the market at a fictitious price."

Income Tax: War Widows.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL SURTEES asked the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER if war widows will come under the same heading as single persons whose taxable income starts at £150 instead of the much higher figure of husband and wife; and whether special relief will be given to those widows who have one or more sons returned from the war who, by reason of wounds or disablement, are unable to maintain themselves and are being wholly or partly maintained by the widowed mother?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Under the Budget proposals the increased exemption limit and abatement allowances in the case of a married couple are not applicable either to a widower or a widow. A deduction of £25 from the taxpayer's assessable income will be made in respect of any relative named by him who is incapacitated from maintaining himself and whose income from all sources does not exceed £25 a year.

Women's Central Advisory Committee.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER KENWORTHY asked the Prime Minister whether there is a body known as the Women's Central Advisory Committee for the selection of women magistrates in existence; if so, under what law or Act of Parliament was this body set up; what are its powers; what are the qualifications for its members; and why is there such a body for the selection of women magistrates and not for the selection of men magistrates?

MR. BONAR LAW: In February last the Lord Chancellor invited the assistance of certain ladies to act in Committee for the purpose of advising him in the selection of women as Justices of the Peace. Its members have been selected because, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, they are best qualified to advise him.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER KENWORTHY: Will the right hon. gentleman reply to the last part of my question?

MR. BONAR LAW: It rests with the Lord Chancellor.

The Serbian Legation has arranged A MEMORIAL SERVICE for The Hon. Mrs. Haverfield in Southwark Cathedral; Saturday, May 1st, 3 p.m.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD. A War Office Precedent.

Local Government Campaign.

The Women's Local Government Society is preparing a big educational campaign to rouse the majority of the women of the country to their responsibilities as citizens. The number of women at present serving on County Councils in England and Wales is 47. There are 132 women Town Councillors, 70 Urban District Councillors, and 263 Rural District Councillors. Women Guardians number 2,063, including 263 returned as Rural District Councillors, and there are 142 women serving on London Metropolitan Borough Councils. Nevertheless, much spade work still remains to be done. In Yorkshire there are only 6 women councillors; in the whole of Wales only 15 women rural district councillors, 1 woman county councillor, and 2 women town councillors; whilst in all Scotland there are only 3 women town councillors, and no women county councillors.

Housewives and Politics.

The Housewives' Association at Sydney recently waited for hours in the lobby of the Federal House in order to interview Mr. Hughes and protest against the increased cost of sugar. When the Prime Minister said that this was inevitable the women claimed that they ought to be consulted in such matters, and it was agreed that they should have representation on the Conference which is to consider the causes of industrial unrest. The wives of the extremists who are advocating direct action to secure a five-day working week are also bestirring themselves and insisting that hotels shall be closed on Saturdays if no work is done, so that wages may not be spent in them.

Single Life in France.

The much-discussed bachelor tax has now been passed by the Chamber, after a number of amusing speeches for and against its various provisions. The tax increases the normal income-tax by 25 per cent., and will be levied on men and women alike who have passed their thirtieth year, but no tax will be payable by those whose yearly income is less than 6,000 francs. The same tax will be payable by divorced persons of both sexes, but not by widows and widowers. Married people who have been married two years on January 1st of each fiscal year, and who have no children, will also be liable. Bachelors disabled in the war are to obtain exemption.

Woman Property Manager.

The Woods and Forests Departments have appointed a trained woman property manager for the Crown Estates in the vicinity of Park Crescent and Park Square. Her assistants are two University women, and they carry out to the letter and in the spirit the principles laid down by the late Miss Octavia Hill. Miss Hill believed in the personal relationship between the manager of working class property and the tenant, and that the proof of such property management was the personal collection of the rents in the home by educated trained women.

Press Conference Innovation.

Miss M. F. Billington, of the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*, will represent the Society of Women Journalists at the meeting of the Imperial Press Conference in Ottawa during August, and will be the guest of the Canadian Government with the other delegates on the tour through the Dominions that is being arranged. This is the first time that women have taken any part in the Conference.

Education by Film.

The Ealing Education Committee has rented one of the local cinema theatres, and on certain days the children, in charge of their teachers, are to visit the theatre, when films of an educational nature are shown. These are selected by a committee of the head teachers, and supplementary lessons in school will be given on the subjects filmed. Five hundred school children will visit the cinema each week.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD. A War Office Precedent.

