

"BLUNDERS OF WOMEN'S LEADERS?"

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.
NON-PARTY.

VOL. XXV. No. 776.

(Registered at
the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 5, 1924

OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the powers already obtained to elect women in Parliament, and upon other public bodies, for the purpose of establishing equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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EQUALITY OR "PROTECTION" FOR WOMEN?

In the bad old days, less than one hundred years ago, when men, women and children worked in our factories and mines for fifteen and sixteen hours a day, when no consideration was given to the health of the workers, and when it was stoutly maintained in Parliament that the prosperity of this country depended on the long working-hours, not only of adults, but of mere children, there was a crying need for the protection of the workers of both sexes and of all ages. The conscience of the nation was slow in awakening on this matter, and it was natural that the position of the children should first be dealt with. Very soon the revolting conditions under which women worked in our mines, and their long hours in the factories, caused public opinion to demand remedial legislation, which, however, was not always immediately helpful to the women concerned, for serious distress followed their loss of occupation when they were turned out of the pits and offered no alternative employment. These women were often hired by the men workers to push trucks of coal, and were content with smaller wages than men wanted. It became the custom, for purposes of legislation, to classify women with children, and to make regulations for them which did not apply in the case of men. Such legislation, however, was bound to bring about improvement in the conditions of all workers—men and women, and young people—especially as men organised themselves more and more in Trade Unions to work for better conditions, better pay, and shorter hours, and the State began to realise that the health of the workers was an important national asset, and that good sanitation and healthy conditions were a necessity for all workers.

At the present time women in this country, and women in America and other countries, are divided in their opinions as to whether women industrial workers should continue to be subjected to special "protective" legislation in regard to hours, the prohibition of night-work, etc., or whether they should repudiate all "protective" legislation in the case of women, which does not apply in the case of men; and work to secure equal opportunities, equal pay, and equal conditions with men throughout all branches of industry as well as throughout all the professions. In an article appearing last month in *The Labour Woman*, under the heading "Middle-Class Women and Industrial Legislation," Mrs. Barbara Drake urges the case for "protective" legislation. We

cannot refrain from saying that if Mrs. Drake had shown less irritation with "Middle-Class Women," whom she describes as "arm-chair philosophers" (Are not the vast majority of the women leaders of the Labour movement themselves most emphatically and typically middle-class women?), and devoted more space in her article to arguments for her case, the results would have been clearer and, perhaps, more effective. As it is, we are conscious that there is something to be said for "protective" legislation, but we confess that we cannot discover that there is anything definitely conclusive. We are told that "industrial women are as sound as middle-class feminists on the question of 'equal laws,' but they are more concerned for the practical results of legislation than for its mere conformity with the abstract principle of sex equality." We ourselves want to see industrial women have practical equality of opportunity with men throughout industry, and we are convinced that "protective" legislation for women workers serves to bar women from employment. We should like to see night-work abolished for men and for women; but we recognise that our morning newspapers have to be printed at night, and that a certain amount of night-work is necessary also in other spheres. To "protect" women by prohibiting them from working at night in factories and workshops is a denial of the equality of opportunity which we ask for them. Women are not debarred from night-work when they are nurses, doctors, actresses, or mothers in the home, looking after a sick child, or an invalid adult. Why should the State keep them in leading-strings when they are competing with men in industry? We yield to no one in our demand for the best possible conditions in industry for both men and women; but we believe that the best way to secure an improvement is for men and women to work together for it, on equal terms. If all Trade Unions would throw open their membership equally to all workers of both sexes, and insist that men and women should receive equal pay for the same job, so that women should not be forced to act as blacklegs in the Labour Market, the position and the health of women workers would be infinitely more improved. Until women can get equal opportunities and training with men in industry, the great mass of them will remain unskilled and unorganised, and the more will they crowd into sweated trades with low pay, and with a certainty of their health becoming

undermined. During the war, when they had the opportunity to do men's work, and, incidentally, to receive men's pay, they not only rendered satisfaction to their employers, but, because they received adequate wages—many of them for the first time in their lives—their health, both physical and mental, enormously improved. It is not "protection" that women workers need, but fair conditions under which to work, more opportunities to make a success of it, and better wages all round. Men workers have realised the necessity for these things, and by organisation have secured them. The interests of women workers and men workers are ultimately the same. Why should they not work together under entirely equal conditions for equal rewards? Adult women workers should cast off all fetters of "protection," and boldly insist on equal treatment with men.

SUCCESS OF WOMEN ENGINEERS.

We congratulate the Women's Engineering Society on the September issue of *The Woman Engineer*, all the articles in which are of excellent quality. On reading News of Members we are specially interested to learn that Miss Evelyn Roxburgh has obtained the Diploma of the Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, in Electrical Engineering. She is the first woman to obtain such a degree at this College, and has been the only student there for some time. Miss Roxburgh is said to be the first woman in Scotland to qualify as an Electrical Engineer, most of the other engineering students having taken up Civil Engineering. Arrangements are now being made for her to undergo an apprenticeship at one of the large Electrical Engineering Works.

