

THE VOTE,
APRIL 6, 1923
ONE PENNY.

WOMEN PEERS FIRST!

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 1923

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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PREPARATIONS FOR THE ROME CONGRESS.

A Reception, in support of the Rome Congress, was held by the Women's Freedom League at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, on Friday, March 23rd, when Mrs. G. F. Abbott, Editor of *Jus Suffragii*, the organ of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, Mrs. Fawcett, J.P., L.L.A., and Mrs. Herebai Tata, of Madras, were the chief speakers.

Dr. Knight explained the object of the Rome Congress, and its special importance this year, because Italian women had not yet got the vote, and expressed the League's gratification at having secured such representative speakers that afternoon.

Mrs. Abbott said that the Alliance existed not only to obtain the suffrage for women in all civilised countries, but also to establish a real equality of status and opportunity between the sexes. There were two questions to-day which specially affected women: (1) Equal pay and opportunity, which included the abolition of all restrictions on women's work; and (2) Equal moral standard. There was a growing feeling in the country that married women should no longer be employed in public work, in spite of the existence of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act. Not only the L.C.C., but local authorities all over the Kingdom, were turning their married women out of employment. This prejudice against married women's work was not confined to Great Britain, but was prevalent to-day in all the countries of Europe. It was sometimes supported by motives of economy, and sometimes on eugenic grounds, but more often by sheer jealousy and ill-will.

As regarded an Equal Moral Standard, the Alliance, as well as the League of Nations, were definitely opposed to State regulation of vice, and in country after country progressive medical men were now denouncing the system, as morally bad and scientifically useless. A problem, however, was presenting itself as to what might replace State Regulation. Czecho-Slovakia, the Scandinavian countries, New Zealand, and Australia were now insisting upon compulsory notification of venereal disease, which, in the long run, would bring about conditions almost as bad as the Contagious Diseases Acts. It was only by means of Inter-

national bodies such as the Alliance and the League of Nations, that strong resolutions on such questions could reach the various countries.

The Congresses arranged biennially by the Alliance roused a great deal of interest in the countries where they were held, whilst the Press spread the proceedings broadcast. This year, because the Congress was being held in Italy, the Premier, M. Mussolini, had promised to introduce legislation giving Italian women the municipal vote on an educational basis.

Mrs. Fawcett said the most remarkable happening of modern times was the way in which the Woman's Movement had spread in every country. Its rapid advance could only be compared with the spread of Christianity. It had embraced the women of the East as well as of the West, and was no respecter of creed, caste, or colour. American women had been the first to recognise the international character of the movement, the creation of the Alliance being due to their efforts. Great progress was now being recorded in the East, as well as in the West. In India, women had already been admitted to the franchise in Bombay, Madras, Burma, and in the United Provinces, a vast region inhabited by 47 millions of people, where the question was carried in the Legislative Council without a single dissentient voice. In Palestine, the Government had been afraid to enfranchise the women, because of the strength of the Mohammedan population, which formed nine-tenths of the whole, yet, in the United Provinces of India, Moslem after Moslem had risen in the Assembly to express approval of woman suffrage.

Mrs. Tata said that, in India, province after province was gradually conceding the principle of woman suffrage. In Bombay and Madras, women had possessed municipal voting rights before becoming politically enfranchised. Indian women were now enfranchised at 21 years of age, but Burmese women could vote at 18. Women who paid rates, or possessed property in their own right, had the additional privilege of electing members for the Legislative Councils.

A vote of thanks to the speakers from Miss Underwood, coupled with a special tribute to Mrs. Fawcett, completed a most enjoyable afternoon.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Venereal Disease.

MR. WHEATLEY (Shettleston) asked the Under-Secretary to the Scottish Board of Health what was the total amount allocated in grants to Scottish Local Authorities for the treatment of venereal disease in the last six months of 1922; what was the amount of grants allocated to the same authorities for child welfare schemes in the same period; what was the total expenditure of the Glasgow Corporation on venereal disease treatment for the last six months of 1922; and the amount expended on child welfare? CAPT. ELLIOT regretted that he could not give the information in the precise form asked for, but in regard to the first two parts of the question, said that the Board's estimate for 1922-23 provided for grants amounting to £65,000 in respect of treatment of venereal disease, and £120,000 in respect of maternity service and child welfare schemes. With regard to the third and fourth parts of the question, he was informed that the Corporation of Glasgow stated that their expenditure in the six months ended November 30th last was £15,955 on venereal disease treatment, and £18,215 on child welfare.