The War Office which has always brushed aside civil women dentists in its usual high and mighty style, recently asked the London School of Lady Dental Mechanics to supply a number of women dental mechanics to join the Rhine Army. The three available women, Miss M. Watson, Miss E. Bilson and Miss D. Bach readily volunteered and will go out as Section leaders under the Red Cross for six months service at Cologne. It is to be noted that the terms 47/6 a week and £8 uniform allowance compare unfavourably with the current rates in civilian employment.

Women as Articled Clerks.

Women have secured a complete victory in Chancery Lane. The Council of the Law Society have resolved that all the exemptions and concessions which belong to men who are articled clerks shall now be equally enjoyed by women. An articled clerk who has been an ordinary clerk for ten years is entitled to be admitted after three years' service under articles instead of five. Several women who have been serving as ordinary clerks in solicitors' offices are obtaining their articles.

Women Students at Gray's Inn.

A recent correspondent in a London evening paper has drawn attention to the shortage of housing in Gray's Inn, due, it is alleged, not to the pluralism of male tenants, but to the invasion of women law students which has taken place since the war. The Inn has long ceased to be used by barristers for practising purposes, the lower floors being now given up almost entirely to solicitors and a sprinkling of architects, whilst the upper ones are nearly all occupied by women students.

ELECTIONS at BUENOS AIRES.

During the past week Doctor Brunhilde Wien, of Buenos Aires, on her way to the Congress at Geneva, has visited the Women's Freedom League and other women's organisations in London, interesting us all in the struggle of the women of the Argentine Republic for votes for women. Quite recently, at the time of the elections at Buenos Aires the women suffragists there organised a great suffrage campaign, in which university women, women journalists, women employers, working women, and women of all social ranks worked zealously together, and on the day of these elections put up women candidates, among them an Independent, Dr. Julieta Lauteri, and a Socialist, Senora Alcira Beron de Astrada. They succeeded in getting women to vote for them, to place their papers in separate ballot boxes, and secured the presence of women inside the polling booths, without the special permission of the Chief of Police but with the kindly indulgence of the ordinary policeman and of those in charge of the tables. Every elector who went to the poll knew that there were women who ardently desired the vote in Buenos Aires, and many of them wished the women all good luck, and more than one man exclaimed, "After all, you women are only asking for a right!"

When the result of the poll was made known, it was found that 3,607 women had voted. We warmly congratulate our fellow women suffragists in Buenos Aires on their enterprise and zeal in our common cause, and we sincerely hope that it will not be long before the women of the Argentines are enfranchised on equal terms with men.

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THE VOTE.

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 FRIDAY, APRIL 30th, 1920.

EDITORIAL

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

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OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League was held at Caxton Hall last Saturday, and was attended by delegates from our branches in various parts of England, Scotland and Wales. Mrs. Schofield Coates (of Middlesbrough) presided, and said that it was a matter for congratulation that we now had a Woman M.P., Women J.P.s, and that women were eligible to become lawyers and jurors. She pointed out that during the past year the Women's Freedom League had missed no opportunity of pressing forward women's claims in the interests of the true development of humanity. She insisted that there was still a great need for such an organisation as ours, which was quick to take action against injustice to women and which stood outside political parties whilst influencing all, because it had members both inside and outside those parties. Many barriers had yet to be removed before women secured complete emancipation. Unfortunately, men continued to think on the old lines—the Pre-War Practices (Restoration) Act was a concrete example of this old way of thinking. Women were being turned out daily from occupations in which they had done excellently in order to satisfy organised men who demanded that men should be privileged in the world of Labour. The same bias was shown in the reports of the Commissions on the Civil Service and in the fixing of teachers' salaries. For obvious reasons, this position was not being fought by any of the big political organisations, and the matter was likely to become even more acute in the near future. The Women's Freedom League, therefore, had much strenuous work in prospect before all the artificial barriers restricting the full development of women's powers and their opportunities were broken down. Mrs. Coates added that the League's prestige and efforts were not confined within the limits of the United Kingdom, but were used on behalf of other women under British rule, and when the International Suffrage Alliance met at Geneva representatives of the League would be there assisting the movement internationally.