We learn also that Miss V. Holmes, B.Sc., A.M.I. Mech.E., has been elected an Associate Member of the Institute of Marine Engineers; that the Hon. Lady Parsons, J.P., has been elected a member of the Council of the Illuminating Engineering Society; and that Mrs. McBerty, A.I.E.E., has been elected President of the Ohio State Federation of the Business and Professional Women's Club.

The Woman Engineer also reports that Miss C. Elam has been appointed to the Research Fellowship in Metallurgy, of the value of £500 a year for five years, given by the Worshipful Company of Armourers and Braziers in the City of London, and awarded through the Royal Society. Miss Elam was a student of Newnham College, Cambridge, and has been engaged in research work on the properties of metallic crystals with Professor H. C. H. Carpenter, at the Royal School of Mines, for the past few years. She also investigated the method of distortion of aluminium crystals in tension, in conjunction with Prof. G. J. Taylor, at the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge, and the results of this investigation formed the subject of the Bakerian Lecture of the Royal Society for 1923.

MINERVA CLUB.

The Minerva Club is in festive spirit this week, having celebrated its first wedding. Miss Grace Nelson, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Nelson, of Hull, who has lived for some years at the Club, and who is a member of the Minerva Club branch of the Women's Freedom League, was married on the 3rd inst. to Dr. John Coghlan. The marriage service was held at the Church of St. Anselm and St. Cecilia in Kingsway, and the reception was held at the Club, where a large number of friends of the bride and bridegroom met to wish them well. The honeymoon is to be spent at Mentone.

All those who know Miss Nelson feel that Dr. Coghlan is very much to be congratulated, and although she will be very much missed at the Club, it was a very great pleasure to all concerned that she should have been married from the house in which she has lived while in London, and we join in wishing them both much happiness and usefulness in their life together.

WOMEN AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

The *Women's Local Government News* for September has a very opportune article by Miss Bertha Mason on "The Responsibility of Electors." She points out that Elections for Town Councils will take place on November 1st, followed by Elections for County Councils early in March next, and followed again by Elections for Rural and Urban District Councils, Parish Councils and Board of Guardians. All these Elections must take place between November 1st, 1924, and April, 1925. Miss Mason pertinently asks: (1) What are women electors going to do between now and April, 1925? (2) Where are the women who are willing and ready to come forward as candidates?

As we go to press we learn with pleasure that Mrs. Mabel Thompson, writer and journalist, an old member of the Women's Freedom League and some years ago President of our York Branch, is standing for the Lammas Ward at the Ealing Town Council Elections, in November. She is putting up in the Labour interest, and, if elected, she will be the first woman to become a member of this Town Council. We send Mrs. Thompson our heartiest good wishes for her success, and we shall be pleased to learn of the candidature of any other of our members.

Miss Mason suggests in her article that, with a view to rousing women, and, for the matter of that, men also, to a sense of their electoral duties and responsibilities, and to the importance of good local government, an educational campaign should be started at once, with women rallying to it as to a national duty. We cordially agree, and will gladly give space in *THE VOTE* for recording any of the arrangements in connection with such a campaign.

WOMEN AND HOUSING.

Before the war there was considerable housing shortage, and in some places appalling overcrowding. Even then we had heard so much about slums that, like the poor—the average man and woman were inclined to think—they were always with us! During the war it was impossible to build houses, and when the men returned to this country, after being promised "homes fit for heroes to live in," vast numbers of them, together with their wives and families, were reduced to the direst straits to find any kind of shelter. Since then we have had various Ministers of Health, all of whom have made some attempt to tackle this pressing problem, but we continue to read in the newspapers of most distressing cases of families who find it absolutely impossible to discover any decent kind of accommodation. It is admitted that the women—as wives and mothers—are the greatest sufferers under the present order of things. Only last week a woman appeared at the Willesden Police Court with a baby in her arms, and three other small children clustered around her. In reply to the magistrate's question she said there were five other children at home with their father, who was out of work. She wanted an order for ejectment to be held over a little longer. In granting a fortnight's extension, the magistrate hopefully suggested that if she showed those nice little children to any landlady, she would surely take them in! The woman promptly replied that lots of landladies had seen them, and it was the "dear children" who were the trouble. The magistrate's comment was: "Well, well, you're a brave woman. Try again!"

Men in Parliament have failed hopelessly to remedy this evil which is undermining the health of our race. We should like to see the women M.P.s band themselves together, and make housing accommodation one of their chief demands. They could gather together men M.P.s who are really keen on the matter and, in season and out of season, force the attention of the Government to this subject, and compel it either to take more vigorous action or to disclose its real reasons for its unwillingness or incapacity to do so.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Women's Indian Association.

The Reports of the Women's Indian Association for the years 1922-23 and 1923-24 have recently been issued. In April, 1924, there were 51 branches and 18 centres, with a membership of 2,500, against 2,075 members a year ago. The members are now working to remove the disqualification of sex, which prevents women from being elected or nominated to the Legislatures, and are responsible for the Women's Home of Service in Mylapore, which has been carrying on public health and educational work. During the past year, the Association sent a protest to the South African Government against their continued exclusion of women from the rights of citizenship. It also wrote to the League of Nations, putting forward the claims of women to inclusion in its Councils and Committees, and is in correspondence with the women of Japan, "who are at present fighting for the elementary right of attending political meetings and of forming political associations." The Association looks forward to greater expansion of work, and will devote special attention to child welfare work, compulsory education of girls, and the extension of the franchise.