Borstal Institutions, Aylesbury (Governorship).

MRS. WINTRINGHAM (Louth) asked the Home Secretary whether the post of Governor of the Borstal Institution, Aylesbury, was yet filled; if not, whether a suitable applicant would be debarred by reason of being a married woman; and, if so, whether it could be treated as a special appointment, not bound by Civil Service Rules? MR. LOCKER-LAMPSON (replying for the Home Office) said that a candidate had been chosen, and the arrangements for filling the post were approaching completion. The question of marriage did not arise, but he stated that the general rule for Civil Service appointments, and for appointments in the Prison Service, was against the employment of married women, although exceptions could be made where the Treasury and Civil Service Commissioners were satisfied that the interests of the public service so required. *We learn that a woman has now been appointed to this post.*

Poor Law Institutions (Women Inspectors).

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, replying to MR. J. BUTLER (Cambridge University), said that the duties of the women General Inspectors of the Ministry of Health comprised the routine inspection of Poor Law infirmaries, sick wards, and nurseries of Poor Law institutions, and also of children's homes and boarded-out children. The number of Poor Law institutions in England and Wales was 722, to which 206 visits were paid by women inspectors last year. *From these figures it certainly appears that the number of women inspectors under the Ministry of Health should be immediately increased.*

Insurance Inspectors.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply to another question by MR. BUTLER, said that the duties of men inspectors were to secure compliance with the provisions of the National Health and Unemployment Insurance Acts, and to act within their districts as the local executive officers of the Insurance Department of the Ministry of Health. The women inspectors were employed in the inspection of trade, where women were mainly employed, and in inquiries as to the benefits of insured women. The numbers of higher and lower posts for men and women were as follow:—Men: Assistant Inspectors, 92; Inspectors, 57; Divisional Inspectors, 12. Women: Assistant Inspectors, 41; Inspectors, 17. In addition, there were 120 Health Insurance Officers (men), against 19 Health Insurance Officers (women). The women staff was not organised on a divisional basis, and, therefore, there were no divisional inspectors' posts for women. With regard to the staff generally, the numbers were fixed with strict regard to the requirements of the work.

Ministry of Health (Women).

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, replying to MR. GERALD HURST (Moss Side), said that the duties of the woman officer serving in the Establishment Division were identical with those of men of the same grade in the Division. They were equally consulted when necessary on questions affecting the male and female staff. He saw no necessity for appointing a woman as Assistant Director of establishments. In reply to a further question by MR. HURST, the MINISTER OF HEALTH said that the total number of male officers employed in his Department was 2,805; the total number of female officers was 1,092. There was no woman establishment officer, but a woman was employed as a first-class clerk in the Establishment Division of the Ministry, at a salary of £300, rising to £400 a year. Her duties were interchangeable with the male officers of her grade serving in the Division, of whom there were two.

Inland Revenue Department.

MAJOR BOYD-CARPENTER (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), in reply to a question by Mr. Griffiths (Pontypool), said that the re-organisation of this Department was not yet complete, and at present one higher clerical post only had been specially assigned to a woman. The work of the Department did not favour a definite allocation of clerical posts by reference to sex. *We wonder what he meant?*

Board of Education (Women)

MR. AMMON (N. Camberwell) asked the President of the Board of Education whether the reorganisation of his Department was yet complete; and, if so, what steps had been taken to open to women opportunities of training in the work of all branches of his Department in accordance with Clause 2 of the Resolution of the House of August 5th, 1921, which provided that women should be given equality of opportunity with men in the Civil Service? MR. WOOD replied that the re-organisation of his Department was practically complete. There had been regard throughout to the principle laid down in the Resolution referred to.

Unemployed Teachers (Wales and Monmouthshire).

MR. WOOD, replying to MR. EDWARDS (Bedwely), regretted he had no information to show the total number of qualified unemployed teachers in Wales and Monmouthshire. According to the latest information in his possession, 205 of the students who left the training colleges in Wales and Monmouthshire last summer had failed to obtain posts. The number of students expected to leave those training colleges next July was 793; but until they had completed their course he could not say how many of them would be fully qualified. Replying to a further question, MR. WOOD said it was not in his power to provide maintenance for the teachers who were out of employment.

Fiji (Dr. Mildred Staley).