Emergency resolutions were passed unanimously by the Conference calling upon the Government to bring in immediately a Bill granting the franchise to women on equal terms with men, and to pass it through all its stages into law without delay; welcoming the Bishop of London's Bill which proposed to raise the age of consent, but pledging the Women's Freedom League to resist with all its power any other regulations for sex offences which in operation would be unfair to women as compared with men; and promising uncompromising opposition to those clauses of the Bastardy Bill which proposed to compel the mother to disclose the name of the father of her child, making the child a ward of the Court, thereby connecting it with the Police Courts from its earliest infancy and converting its mother into a guardian on sufferance. This last resolution also urged that the unmarried mother and child should come under the care of the Public Health Authority's Maternity and Child Welfare Committee.

Other resolutions discussed and passed by the Conference pledged the Women's Freedom League to work for:—

The removal of every legal or other artificial restrictions on women's activities, political, economic, social, professional and industrial, with equal pay for equal work.

The appointment of women to the Privy Council. Proportional Representation.

Pensions for widows with children under sixteen years of age, and for mothers without a breadwinner.

Equal rights of guardianship of the children for married mothers and fathers; equality in our marriage and divorce laws; equal rights with men to retain or change their nationality; and the responsibility of a married woman for her own income-tax.

The appointment of women governors and women medical officers in women's prisons, and of women police commissioners and women commissioners of prisons.

The appointment of women lunacy commissioners and women medical superintendents for the women's sides of asylums, and the inclusion of women in all asylums' visiting committees.

The abolition of our present laws of solicitation—molestation to be a punishable offence equally for men and women, but no conviction to be made unless the person molested appeared in Court to support the charge.

A Bill to ensure that in cases of infanticide, or attempted infanticide by unmarried mothers, that the father, if known, as well as the mother, shall appear in Court, and be held equally responsible for the care of their child.

The appointment of women magistrates on the same terms as men, and the abolition of the Women's Central Advisory Committee, which the Conference considered to be an entirely unconstitutional and unsatisfactory body.

The return of women to Parliament. The Conference decided that we should run or support a woman candidate whenever and wherever possible.

At the beginning of the Conference cordial messages were received from Mrs. Despard, wishing the Women's Freedom League all prosperity until every artificial barrier to women's advancement was broken down; and from Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, that the worth of freedom was the opportunity to fight for the freedom of others. Dr. Elizabeth Knight was re-appointed Hon. Treasurer, and the following members were elected to our National Executive Committee: Miss A. M. Clark, Mrs. Schofield Coates, Miss Evans, Miss Janet Gibson, Mrs. Mustard, Miss C. Neal (Swansea), Miss M. I. Neal (Manchester), Miss Normanton, Mrs. Pierotti, Mrs. Keevil Rickford, Mrs. Whetton, and the Scottish representatives, Dr. Aimée Gibbs (Edinburgh), Miss Shennan, and Miss M. Steven (Glasgow). Miss F. A. Underwood was re-appointed General Secretary.

On the evening before this Conference a dinner was arranged for the delegates at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, when a short speech was given by Miss Morton on "Proportional Representation." Sunday afternoon a reception to delegates and their friends was also held at the Club. We take this opportunity of recording our most grateful thanks to Miss Pierotti for arranging this reception, and to our old friend, Miss Hunt, for so kindly coming to London to assist us all day at the Conference. F. A. UNDERWOOD.

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.

THE BASTARDY BILL, 1920.

By MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON, L.L.A.
 (Poor Law Guardian.)

The new Bastardy Bill is an honest attempt to deal with ancient injustices and to ameliorate the status of the illegitimate child. Two very drastic reforms are proposed—the abolition of the doctrine of *fillius nullius*, and the legitimization of the illegitimate by the subsequent marriage of the parents.

Many attempts to alter this law have been made since the Council of Merton in 1236, when the Bishops, led by Grosseteste, tried to legalise children born out of wedlock by subsequent marriage in accordance with early Canon Law, which followed the Roman Marriage Law of the Empire, a law fair and honourable to women, equal divorce being obtainable even then.

This proposal was rejected by the great Barons in the famous formula, "*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutare*," a formula which, as Havlock Ellis says, "merely stood for an unreasonable and inhumane obstinacy." England has stood almost alone in this respect; the early Canon Law has always prevailed in Scotland, in our Oversea Dominions, in most European countries, and in many of the States of America.