British Woman Worker in the Near East.

Mrs. Ann M. Burgess is at present on a visit to this country. For 36 years she has worked almost alone in Constantinople, where she won the respect of the Turks and the love of the Armenians. Many a time she has been instrumental, in the face of angry mobs, in protecting Armenians, when, sheltering in the Friends' Mission, their lives were in imminent danger. During the last crisis in Constantinople, she was forced to transfer her charges and her work to Corfu, though always looking forward to a return to Turkey.

A Woman Regent.

Prince Chitthira Tirumal, a boy of 12 years of age, has been installed as Maharajah of Travancore. The civil ceremony took place before a numerous attendance of Europeans and Indians. At the same time, the senior Rani, Setu Lakshmi Bayi, was installed as Regent. The new Regent, who is 28 years of age, used often, when a girl, to rise at 3 a.m. and study until the arrival of her English teacher at 7.30.

Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P., in Moscow.

Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P., who flew recently to Russia, in an aeroplane, had an enthusiastic welcome at the plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet, when Rakovsky and Tchitcherin read reports on the Anglo-Soviet Treaty. From the platform Miss Lawrence made a speech, ending it with an appeal for a closer understanding and co-operation between the two peoples.

Another Woman Parliamentary Candidate.

Mrs. McNab Shaw, wife of the Secretary of the Scottish Labour Party, has been nominated by the Independent Labour Party to oppose Captain Wedgwood Benn, Member for Leith, at the next Election. Mrs. Shaw was the first woman member on the Leith Town Council.

High School Teachers at Warsaw.

Last week, the Third International Congress of High School teachers was opened by M. Wojciechowski, the Polish President, at Warsaw. Delegates from Great Britain and many other countries were present.

A Long Career.

Last week, Mrs. Brooks, Principal of Blackdown School, Wellington, Somerset, completed 60 years' work as a headmistress.

Soviet Government Appoints Woman Representative.

Madame A. Kollontai has been appointed the representative of the Soviet Government in Norway.

Women Justices of the Peace.

Mrs. Ida Alice Parkinson, the wife of the M.P. for Wigan, and Comptroller of the King's Household, is the first woman J.P. appointed to the Wigan Magisterial Bench. Mrs. Parkinson has always been keenly interested in temperance work. She is a member of the Wigan After-Care Committee for Consumptives, a member of the Borough Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, and one of the representatives for Orrell on the Ashton-in-Makerfield and Districts Education Authority.

Last Monday, a woman magistrate, Mrs. S. E. Maundrell, for the first time, presided over the Sittingbourne County Bench, at the Petty Sessions.

Women Inspectors.

According to the report of the Board of Education for 1922-23, the number of women inspectors has increased. Women inspectors were at first confined to domestic subjects, but they soon went beyond this, and are now a definite part of the Elementary Education Inspectorate. In 1905, a first chief woman inspector was appointed. New duties in other branches have been assigned to them, and senior posts, called "staff inspectorships," have been created for them. Altogether, there are now 75 women inspectors in all branches of the Board's service.

Women Painters' Exhibition.

An exhibition of pictures and sculpture, all by women, has been organised by the Three Arts Club and the Faculty of Arts, and is being held at the Maddox Galleries. The best known among the Exhibitors are Miss Edith Walker, Mrs. Farmer, and Mrs. Fagan. It is said that some eminent women artists refuse to contribute to women's exhibitions because they prefer to be judged simply as artists, and not specially as women artists.

Maternity Training for Young Girls.

Darwen Education Authority are undertaking a new experiment in the teaching of girls. Girls between 13 and 14 will attend maternity centres to ascertain how babies are reared, and to note useful facts in development. The older girls will have an advanced course in household management. The medical officer stated that he anticipated useful results.

Women as Farm Labourers.

The Cistercian nuns, at Staplehill, Wimborne, not having the means to pay for hired labour, have themselves to work on their 75-acre farm, and have recently been employed cutting and carrying away heavy stacks of corn.

Woman Shot Beats Men.

In an Ibis Rifle Club contest on the Stickle-down ranges at Bisley, last Saturday (ten shots at 900 and 1,000 yards), Miss M. Williams beat all the male competitors, scoring 88 out of a possible 100.

The POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL of SPEECH TRAINING

PUBLIC SPEAKING FOR WOMEN.

Many women realize to-day that there are great opportunities for those who think logically and speak clearly.

A Class is conducted by MISS LOUIE BAGLEY on Thursday afternoons, at 3 o'clock, at 15, Langham Place, W.1, in which the subjects dealt with include Voice Training, Vocal Expression, Nerve Control, Methods of Preparation and Construction of Speeches, Delivery, Control of an Audience, etc.

FEE for Course of 24 weeks - - - £3 0s 0d.
FEE for Course of 12 weeks - - - £1 12s. 6d.

An Evening Class, followed by a Debate, is held on Mondays at 6.30.