MRS. WINTRINGHAM asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he had received a copy of a translation of a petition from the Indian women in Fiji, asking for the continuance of the appointment of Dr. Staley; and, if so, whether, in view of the petition, he would reconsider his previous decision regarding such appointment? MR. ORMSBY-GORE replied that he had received a translation of the petition. The Secretary of State regretted that, in view of the serious financial position in Fiji, he did not feel justified in urging the Governor to revise his decision not to renew Dr. Staley's engagement.

Legitimacy Bill.

This Bill, which provides for the legitimisation of children born out of wedlock by the subsequent marriage of parents, has passed its Second Reading and through its Committee stage in the House of Commons.

F. A. U.

WOMEN AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. WOMEN AT HOME & ABROAD.

Lunacy reform, smoke abatement, and cinema censorship were the chief topics discussed by the Women's Local Government Society at their annual meeting at the Caxton Hall, on Thursday, March 22nd.

The urgent need for women on the Visiting Committees of Public Mental Hospitals was stressed by Sir Robert Newman, M.P., and a strong resolution was passed welcoming the legislative proposal that two, at least, of the members of every such Committee should be women.

The fact that there are more women lunatics than men seemed unduly to depress one delegate, who quoted an Asylum Superintendent as having told her that there were three or four times as many women patients as men! If people would only consult the Board of Control statistics, and otherwise keep in touch with modern research into mental illness, they would realise that, although there unfortunately do exist more women mental patients, there also happen to be about two more million women than men in this country! It is likewise an established fact that the private asylums in England contain far more men than women, presumably because they have more money to pay the somewhat high fees demanded. Women criminal lunatics are remarkably few and far between, and so are the women who have gone mad through drink. Among those suffering from general paralysis of the insane, caused by the social scourge, as established by Sir Frederick Mott, the proportion of women is again remarkably small.

Miss Evelyn Fox (Hon. Sec., Central Association for Mental Welfare) said that in many asylums the women inmates were still doomed to wear the clothing in vogue thirty years ago, because it had not occurred to the Visiting Committee to arrange matters otherwise. At present only women County Councillors could be appointed to serve on Visiting Committees, and, as women County Councillors were not very numerous, women on Visiting Committees were still less numerous.

Councillor Mrs. Hatfield, who had called attention to the alleged lack of bathing facilities at Willerby Asylum, Yorks, said she had visited the asylum as a Guardian, and had no power, beyond that of publicity, of remedying the defect.

Dr. H. D. Des Voeux, of the Coal Smoke Abatement Society, moved a Resolution, that "The Women's Local Government Society should urge upon Parliament and the Ministry of Health that it should be made compulsory for Local Authorities to use the powers which they have for abating the smoke nuisance, and that these powers ought to be increased, with a view to removing one of the main sources of waste, dirt, disease, and lowered vitality."

There was no motion passed on Cinema Censorship, but Miss M. Berry (Sec., Women's Local Government Society) demonstrated the influence of the film on the child mind, and the need for women to ensure that such influence was a good one. S. W. M.

EASTER CAMPAIGN—BRIGHTON.

PLEASE HELP!

This year's campaign at the National Union of Teachers' Annual Conference at Brighton is of special importance, in view of various Resolutions to be proposed, to "suspend" and "rescind" the Union's policy of Equal Pay for men and women, and to prevent the employment of married women teachers.

Miss Alix Clark is devoting her time and energy to the Campaign, and urgently asks for the help of all our members for the heavy expenses of this invaluable work. Offers of help and donations should be addressed to Miss Clark, Forde, 25, Bloomsbury Place, Marine Parade, Brighton.

Women in the Dutch Civil Service.

The modes of entry and the highest posts in the Dutch Civil Service are open to men and women alike. Many of the women in the Dutch Civil Service are university graduates, the most eminent being Clara Wickmann, a brilliant young lawyer. Although during the last twelve months most of the Departments of State in Holland have reduced their personnel, hardly any women were dismissed, whilst, since April, 1921, there has been a steady increase in the number of women in the higher grades.

American Women and Science.

The Assistant Curator of Marine Invertebrates in the National Museum, at Washington, is a woman, and another woman is doing valuable work as an investigator in fish culture, and in the prevention of stream pollution. The New York Zoological Society employ women on research work in connection with tropical fauna, and a museum in South Carolina has a woman director. Both in botany and zoology many women are earning a living as teachers, and at some of the universities there are women on the administrative side of both museum and garden staffs.

A Czecho-Slovakian Feminist.