Another valuable reform of the Bill is Clause 11, whereby the putative father, having admitted paternity before the birth of the child, "the Court may at once make an order upon him providing for such weekly payments to the woman towards her support and for the expenses of her confinement as shall seem to them to be reasonably necessary."

The great blots upon the Bill are Clauses 1 and 3, by which the mother of an illegitimate child is required to fill up Schedule A, giving the name and address of the putative father under penalty of fine or imprisonment under the Births and Deaths Registration Act (1874) for "refusing or neglecting to give such information," or "for wilfully making a false statement relating to the information required."

This is a grave infringement of the liberty of the subject. Many women will protect the father of their child at any cost to themselves, and surely the law has no right, even in the interests of the child, to over-rule such generous and honourable scruples. The present generation should not be so sacrificed for the future.

"No, I'll not ask him for anything; his wife is a good woman, and if she gets to know about this it will ruin her life too," is a generous answer one hears to the suggestion of a paternity order. "I don't want any help from him; I can keep my baby all right, thank you. Why should I get him in a row with his wife and perhaps break up his home?" is another dignified attitude one meets with even in the Poor Law.

It happens sometimes that girls of gentle birth and good education (especially during the war) have found themselves in the terrible predicament of pregnancy; with the help of friend or relative they have succeeded in avoiding publicity and making private arrangements for the child. Their strongest desire is often to avoid disgrace that would fall upon honoured parents, but now, with the proposed inquisitorial registration, they will be driven in despair to abortion, suicide, child-desertion, or even child-murder. These tragedies have been so common the last six years that our rulers ought to reflect before increasing them. Surely a woman will not be sent to gaol for holding her tongue, or if prison does not reveal the putative father's name, will successive sentences be passed for the term of her natural life, or will the rack and thumb-screw be revived? Even such methods may not bring out the real name, and blackmail will probably be increased.

Many women in our workhouses are mentally weak and morally degenerate, and few experienced people would dream of accepting their most unreliable word; others also adopt the tactics of Brutus, the founder of the Roman Republic, and feign imbecility and complete ignorance of all details. "He is always called Bill; I don't know his proper name," is a common answer to official enquiries, though often later the same women,

free of the Poor Law, will admit to a Guardian that they knew the name "right enough," but they find ignorance the simplest method to adopt in order to end inquisitorial research.

Clause 22 is again a grave interference with the rights of motherhood, as it enacts that "all bastard children shall be deemed wards of Court under the Children's Act, 1908," and also gives power to the Court "to appoint Guardians either in addition to, or in substitution for the mother of the child." Why should this be done and special legislation made for the torment of the unmarried mother? In case of cruelty or neglect the interests of the children are already guarded by the Children's Act, 1908. We are told Conscription is ended, but to take a child away from its mother or make it a "ward of Court" against her consent seems a new and dangerous form of Conscription.

In Schedule A the promoters of the Bill show a touching example of the triumph of hope over experience in asking for "the names and addresses of witnesses" to prove the paternity of the child. Because there never (or hardly ever) are any witnesses the orders in Bastardy are barely 10 per cent., probably less since the war; the paternity is admitted by the putative father, or a letter of his confirms it. A third person is rarely involved, nor will the Bill (if it becomes an Act) be likely to produce the witnesses required. Women must watch this Bill in the interests of freedom for their sex, and prevent the forging of fresh chains upon women.

A BAD BILL AND A GOOD ONE.

Another no—C.D.—Acts Campaign is upon us! Two Bills are before Parliament. Both have been twice read in the Lords. Both are going to a Joint Select Committee of Lords and Commons. Both are "Criminal Law Amendment Bills." They are No. 1 and No. 2.

How do they differ? *The Bishop of London's Bill* (No. 1) raises the age of consent from 16 to 18.

No. 1 is our one.

Lord Sandhurst's Bill (No. 2) does not raise the age of consent, but it includes the unjust, oppressive and dangerous compulsory-rescue and 40D clauses which we fought and vanquished the last time he introduced it, on April 24th, 1918. This hateful Bill has not improved by keeping, and women, who have the vote now, will indignantly reject it. The confusion of these two Bills is our only difficulty.