Full particulars free on application to the Director of Education The Polytechnic, 309 Regent Street, W.1.

THE VOTE

Proprietors: THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
Offices: 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1924.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—
To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders,
printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

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.

"BLUNDERS OF WOMEN'S LEADERS?"

Seeing an article under the above heading in *Reynolds News*, with a further sub-title, "Feminists who Fail to Exercise a Due Share of Common Sense," and signed by Mrs. Philip Snowden, we rubbed our eyes and mildly wondered what the "women leaders" had been doing. Reading this article, we found that they had been criticising the Labour Government for not passing into law any one of the measures which women's organisations have been working for during many years, and which incidentally have been given prominence, also for many years, on programmes of the Labour Party! It really does appear somewhat incongruous, and not a little amusing, that a member of the Labour Party, who, before they themselves came into office, in season and out of season, forced upon the attention of the Government and the public their own particular panaceas for all the nation's ills, should lecture women for upbraiding the Labour Government for not fulfilling their oft-repeated pledges in regard to special reforms, so long advocated by women, irrespective of class or party, which the Government had the opportunity and the necessary assured majority to carry through last Session. Mrs. Snowden knows as well as we do that it is only by constant and vigorous pressure that any Government in the past has taken up women's questions. Some of us hoped that, because the Labour Party's professions had been so loud and so insistent on these particular questions when they were in opposition, their performance, when they come into office, would show some proportionate correspondence to these professions. Because their performances were "nil" on these questions, we think we have a right to make that fact known as widely as possible. Mrs. Snowden admits that Widows' Pensions, Equal Pay for Equal Work, and Equal Guardianship are in the programme of the Labour Party, but says that "What is not true is that Labour at any time promised that all these things should be carried into law the moment they came into power." With all due respect to Mrs. Snowden, we think that excuse a mere quibble, even though the present Government have had to consider the questions of peace, reconstruction, and unemployment, and the reduction of indirect taxation. Even with their achievements on these particular questions (but we note women's unemployment has received scant attention from the present Government), they had ample time and opportunity to have settled the question of the equal enfranchisement of women with men during the last Session as well as to have made much greater progress than they did make in regard to establishing a real equality for mothers with fathers in the guardianship of their children, in making genuine attempts to secure equal opportunities, and equal pay, for women and men in the Civil Service, in formulating a workable scheme for widows' pensions, and in bringing nearer to the Statute Book

other reforms for which Mrs. Snowden knows that women are working. We do not think a great deal of Mrs. Snowden's expressed fears in regard to errors of judgment on the part of feminists. So long as there are four and three-quarter millions of women over the age of 21 in Great Britain without any political power, and only 303,000 voteless men over that age, and so long as men have the monopoly of practically all the plums of political office, of the professions and commerce, and while the status of women, whether married or single, is so inferior to that of men in this country, feminists are bound to emphasise, with all the force at their command, the need for equality of opportunity, of responsibility, and of reward for women with men throughout all branches of our national life. Surely they would exhibit a glaring lack of common sense if they failed to do so!

WOMEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE.

Commenting on the appointment of Mrs. Miriam Ferguson, as Governor of Texas, the largest State in the American Union, with an area of 266,000 square miles, and a population of 4,700,000, *The Observer* points out that there remains scarcely any public position, in one part of the world or another, that women have not conquered. In our own country their admission to the Christian Ministry of the Established Church has not yet been granted, but in America, where there is no State Church, more than forty sects have ordained women. The writer contends, however, that the advance of women may, on the whole, be said to have been more marked in this country than in any other. It is a record of just over half a century, for it was at the first election after the passing of the Education Act in 1870, that three women, one in Manchester, Miss Lydia Becker, and two in London, Miss Garrett (afterwards Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D.), and Miss Emily Davies, became members of the School Boards. In 1873, the first woman Poor Law Inspector was appointed, and, in 1875, the first woman Guardian. Fourteen years later, Lady Sandhurst and Miss Jane Cobden were elected to the London County Council, but it took another nineteen years to pass a measure making it legal for women to serve, for there was a petition lodged against the return of Lady Sandhurst solely on the ground that she was a woman, and it was decided at that time that women were not eligible. At the present time the Chairman of the London County Council Park's Committee is Lady Eve. To the first District and Parish Councils that were formed in the 'nineties, there were ninety women elected in various parts of the country. To-day, approximately, there are some 80 women on County Councils, 300 on Borough Councils, 500 on Urban and Rural District Councils, and 2,500 on Boards of Guardians. Yet, in spite of these achievements, there are still in England and Wales 25 County Councils, 700 Urban District Councils, and 88 Boards of Guardians, each without a woman member!

Women's membership of Parliament has brought with it position in the Government, and their membership of Borough Councils has included service in the Mayoralty, and there are, and have been, several women mayors. In recent years, too, women have served on juries, and there are now over two thousand women Justices of the Peace.