Czecho-Slovakia has just celebrated the 60th anniversary of a pioneer feminist, Mme. Vikova-Kunevicka, who was the first woman to be elected to the Bohemian Diet, in 1902, long before woman suffrage was seriously thought of. She made her debut as a writer and a feminist, by a novel, "Revolt," which contained a passionate plea for the emancipation of women, and an appeal to her fellow-countrywomen to work for equality with men.

American Women and Nature Study.

In Colorado there is a woman director of the State Board of Agriculture, and a woman organises collections in the Natural History Museum, in Chicago. New York employs two women at the Botanical Gardens, one as a research assistant, and the other as a technical assistant, while many women work as technical advisers to scientific journals.

Women and Orchestras.

Sir Henry Wood has put it on record, from his own professional experience, that the presence of professional women violinists in an orchestra changes its working tone for the better, and that, as regards efficiency, they play the violin just as well as the men, and are keenly interested in their work. The women receive the same pay as the men.

An International Gift.

Miss Llewelyn Davies and Miss Harris, the last general and assistant secretaries of the Women's Co-operative Guild, will devote the testimonial of nearly £800, which was presented to them by the Guild branches on their retirement from office, to promoting international organisation among co-operative women.

Woman Angler's Record.

The heaviest salmon caught on the River Tay this season, a magnificent fish of 41 lbs., 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, and 25 inches in girth, has been landed by a woman, Mrs. Graham, fishing on the Lower Scone stretch of the river. Last year also the record Tay salmon was caught by a woman.

Belgian Women and Literature.

Mlle. Marie Belpaire, an authoress of Anvers, has been elected a member of the Flemish Academy. The Grand Prize for Literature in the Province of Brabant has been won by Mme. Cecile Gilson, for her novel, "The Marvellous Summer."

Resignation of Dr. Claypon.

Dr. Janet Lane Claypon, Dean of the Household and Social Science Department, King's College for Women, is resigning her post as from the end of the summer term.

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NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—
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EDITORIAL.

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

THE GUARDIANSHIP OF CHILDREN.

The Guardianship of Infants Bill, sponsored by Lord Askwith, has passed through the House of Lords, and has now been referred to a Joint Committee of Members of both Houses of Parliament. During the last Parliament it passed its Second Reading in the House of Commons, went through Committee, and came back to the House for Report, but its progress was then blocked by one or two opponents. Soon after the opening of the present Parliament, the Prime Minister was asked if the Government would bring in a similar Bill, but the Government's answer was a definite refusal to do so. We sincerely hope, however, that sufficient pressure will be brought to bear upon the Government, when the present Bill has been considered by the Joint Committee, to give full facilities for its passage into law. This Bill has the support of practically every organisation, irrespective of party, interested in the welfare of women and children, and, if passed, will remove one of the most glaring of the existing inequalities of the law as between men and women. It proposes to amend the law as to the rights and responsibilities of parents with respect to the guardianship, custody, and maintenance of their legitimate children, and provides that the mother of every legitimate infant shall be guardian jointly with the father for all purposes, and have equal authority, rights, and responsibilities. It further provides that the parents of every legitimate infant shall both be liable for the maintenance and education of their children, according to their means. Not only will the parents, while both are living, have equal rights of guardianship over their children, but the father and mother of any legitimate infant shall each have the right (if such infant be unmarried) to appoint a guardian or guardians of such infant by deed or will as from his or her own death, and the guardian or guardians so appointed shall act jointly with the surviving parent. Where one parent is dead, and has appointed no guardian, the surviving parent shall be the sole guardian of such infant, unless it be shown to the satisfaction of a Court of Justice that the surviving parent is, for any reason, unfitted to be the sole guardian. Where both parents are dead, the guardian or guardians appointed by the father and mother respectively shall act jointly. Under the existing law, the father alone of a legitimate child has the right to say where and how that child may be educated. He can, if he chooses, take it entirely out of the mother's care and jurisdiction, and she has no redress, unless it can be proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the father is an entirely unfit person to have charge of the child. Such a state of things is one of the greatest anomalies of our present stage of civilisation, and all self-respecting women rightly and strongly resent the inferiority of their position, as compared with that of the father in respect of their children. The reform which the Guardianship of Infants Bill seeks to bring about is long overdue, and we trust that our readers will do all in their power to persuade their local Members of Parliament to urge the Government to secure its passage into law without delay.