Meetings in support of the good little Bill will be misrepresented as support of the bad bigger Bill. *This trickery must be met.*

We support No. 1, the Bishop of London's Bill, for the age of consent reform that we have always demanded, and we are joining officially in the meeting of support advertised below. This Bill we must all push with all our might. An obstinate, insidious and envenomed opposition will be no match for the Mothers of the Empire!

Every member of the Women's Freedom League and all who love justice must help here, and clear up confusion wherever they go, by insisting that we want, and are determined to have, the age of consent, and do not want, and will not have, Lord Sandhurst's Bill with its detestable provisions. E. KNIGHT.

Important Meeting in Support of The Bishop of London's Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER,
 WEDNESDAY, MAY 5th, 1920, at 4.45 p.m.,

SPEAKERS:

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON, THE REV. SCOTT LIDGETT, D.D.,
 VISCOUNTESS ASTOR, M.P., Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY, Mr. C. G. MONTEFIORE
 Chair: Miss PICTON-TURBERVILLE, O.B.E.

Admission Free. Reserved Seat. 1/6. Tickets and all information from C.L.A. Committee, 19, Tot Hill Street, S.W.1.

BOOK REVIEW.

Betty Stevenson, Y.M.C.A., Croix de Guerre avec Palme. (Longman, Green & Co.) 7s. net. (To be obtained from this office.)

The most astute biographer could not have given so true a picture of Betty, as she herself has drawn in her letters and diaries.

"My letters all begin the same, namely, that everything here is too divine for words," she wrote to her mother from St. Denis, where she worked in the Y.M.C.A. canteen in 1916. Her letters show how arduous her duties were, but how indomitable her spirit. Later she was joined by Mrs. Stevenson, who frequently mentions in her own diary how tired and pale Betty often looked. Before the camp possessed a "Ford," the journey to and from the canteen had to be made in an overcrowded tram-car, for which they had to wait for half an hour to an hour and a half, and even when they did get on they had to "sit on someone's figure," as Betty described it.

A happier spirit, and one more animated with "radiance and delicious naughtiness" never dwelt upon this earth. Betty's love of her work, her wonderful faculty for enjoyment, and her sympathy with the distressed "relatives" whom, as Y.M.C.A. driver at Etaples in 1917, it was part of her work to drive to and from hospital or cemetery, endeared her to all with whom she came in contact, and made her "the darling of the whole base."

Beset with difficulties, suffering from extremes of cold or heat, worn out with fatigue and mental strain, her courage never failed. On one occasion only we see her depressed by her environment. After a few days illness she wrote a letter to her father early in 1918, in which she speaks of being "mentally unsettled," and says she is "floating about without an anchor—sounding feverishly for something definite to anchor to." The peaceful fishing boats on one side of the bridge across the river at Etaples, and the tents, soldiers, ammunition wagons, and bugle calls on the other, fascinate but bewilder her by their incongruity.

Betty is a fine picture of English girlhood. Her years were few, but she lived intensely. In the dark days of privation and suffering she had a kind word and happy smile for all.

"This is woman's hour; to woman too it is given to lay down her life in a righteous cause—to help free the world from evil," writes C.G.—in one of the letters of sympathy and appreciation, with which the book closes, and we feel that Betty's sacrifice has not been made in vain.

E. HAMBLING.

OLD FAITHS AND NEW ETHICS.

Councillor Margaret Hodge, in her address last week at the Minerva Café, stated she had lived through many phases of faiths and ethics. Exponents of old faiths frequently went out of their way to create offences. At one time people were fined if their children did not know their catechism, just as men and women were occasionally put into the stocks if they did not attend church. Poor people were taught to reverence their betters, and it was considered wrong to teach servants to read and write because humility was supposed to be their crowning virtue. A great deal of what was called moral teaching was inculcated by moral tales, or stories with a moral which were so impregnated with dullness that everyone nowadays would have the utmost sympathy with the little girl who begged her teacher to tell her a story of another little girl who was so wicked that she had to go to live with Mr. Satan! In Miss Hodge's view modern education and modern ethics were an improvement upon the false teachings of former days. Self-confidence and self-respect were far greater assets than a sense of humility, sloth, or self-complacency.

NOTES FROM APRIL NUMBERS.

Fortnightly Review.