Women have not yet been elected members of the Council of the League of Nations, but our Governments have sent women as substitute delegates to the Assembly of the League. Women have in some instances been appointed members of Government Departmental Committees and Commission, but always in very disproportionate numbers to men. Perhaps the most interesting and remarkable of recent appointments is that of Mrs. Wootton on the Commission to inquire into the National Debt, for though she has taken a very brilliant degree in Economics at Cambridge, she is not yet old enough to have a Parliamentary vote.

OUR DAILY PRESS.

Last week the *Daily Mail* had an article on "A Real Career for Educated Women." It began by quoting the following remark by a man: "There is no future for highly educated women in England. They simply are not wanted;" and this cheerful optimist, after proceeding to explain that a university training does not help a woman to get a living, says: "Women will always be needed in the most honourable profession of nursing; they are needed in greater numbers than ever before in business. In years to come, I believe, the skilled household worker will be more highly paid than the struggling woman doctor, and that is the day for which women should prepare themselves. For none of these careers is the education of the scholar necessary."

The writer, a woman, was evidently impressed with these assertions, and in her vision of the future depicted not fewer but better household workers, and praised some High School girls who now get their living by going out at 7 a.m. to do eight hours domestic work each day. She says that "these women are well paid, independent, have freedom, and the prospect of careers that will last long after middle age, and the day is coming quickly when the skilled domestic worker is going to be certain of a living for as long as she is able to work." We believe that is true at the present day; but if all women who have been to a High School, or one of the Universities, were suddenly to enter into competition for domestic posts, is it likely that they would all find well-paid employment? It is curious how many men and women there are, including this writer in the *Daily Mail*, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour, who can only think of one career for women—domestic service. It is, of course, the one career in which men show no great desire to enter into competition with women. If this career is so important, and has so many obvious advantages to the employer and to the employed, why is it men with university or public school training who cannot get highly paid positions do not take up Domestic Work? Perhaps writers in the *Daily Mail* will give us some information on this matter?

For the last two Saturdays, Mr. H. G. Wells has been writing in the *Westminster Gazette* about women, and we are told that he contributes a special article to that paper each Saturday, expressing his own views on topics of his own choosing. In the first article he discusses with a friend the Feminine Influence in Politics. His friend seemed to do all the talking, and, after asking what the average voter knows about anything that really matters, the friend delivers himself thus:—"But Prohibition, shutting the public-house round the corner, every man and woman understands that, and the woman will vote for it anyhow, blind to every other consideration. That is something they can understand, and the peace of the world, the volume of trade, and economic justice may go hang so long as son and husband can be shut and barred from the drink. Interference with the personal habits of other people is innate in women; they acquire it as sisters, wives, and mothers. The enfranchisement of women was the last step in the devotion of democracy to futility. It ended the last possibilities of constructive legislation and inaugurated the age of restraint." Mr. Wells' comment is "Thus my friend, and I found it very difficult to gainsay him."

Last Saturday, Mr. Wells wrote on "Sex Antagonism." He had been reading *Ancilla's Share*, by Miss Elizabeth Robins, which was recently reviewed in THE VOTE. He frankly disagrees with most of the contents of that book, and states: "Miss Robins thinks she is at war with men; she is really at war with sex." Then he has a good deal to say about sex, and complains that, while the life of man becomes more civilised and mental and his need for an adequate helpmeet increases, there is no corresponding disposition in able women to co-operate with men. "They seem to want to drop their sex and set up as imitations of all the successful male types. They become a new sex of little aggressive pseudo-men . . . They want to substitute Great Women for Great Men in our histories, and turn out Buddha, and Mahomet,

and Christ in favour of feminine equivalents. They will presently want a Lady God in a world in which the male will be a fading memory."

Mr. Wells' imaginative writings are always provocative. He must admit that the order of things in this world is at present very masculine. Women have no desire to make this order entirely feministic; but they are certainly prepared to make it more evenly representative of its masculine and feminine elements. They may not, however, be prepared to consider that the whole and sole purpose of their existence is to be a helpmeet to some man.

WOMEN PROFESSORS FOR CAMBRIDGE?

The University of Cambridge Commissioners have sent forward a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor showing the "provisional" conclusions to which they have come regarding the organisation of teaching.

Though no direct step is taken by the Commissioners towards the admission of women to the University on equal terms with men, it is recommended that women shall be eligible as University Professors and Lecturers and Fellows, and lest there should be any mistake about it, we have the definite statement: "The term 'Fellow of a College' includes Selwyn, Girton, and Newnham."

"The Commissioners contemplate that the statutes they will now proceed to frame will render women eligible for Professorships, Readerships, University Lectureships and Examinationships, subject to the reserved recommendation by the Royal Commission.

"The Commissioners have dealt with the position of women in the organisation of teaching only. As at present advised they propose to leave to the University itself questions relative to the admission of women to share in the government of the University."

These proposals will give to women lecturers of Newnham and Girton, who are not members of the University, but may be members of Faculties, the work of preparing syllabuses of study and drawing up examination papers for men who are members of the University.

This Faculty system is recommended to start in October, 1926. Will the University still persist in excluding women, and allow this ridiculous anomaly to arise, or will it reject the proposals and endanger the Government grants; or will it boldly break with the obstinacy of reactionary prejudice and return to the courage of a glorious past, by itself taking the simple step, which has brought no disaster in the case of Oxford, of opening its gates to men and women on equal terms, and offering to women full University membership, with all the rights and privileges which it implies?