WOMEN PEERS FIRST!

On March 22nd, Lord Newton, in the House of Lords, called attention to the recent return of the attendances of Peers in the Hereditary Chamber. Those who attended regularly might be estimated at 150 or 200, and nearly all the talking was done by about fifty or sixty noble lords. He suggested that the whole body of peers should elect a limited number of themselves to sit at Westminster, in the same way as Scottish peers were chosen—the number to be 250 or 300. Viscount Knutsford declared that, if that proposal was carried into effect, peers would be deprived of the only political privilege left to them, and they would be classed with criminals and paupers (he might have added all women under 30) in not having a vote in the election of the Government, or power to turn it out. Lord Phillimore stated that, since the case of the Earl of Bristol, in the reign of James I., it had been held that every peer had a constitutional right to a writ of summons, and that neither the Crown nor his brother peers could exclude him from taking his seat. Lord Oranmore and Browne suggested that no peer should be allowed to take his seat in that House under the age of 30, nor should he be allowed to exercise his full functions of debating and voting until he had served three years as a probationary period, during which time he must attend at least one private Bill in Committee! Viscount Burnham favoured the reform, holding that their lordships' House was the most cumbersome and uncertain of all the Legislative Assemblies of the world. They were now working on lines which led to ridicule, and which did not tend to consolidate our Parliamentary institutions. Lord Curzon, replying for the Government, said that the really important question in the future was not the question of numbers; it was a question of powers. They could not deal with this problem in morsels; it must be dealt with as a whole. The task was immensely difficult, but it would be undertaken by the Government later on. No mention was made during this Debate of the claims of peeresses in their own right to a seat and a voice in the House of Lords. In our view, this is the most urgent of any of the reforms suggested in connection with the Upper House, and when the Government can find time to deal with this question "as a whole," we shall most certainly urge that the claims of peeresses in their own right shall be fully considered.

PUBLIC EDUCATION.

On the motion for the adjournment of the House of Commons until April 9th, Sir John Simons called attention to the present condition of public education in this country, and the attitude of the Board of Education towards educational progress, as illustrated by recent Departmental action. He contended that the Board of Education ought to stimulate educational advance, but it appeared sometimes as if it was acting merely as an outpost of the Treasury, cutting down and limiting educational standards, and putting forward definitely retrograde proposals. This was seen in the present size of the classes in elementary schools, in the provision of so few places in secondary schools, and in the suspension of the awarding of State scholarships for the University, as well as by the introduction of unqualified teachers into the special schools of this country, for the blind, the deaf, the mentally and physically defective, and into our infant schools. The policy now being followed by the Board of Education produced the maximum of friction, not only with the local authorities, but also with the teachers. What was needed was a conception of national education which realised that money spent on inefficient education was waste, and the active pursuit of a wise educational policy was the best form of economy. During the last three or four years we had failed to provide for the youth of the nation what was the best source of national strength—the education which they ought to have. With these sentiments the Women's Freedom League heartily concurs.

THE MANDATES COMMISSION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

In accordance with a Resolution passed at the Annual Meeting on November 30th, the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations has been urging the appointment of more women on the Permanent Mandates Commission. In view of the omission in Mandates A and B of any reference to the responsibility of mandatories regarding the traffic in women and children, the matter is of paramount importance, and this omission and the demand for the appointment of more women has been brought by the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, not only before the authorities here and in Geneva, but also before the Council of the League of Nations at their session last January.

A communication has now been received (February 22nd, 1923) from the Foreign Office, of which the following is an extract:—

"As the Resolution forwarded in your letter was based on the fact that there is no explicit reference in the text of 'A and B' mandates to the responsibilities of mandatories in connection with the traffic in women and children, the following observations regarding the application to British mandated territories of the Convention on this traffic, adopted by the League of Nations in September last, may be of interest:—

"The list of International Conventions mentioned in Article 12 of the mandate for Irak, and in Article 19 of the mandate for Palestine, is not intended to be exhaustive. His Majesty's Government recognise the importance of securing the accession of the Govern-

ments of these territories to the above-mentioned Convention, and, in the case of Palestine, steps are already being taken to this end.

"The position as regards the Cameroons is that the mandate provides for the application to the territory of any general international Conventions applicable to the contiguous territory of the mandatory. It is not intended to apply the Traffic in Women and Children Convention of 1921 to Nigeria, and, therefore, it is not proposed to apply it to the British sphere of the Cameroons, more especially as social and other conditions in this territory render such application unnecessary.