Lady Simon discusses "The New Old-Age Pensions Act," and deplores the hasty legislation connected with it, recalling the writer in the *Times*, who declared "the Bill was passed through all its stages in less time than it took one eupeptic man to eat a chop." Lady Simon is of the opinion that the Report of the Departmental Committee on Old-Age Pensions had little or no influence on Parliamentary action, the new Act being in reality the result of a particularly strong public opinion. She recommends as useful amendments to the new Act: (1) Either free housing, or higher pensions than 10s. weekly for the most needy cases; and (2) the lowering of the age limit, say to 65, in those cases, otherwise eligible, when it can be shown that regular employment has been lost owing to age and infirmity. With regard to the vexed question of "means," she suggests that the following should be entirely ruled out of the question at issue: (1) Casual earnings due to the pensioner's own industry; (2) gifts, whether in money or kind, given by friends, ex-employers or relatives, with the view of adding to the pension; (3) board and lodging, whether partial or complete. Lady Simon, in the course of her investigations, has been the recipient of hundreds of letters from old-age pensioners, nearly all of them sad, and, though seldom in the nature of begging letters, are frequently pathetically suggestive. One wrote: "Your letter made our poor old hearts jump for joy, after our living in a state of semi-starvation ever since the war began." Another pleaded for "the necessity of some sort of homes reserved exclusively for respectable old people being provided for them at once," and suggested that some of the workhouses might be converted into lodgings for old-age pensioners, where they could "keep their own poor belongings about them." It is interesting to note in this connection that a workhouse inmate costs the State 7s. 6d. more per week than an old-age pensioner in receipt of the maximum, viz., 10s. weekly.

The World's Work.

Lady Bonham-Carter occupies the place of honour in the series "Men and Women of To-day." Miss Priscilla Moulder contributes an interesting review of the work achieved by the Workers' Educational Association, a movement which, she asserts, is attracting working women both in the towns and rural areas in ever-increasing numbers. These women include shop assistants, factory workers, elementary school teachers, domestic servants, busy housewives, farm girls, dress-makers, milliners, etc. The subjects of study vary from Sociology, Social Geography, English History, Industrial History, English Literature, Music, French, and Citizenship, down to Welfare Work and Infant Feeding. Quite one-third of this magazine is devoted to Housing this month, and includes the following articles: "Some Larger Aspects of the Housing Scheme," by Dr. Addison; "The Science of the Home," by Jasper Lockett (a description, accompanied by excellent photographs, of the training in Domestic Science, Chemistry, Economy and Hygiene, now being given by the Household and Social Science Department, King's College for Women, University of London); "Economics in House Planning," by W. Alexander Harvey, F.R.I.B.A.; "Garden Cities and Suburbs," by James Armstrong; "A Housing Experiment," by William Wallace (the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust); and a number of short technical articles, by various experts, connected with wood, asbestos-cement, concrete, and the respective virtues of gas and electricity.

D. M. N.

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

DARE TO
BE FREE

Friday, April 30.—White Elephant Sale, Minerva Café. Afternoon 3.30—5.30, and evening 7.0—8.30. Please send goods to Mrs. McLeod at the Office.

Wednesday, May 5.—Public Meeting, Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speakers: Miss Helen Ward, Mrs. Abbott. Subject: "The Geneva Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance." 3 p.m. Chair: Mrs. Mustard.

Thursday, May 6.—Public Meeting, Belmont Hall, Belmont Road, Clapham. Debate: "That the interests of this country would be best served by the return to power of a Labour Government at an early date."

Proposer: Mrs. Samuel. Opposer: Miss Georgiana Hill. Admission 3d. 8 p.m.

Friday, May 7.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Debate: "That only very exceptional women are fitted to sit in Parliament." Opener: Councillor Margaret Hodge. Opposer: Miss Helena Normanton, B.A. Admission 1s. 7.30 p.m. Chairman: Dr. G. B. Clark.

Wednesday, May 12.—Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Mrs. Mayne. Subject: "A Mem Sahib's Views on India." 3 p.m.

Monday, May 17.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Miss Horniman, M.A. Subject: "Theatrical Reminiscences." 7.30 p.m.

Saturday, October 2.—Dance, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

Friday, November 26 and Saturday, November 27.—Green, White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

PROVINCES.