A MUCH-NEEDED REFORM.

We congratulate the Board of Education on its decision to increase floor-space in class-rooms for older children from 10 to 12 square feet. The Chairman of the Birmingham Education Committee states that this alteration is necessary because of the increasing stature of the girl scholars. He says that there have recently been a great number of complaints in the higher standards that the desks are not big enough for the girls' legs, and that larger desks are a necessity. It is stated that girls of the present generation are taller, and of a far superior physique generally to those of some years ago; and it is against all modern health ideas that they should sit cramped up for several hours a day at desks which are too small for them.

It is a pleasure to record that, however disappointed we may sometimes feel in the work of other Departments of the present Government, the one Department which is alert, where the interests of the children are involved, is the Board of Education. The health and well-being of the children who come under its jurisdiction are matters which are of real concern to this State Department.

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE.

We have received the following letter from Mrs. Acres, of The League of the Church Militant, and we urge all our readers who are interested in this matter to write to her in the way she suggests.

MADAM,—Are all your readers satisfied with the Marriage Service in the Church of England Prayer Book, or do they desire to see it revised? The usual way of testing feeling on such a point is for a petition to be circulated; but petitions are not viewed with favour by many ecclesiastical authorities, and it was thought better to ask the courtesy of your columns to invite your readers to send their views, either "Aye" or "Nay," by letter to Mrs. Marston Acres, Church House, Dean's Yard, S.W. 1. The replies will then be tabulated and the results made public. If your readers are all "Ayes," I hope they will not leave it all to the "Nays," or, if "Nays," that they will not leave it to the "Ayes," to make their views known. The more replies, the more faithfully will the results interpret public feeling.

Thanking you for publishing this letter on behalf of a group of men and women, especially interested in Prayer Book Revision, who are anxious to know what is the general view of this question.

I remain, yours faithfully, E. LOUIE ACRES.

A PLEA FOR NURSERY SCHOOLS.

At the end of last Session, in the Debate on the Board of Education, Mrs. Wintringham strongly urged an extension of Nursery Schools, and we have just received a pamphlet by Miss Margaret McMillan—"What the Open-Air Nursery School Is." We recommend all those who are interested in this subject to purchase a copy (price 1d., post free 1½d., from this office). A brief sketch is given of the pioneer Nursery School at Deptford, founded by the writer's sister, Miss Rachel McMillan, an extension of which was opened by the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, in August, 1917, and called by her name. The children are received at this school at 8 o'clock in the morning, and are fetched by their mothers, or elder sisters, at 5 or 5.30 p.m. Miss McMillan states that in the poorer parts of our cities there are about four-fifths of the children rickety at the age of two, and they are damaged for life long before they are old enough to go to school; but within a year, at this Nursery School, all cases of rickets are cured, and there is no more anaemia. When the children arrive in the morning—there are 300 of them—Miss McMillan says: "They go to their own shelters, their own indoor bathroom, where is an abundance of hot as well as cold water. They are quickly overhauled, washed, dressed warmly, but with few garments. At nine, all sit down to breakfast, and at 9.30, no one cares a rap either for Jack Frost or his brother Snow. On the tables and along the walls is apparatus of varied kinds—coloured discs, coloured balls, insets, colour scales, bright letters to be fitted, pictures and picture books. Outside there are sliding boards, steps, and rib stalls. All the best apparatus is in the garden. The two-year-olds work hard. It is hard to stop them. At twelve, there is a two-course dinner, and at 12.30, 300 little ones are fast asleep. There are few days in the year when the Sun does not come for a while, and always, winter or summer, morning or afternoon, we let Him bring His great healing and joy to our children. All the afternoon, and on fine mornings, they are playing, working, sleeping, where He can find them. This is the great source of our rapid cures."

The medical officers report that there is no trace of rickets after one year's attendance at this school. Miss McMillan is a vigorous enthusiast for this work which is so well worth while, and, with her, we hope that there will be many, many more such schools throughout the country.

BOOK REVIEW.

Our Story. Women's Housing Councils National Federation. Price 6d. (Can be obtained at this Office.)

To-day the Housing problem is one which meets us on all sides, and the story of the Women's Housing Councils National Federation will be read with interest by many women who realise the importance of the question and the need for a great National Housing Movement. Since October, 1919, when the first organised Council in support of State-aided homes was founded, the movement has grown, and some very good houses have been built, largely owing to the energy and vigilance of the members of these bodies. But the way has not been easy, and repeated appeals both to the local authority and to the Ministry of Health have often been necessary.

The pamphlet gives several examples of the appalling conditions that too often exist in our villages—"Behind the romance of the thatched cottage with its gay flowers lies hidden the horror of reality. Parents and large growing families of both sexes, crowded into two bedrooms, one of which may be merely a landing. No upstairs fireplaces; no sinks; no sanitary arrangements; birth and death made hideous by the necessity of close contact. Anæmia and tuberculosis rampant, in spite of perfect air and nature at her best; mental and moral deficiency chiefly due to the lack of the ordinary decencies of accommodation."