"The social conditions of the British sphere in Togoland likewise render the application of the Convention thereto unnecessary, and actually undesirable; but, if for geographical reasons it is decided to administer any portion of this territory as if it were an integral part of the Gold Coast Colony, which has decided to accept the Convention, it will apply necessarily to such part.

"The same considerations in the case of the Cameroons apply in the case of Tanganyika Territory, and it is not proposed to apply the Convention in this case."

Readers of THE VOTE will agree that this explanation is entirely unsatisfactory, and the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations has sought the co-operation of other societies non-affiliated, such as the League of Nations, in getting the question properly threshed out.

THE RELATIONS OF THIS COUNTRY WITH RUSSIA.

The last of the series of Fortnightly Lectures on Foreign Politics, arranged by the Women's Freedom League, was held on Monday, March 26th, when Mr. A. Macdonell, of the League of Nations Union, spoke upon "The Relations of this Country with Russia." Mrs. Mustard presided, pointing out, in her introductory remarks, the necessity for an inside knowledge of other countries, for which purpose the Women's Freedom League had arranged this special series of Lectures on Foreign Politics.

Mr. Macdonell said the subject of Russia was not only a vast but an extraordinarily difficult one. A deal of nonsense had been written about Russia during the last few years, and it was necessary to take an impartial point of view about the country, and not a political one. The Czarist Government had been the worst government in Europe. Ninety per cent. of the population were peasants, with no voice in the Government, and only 8 per cent. were educated. In spite of this régime, a tremendous reverence prevailed amongst the common people for God, and for the Czar as His representative on earth. When the war broke out, the whole of Russia went to fight with extraordinary enthusiasm and religious fervour. But the soldiers were badly equipped, and practically without weapons, and also suffered from inferior leadership. In spite of their heroism, therefore, the Russian Army could make no headway against Germany, and during the severe winter of 1917, became physically unable to continue fighting any longer. This moment was seized by Kerensky and his party, who immediately set up local Soviets, chiefly committees of soldiers and sailors, and took the authority out of the hands of the officers. The Army now ceased fighting, and began to stream back to Russia. A provisional Government was set up, and the Czar abdicated.

The real Bolsheviks, or "majority" group, now saw their chance, and came forward, with Lenin in charge. This remarkable man had been working for 20 years to bring about the overthrow of Czarism, and the war now gave him his supreme opportunity. Lenin had a definite plan of a Soviet Government, and, after overthrowing Kerensky and his party, he disintegrated the Army, putting all the rolling stock in Russia at the disposal of the soldiers, so as to rush them all quickly home. From that time onwards Kerensky and his

party had no further opportunity of being returned to power.

In 1917, the Russian people were numb and bewildered with their continual sufferings. A conviction seized the peasants that God had deserted them, and a wave of irreligion, superstition, and black magic passed over the country. Churches, ikons, and shrines were abandoned. Wrangel and Denikin's army, known as the White Army, now came forward, aided by the French and British, in an attempt to overthrow the Soviet Government, but the peasants, who had now taken possession of the plots of land they used to till for the dispossessed landed nobles, rallied to the side of Lenin, and defeated the new attack.

The Communists now settled down resolutely to working out their economic millennium. The peasants still stuck to their land, though the Bolsheviks tried to take it, and make it into Communist property. In order to abolish money, Lenin turned out paper roubles at a great rate, but as no personal property, nor private trading was allowed, since this savoured of Capitalism, the roubles were useless. State ownership being impossible in such an enormous country, Lenin introduced a kind of Guild Socialism, and all property was transferred to the various Trade Unions. Lenin, however, finally acknowledged the failure of his theories, after 20 years of propaganda, and announced a return to Capitalism for a period of 25 years, during which time the public was to be educated up to it, and Russia was to be thrown open to foreigners, who were to be allowed to run the country. During this allotted period Lenin foresaw an entirely new generation growing up in Russia, who would eventually govern it on a Communist basis.

Education now began to go ahead in the various towns. The big houses in the open country were turned into schools, and filled with children from the slum areas, whilst ambitious educational programmes were conceived and executed amongst both children and adults. The famine of August, 1921, caused chiefly by the failure of the crops, owing to a severe drought, interrupted the new development, however. The famine spread with extraordinary rapidity, and millions of people died. The peasants, believing it to be a visitation from God for their former irreligion, and for the murder of the Czar, now became seized by

an extraordinary religious revival, and the churches, hitherto empty, were soon crowded again.