Friday, April 30.—Rye. Model Election. Miss Elsie Morton. Wednesday, May 19.—Portsmouth. Whist Drive and Dance. St. Patrick's Institute, Winter Road. 7—12 p.m. Tickets 2s. each.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Monday, May 3.—Central London Parliament. Irish Debate. Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 5.—Central Hall, Westminster. Public Meeting in support of the Bishop of London's Criminal Law Amendment Bill. Speakers: The Lord Bishop of London, the Rev. Scott Lidgett, D.D., Viscountess Astor, M.P., Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mr. C. G. Montefiore. Chair: Miss Picton Turbervill, O.B.E. 4.45 p.m. Admission free. Reserved seats 1s. 6d. Tickets can be obtained at 144, High Holborn, and from C.L.A. Committee, 19, Tothill Street, S.W. 1.

Friday, May 21.—Kingsway Hall. International Women Suffrage Alliance. Public Meeting to prepare for Geneva Congress. Chair: Mrs. Pethick Lawrence. Speakers: Miss Maude Royden, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mrs. Philip Snowden. 7.30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m.

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

The arrival of a very large party of children to our Guest House, and also one of the prevailing epidemics, have prevented us from acknowledging the very kind and most useful gifts sent to us during the Easter Holidays. They are the more appreciated that though the war has ended the greatly increased cost of living makes it very hard for the poor, even with the increase in wages all round, to make a decent living at all. Therefore, it is necessary for our work to go on and increase, and, unfortunately, the Guest House was only equipped for the war, and now needs as much reconstruction as does everything else. We were very delighted to receive a large parcel of dolls and toys made during the Easter Holiday by the students of the Princess Helena College at Ealing, through the kindness of Miss Olive Turton; Miss Fennings kindly sent us an Easter gift of £1 1s.; Mrs. Harvey a go-cart for the Guest House babies; flowers came from Miss Riggall, Miss M. Cole, Miss Franks, and Mrs. Despard; clothing from Mrs. Allen, and, through Miss Greenville and Miss Pinchen; material to make for sale of work, Miss Riggall; a cot and fittings and bed-linen, Mrs. Despard; a bath apron and 1s., Miss K. Holmes; 3s., Miss Riggall. We are very busy now trying to arrange for a sale of work and a belated jumble sale.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

(To the Editor of THE VOTE.)

The Bastardy Bill.

Dear Madam,—I must say I think your article in this week's *VOTE*, against "The Bastardy Bill," unfair and unconvincing. You sympathise with part of the Bill—the father ought to pay more in support of his child—but you refuse to take the only steps likely to lead to that end, because the mother must not be punished if she refuses to disclose the name of the father.

You seem to forget that the helpless creature among the three to be considered is the child, and it is on that account that the law should do most to protect it from injury and not to protect either father or mother. There is a presumption that the mother who, in the world as it is at present, has committed a life-long injury to the child to suit her own convenience or irresponsibility, is no friend to her infant, and there is need to appoint a guardian, responsible to the Court, in all cases where the mother seems hopelessly fluid and irresponsible, or ego-centric and incapable of sustained maternal feeling. Voluntary applications to a local Council's Maternity and Child Welfare Committee will not do: these permissive activities too often lack results. The name of the Bill is obviously due to the lawyers. They act by precedent and retain old names even when they should be discarded.—Yours faithfully,
ARTHUR LEWIS.

(To the Editor of THE VOTE.)

Women and Political Parties.

Dear Madam,—I was intensely interested in the letter printed in "Our Open Column" on April 16th. It touches a matter which, I feel, is a very involved one, and I would suggest to the vast body of women voters who are still undecided about "a party," to join "The Central London Parliament," now being formed at 144, High Holborn. We hope to make this Parliament a great school for debate and thought on all matters dealing with the "Common" good. We trust, too, that many members will be assisted to select "the party" nearest their ideals, if at present they are in doubt, for, as Lady Astor said at the Queen's Hall, "there is good and bad in all." Many men "followed in father's footsteps" as a "matter of course," but we want to avoid "this course," and we urge all women to join "parties" only when convinced. Converts are always the most enthusiastic in a cause, because they have survived the arguments of the "whys and wherefores" and have a clear way ahead. In conclusion I would urge your readers to join as "Independents" if they are unable yet to make a choice, but in every case I say—Join—Listen—and Decide.—Yours sincerely,
ISOBEL F. LUCAS.