Again, in referring to the work of the North Kensington Housing Council, we are told of a six-room house in which 22 persons of both sexes were living. The basement floor was rotten, the walls were damp, and there was only one water-tap and only one lavatory for the whole house. On the top floor, two consumptive children were living, and a man and wife with eight children in the basement. A high birth-rate nearly always exists in overcrowded areas, and the largest families are often found in basements, owing to the cheaper rent. If we want a healthy race, basement dwellings must be closed, and homes provided in which it will be possible for the future generation to be reared in decent conditions.

DIRTY RAILWAY CARRIAGES.

The patience of the long-suffering British public is proverbial, but it has its limitations. For years we have put up with increased fares combined with decreased accommodation and deficient service on the part of the railway companies; but protests against these inconveniences have recently become more and more insistent, and, with the growing advantages offered by competitive motor services, these protests are bound to find consideration in some quarters. The Southern Railway has come in for special and almost universal criticism, and frequent complaints have been levelled against the dirtiness of its carriages. We ourselves can testify that many of the carriages with their stuffed, upholstered seats thick with dust, and reeking of stale tobacco, are not fit to travel in. A representative of the *Westminster Gazette* recently paid a visit to one of this Company's London stations, and reported that "most of the carriages of trains which arrived were dirty, but the mode of cleaning them was worse. A man came along with a dustpan and a hand-brush; with the latter he swept the floor of each compartment, got the dirt into a heap at the door, and then swept it into the dustpan, which he shook underneath the carriage. This operation caused a cloud of dust, some of which settled on the seats." We can quite believe it. We also believe that women carriage cleaners could do this job better than the men now do it. Yet women's employment on this particular work is opposed with might and main by men belonging to the National Union of Railwaymen. Men have not usually claimed that sweeping and dusting were peculiarly men's work. Has the regular payment for it on the railways anything to do with the objection?

Women's Freedom League.

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

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

Monday, September 8th, at 5 p.m., at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Political Sub-Committee Meeting.

Monday, October 6th, at 3 p.m. Hampstead. Branch Meeting, at 16, Denning Road, N.W.3. (by kind permission of the Misses Berry).

Friday, October 10th, at 8 p.m. Public Meeting, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand.

Saturday, October 11th, at 10 a.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Friday and Saturday, November 28th and 29th, Central Hall, Westminster. Green, White and Gold Fair. To be opened on Friday, at 3 p.m., by Mrs. Hilton Philipson, M.P., and on Saturday, at 3 p.m., by Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P.



DARE TO
BE FREE.

BRANCH NOTE.

HASTINGS.

It was with very great regret that we heard of the tragic death of Miss Thomas, last week. Motoring fatalities have increased to an appalling degree in Hastings, especially along the sea front, where Miss Thomas was run over by a passing motor car and rendered unconscious. She was taken to the hospital, but her injuries were of so severe a nature that nothing could be done. The following letters appeared in the local paper this week:—

AN APPRECIATION FROM AN OLD FELLOW-WORKER.

Last week, there passed away from our midst someone who will be sorely missed in this town.

The thought of Miss Thomas takes one back to a time when the cause of women's representation in the Government of their country was in its initial stages: when the fighting for the good cause was a thing which really meant risk to the fighters and continuous self-denying effort. Miss Thomas will never be forgotten by those who recognised her unflinching pluck and dauntless courage at that time of the women's suffrage movement. She simply didn't know what it meant to be afraid. She never vacillated; she never doubted.

But it wasn't alone in the fighting line that one recognised her strong personality. It was in doing services for friends that do not make much show, but that mean an immense deal to those for whom they are done. It was in denying herself in order to save someone else difficulty or discomfort that one came to know her best. It was in quietly going out of her way to bulwark a cause or a person, and remaining there till the need was over, that one recognised the great value of her help. At every corner in the world's streets are people who ostentatiously bulwark a cause or a person for a time, but if the demand is a lengthy one eventually they fall away. Miss Thomas helped unostentatiously, and never left off till the need for help had ceased. Those of us who knew her well will carry her memory always about with us as an undying possession.

I. DE GIBERNE SIEVERING.

SIR,—The tragic death of Miss J. M. Thomas has come to many of her friends as a reminder of what they owe to her as a gallant fighter in the cause of freedom and justice.

She served well and loyally on the Women's Suffrage Committee, of which I was Hon. Secretary until victory enabled it to disband in 1918. The inscription attached to the cross sent by the Women's Fellowship and Women's Freedom League to her funeral was as follows:—"In affectionate remembrance from her fellow-workers in the Women's Freedom League and Women's Fellowship, and in grateful memory of her self-sacrificing pioneer work for the Women's Suffrage Movement."

As a tax and census resister, she made a brave stand, but never shirked any kind of work, however dull and wearisome. Into it all, she contrived to introduce something of her own natural and very youthful gaiety. It was the greatest surprise to us all to find she had actually reached the age of seventy-four.

I. E. HARRISON.
(Mrs. Darent Harrison.)

In Memoriam.

LYNDON.—On September 1st, at Samaden, Switzerland, Eleanor Lyndon, of Adelaide Road, N.W.3.