(To the Editor of THE VOTE.)

The Married Woman Teacher.

I do not agree with Dr. Marie Stopes that the Woman Teacher, or any other woman, should be allowed to continue her work after she is married and has a husband to support her. The fact that her husband's salary or wages is not sufficient to support her and her family is a matter that must be remedied by the Trade Unions, and it should not be possible, while we have such a large number of women and men unemployed, for a man and his wife both to be wage-earners. There is a tendency—or, rather, I should say that I know it to be a fact—that the man is inclined to neglect his own work in consequence. Again, the married woman in receipt of a decent income does not care to risk losing it through having children, and this, I believe you will agree, is worth thinking about. Another reason is that she can afford to work for less than her unmarried sisters. This tends to make women's labour cheap. It is my contention that a woman employed in the same capacity as a man and producing the same results should be paid exactly the same wages. But while you continue to flood the market with cheap labour you will never get it. It appears to me that the Authorities take a sensible view of the matter in the case of the woman separated from her husband. Teaching, like nursing, is certainly a profession in which women excel, and they deserve to be treated in a more generous manner than they are at present. They are indispensable, their position is strong, and it is their own fault if they are made cheap by flooding the profession with those who do not mind working for a few pounds a year less.
G. W. GILL.

BRANCH NOTE.

PORTSMOUTH.

The meeting on Proportional Representation held in the Grand Jury Room at the Town Hall was very interesting. There was an illustrative election, the audience being the electors. The voting took place first, and while the count was taken, Miss E. Morton, of the Proportional Representation Society, made a very convincing speech. The poll was then declared, Miss Morton explaining the method of counting, and very ably answering several questions. Mrs. Whetton, from the chair, then moved a vote of thanks to Miss Morton for her able speech, and to the Mayor for the use of the room. Miss Morton, in replying, proposed a vote of thanks to Messrs. Speck and Whetton, the returning officers. In aid of the Local Election Fund a Whist Drive and Dance is being held in St. Patrick's Institute on Wednesday, May 19th, from 7 to 12 p.m. Tickets 2s. each.
Hon. Sec.—MRS. WHETTON, 89, Festing Grove, Southsea.

FRIDAY,
APRIL 30,
1920.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Important Meeting to support the Bishop of London.

This meeting, which will be held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Wednesday, May 5th, should be strongly supported by all men and women of good will. Our readers will see from the announcement which appears in our advertisement column that very interesting and representative speakers have been secured. These speakers will be supported by prominent men and women, and over thirty societies representing large organised bodies of religious, social, and women workers are to be represented at the meeting. We strongly urge all our readers to be present at this meeting, and to make it widely known. It is most important that the Government should realise that the Bishop of London has a very strong body of public support behind him. His Bill asks for uncontroversial reforms long overdue, and this meeting is called to support his Bill and no other.

IN MEMORIAN—Miss A. A. SMITH.

At the request of Mr. G. K. Devadhar, of the Poone Siva Sedam (Social Service), a beautiful memorial wreath was placed on the grave of Miss A. A. Smith, in the Hampstead Cemetery on Easter Sunday. The last piece of work Miss Smith did was to prepare an important speech of Mr. Devadhar's for the press. This speech was given in connection with the work of the Poona Siva Sedam, a work very close to Miss Smith's heart, especially that branch of it which arranged for the bringing of Indian women students to England.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MISS MAUD ROYDEN.

Kensington Town Hall. Fellowship Services on Sunday. Dr. Percy Dearmer, 3.15; Miss Maud Royden, 6.30. Subject: "Christianity and the Bible." Master of the Music, Mr. Martin Shaw.

CENTRAL LONDON PARLIAMENT.

The first debate of Parliament will take place Monday, May 3rd, 7 p.m., in the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., and will deal with the Irish question.

Membership is invited from men and women. Subscription 2s 6d. for this short session.

PUBLIC LECTURE ON INDIA.

Thursday, May 6th, at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. "An Englishwoman's Observations on the Social and Domestic Life of India." Speaker: Mrs. Mayne. Tea 4 p.m. Lecture 4.30 p.m. Admission 1s., including tea. Under the auspices of "Britain and India."

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