We regret to announce the death of Miss Eleanor Lyndon, for many years a member of the Women's Freedom League; she was taken ill while staying with a friend at Pontresina, and died in the hospital at Samaden. For many years a member of Miss Buss' staff, at the North London Collegiate School, afterwards with her friend, Doctor Sophie Bryant, from which she retired only two years ago, she was known and loved by a large circle of friends, who will all regret that she was only able to enjoy two years of her well-earned rest. We offer deepest sympathy to her sister, Miss Bertha Lyndon, Hon. Treasurer of our Hampstead Branch, and to the other members of her family.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Women and Trade Unionism.

The *Times* reports that a conference was held at Hampstead last week to inaugurate a women's auxiliary to the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen. Mr. J. Bromley, Secretary of the Associated Society, said he thought the new Society would be a very powerful adjunct to their organisation. In times of struggle with the employers, an understanding body of women could be of tremendous assistance, whereas when they were ignorant of the facts they might become a real menace to the cause of their menfolk. Similar organisations had been in existence in America and Canada since 1887, and it was time they were established in this country. We quite understand Mr. Bromley's appreciation of the usefulness of women sympathisers; but will the men in his Society urge those Branches of the National Union of Railwaymen, who strenuously oppose the employment of women as carriage cleaners and state that "the time is past when women should be taking up men's jobs," to allow women workers to have the same chances of livelihood as men workers?

Selling Drinks to Boys.

Under the above heading, the *Daily News* reports that the first prosecution at South Shields under Lady Astor's Act for supplying intoxicants to persons under 18 years of age failed last week, the magistrates holding that the offence had not been knowingly committed. The licence holders of five public-houses were charged with having knowingly sold intoxicants to apprentice seamen, the intoxicants not being for consumption with a meal. Five barmaids were charged with having knowingly allowed intoxicants to be consumed by the youths. All the barmaids told the Bench that the youths looked as though they were over 18. The presiding magistrate agreed that the youths looked over 18, but requested the licence holders to exercise great care in serving young persons.

The More Need for a Woman Governor!

As no more women are to be received at Maidstone Gaol, female prisoners of Kent will in future be sent to Holloway Prison. Surely it is time that a Woman Governor should be appointed for this women's prison!

Why not Work Scheme for Unemployed Women?

In a letter appearing last week in the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, and signed by "A Girl Out of Work, But Not a Work-Shy," the writer says: "We hear a great deal about the Government schemes for this winter for unemployed men. What about the unemployed women? What is Miss Bondfield thinking about? Why doesn't she bring forward a scheme to find work for unemployed women?" Echo answers "Why?" Last Friday, *The Times* stated that the Manchester Corporation Committee had spent about £3,000,000 during the last four years on schemes involving employment, and that another series of schemes is now being put into operation which will employ over 2,000 men.

Two Women and Sixteen Men!

According to the *Times Educational Supplement*, at Wolverhampton a scheme has been adopted for giving boys and girls, under the age of 18 years, assistance respecting the choice of suitable employment. The Choice of Employment Committee is to consist of eighteen members—nine members of the Education Committee, three teachers, and three representatives each of the Chamber of Commerce and the Trades Council. At least two members of the Committee are to be women, and the Chairmen is to be a member of the Borough Council. Are we to understand, that in Wolverhampton the suitable employment of males is considered to be eight times as important as the suitable employment of females?

A WHITE CROSS CONVENTION.

International Holydays, organised by Princess Karadja, founder of the White Cross Union, will take place September 6th to 19th, at Hastings and St. Leonards. There will be a big Reception in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on September 11th, at 3 p.m. His Worship the Mayor has kindly promised to preside. Among the many distinguished speakers announced, we may mention, Sir Henry Penson (from Oxford), Lord Headley, Eustace Miles, M.A., and W. G. Hooper, F.R.A.S., and others. Two other Receptions will be held in the Ball Room of the Royal Victoria Hotel, St. Leonards, which has been booked for two weeks for a course of TWELVE LECTURES, at 11.15. Members of the Women's Freedom League will be interested to learn that Miss Constance Andrews, one of our early members, and at one time a member of our National Executive Committee, will speak on Wednesday, September 10th, on "The Creative Power of Thought," and that Dr. Sloan Chesser will speak, on Monday, September 15th, on "Women and International Friendships." Further particulars can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary of the White Cross Union, "The Haven," 53, Eversfield Place, St. Leonards.

MARRIAGE.

COGHLAN—NELSON.—On Wednesday, September 3rd, at The Church of S.S. Anselm and Cecilia, Kingsway, W.C.2, Dr. John Coghlan to Grace Nelson.

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NOTICES.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED. Consult H. M. BAKER, the woman Income Tax Expert, 275, High Holborn. Telephone: Holborn 377.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, September 7th. 6.30 p.m. Miss Maude Royden: "A Sermon to the Young."

TRADE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

BARGAIN—list free. Plants, Garden Utensils. Beautiful dwarf roses, named varieties, 6/- dozen, carriage paid.—MCELROY, 33, Saville St., South Shields.

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Name

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Minimum Annual Subscription, 1s.