The relations between Great Britain and Russia were almost non-existent at the present day. The formalities of entering and leaving the country were still very great, and also an indescribable chaos prevailed inside Russia, especially as regarded postal and travelling facilities. A certain steady volume of trade, however, was now distinctly on the increase, though nothing in proportion to what it was before the war. When Russia started to move in earnest, she would probably get back to a democratic form of Government, and the Soviet rule would go, and Great Britain would then resume her old standard of friendliness. The present system was crumbling fast, for Lenin was being driven to recognise that it was imperative to resume relationships with the other Powers.

Many questions, and an animated discussion, in which several Russian men and women who were present took part, followed the speaker's address.

WOMEN'S VOTES.

Women cannot be reminded too often of the inequalities of the franchise as between men and women. According to the *Western Morning News* and *Mercury* it was stated during the revision of the voters' lists for Redruth that an impression had got abroad that, as soon as women attained the age of 30, they were entitled to a vote, without any other qualification; but Mr. Henry Grylls, Deputy Registration Officer, remarked that, if that were the case, they would have 2,000 more voters on the list! At Newton Abbot, the Registration Officer decided that a lady's maid at Harcombe House was not entitled to a vote, although she had her own furniture in her apartments. The fact that her employer lived in the same house disqualified her. A case adjourned from the Kingsbridge Court was mentioned. In that case, a father, son, and daughter claimed as joint occupiers, and the Registration Officer said he had adjourned the case to give the claimants the opportunity of producing their deeds to show that they were joint owners of the property. They had not attended. The father was given his full vote, the son only the Parliamentary vote, and the claims of the daughter and the son's wife were disallowed!

According to the *Nottingham Journal and Express*, in the recent revision of the Newark Division lists, Mr. K. T. Meaby, the Registration Officer for Notts, deferred his decision in the case of several applications for the Parliamentary vote made on behalf of unmarried women. Mr. Meaby has now given the following decision:—

"In my opinion, to entitle an unmarried woman of 30 or upwards to succeed in her claim to the Parliamentary franchise, it is essential that such person should occupy, as owner or tenant, land or premises of the yearly value of not less than £5, or a dwelling-house which, for the purposes of the Act, includes any part of a house where that part is occupied separately as a dwelling-house, irrespective of value.

"If the claim is based on an agreement of tenancy in the legal sense, it must be shown conclusively that the room which is occupied is in the undisturbed control of the person to whom the same is let, and that the claimant has an estate in law carved out of the dominant tenement; and, further, it must be of the yearly value of £5. If the occupied room, on the other hand, is alleged to be a dwelling-house within the meaning of the Act to which I have already referred, no condition as to the yearly value of the room would attach.

"The circumstance as to whether the room is let furnished or unfurnished is not material if the claimant is a party to an agreement of tenancy, but if the claimant is a lodger only, the room must be let in an unfurnished state.

"Each case must be decided upon the facts, and my decision upon the cases before me is that in no case is the evidence disclosed to me sufficient to substantiate a claim for the Parliamentary franchise."

BOOK REVIEW.

Stories, Dreams, and Allegories. By Olive Schreiner. (T. Fisher Unwin.) 6/- net. (Can be obtained at this Office.)

This is a posthumous collection of short stories and allegories, which, with the exception of a novel which it is proposed to publish later, includes all of Olive Schreiner's yet unprinted or uncollected imaginative writings. The general impression is disappointing, most of the stories, etc., being very fragmentary, and in some cases unfinished. There is, however, one good story, the longest in the collection, entitled "Eighteen-ninety-nine." It is the story of two women, one old, one young, who live together in a little daub-and-wattle house in the Northern Transvaal. With them lives the younger woman's son, equally doted upon by both mother and grandmother. His father, grandfather, and uncles all lie buried beneath the veldt. The old grandmother tells the boy many stories of the early doings of the British in Cape Colony, of the great battles with Moselikatse, of the murder of Retief and his men by Dingaan, and of Dingaan's Day. The boy shows great promise as he grows towards manhood, and the two women pinch and scrape so as to save enough money to send him to Europe to be educated. But the South African War breaks up all their cherished plans, and the boy goes a-soldiering instead, to fight for his country. The descriptions of his death in a kopje encounter, and the tragic grief of the two bereaved women, are very graphically depicted, reviving again, after many years, the now half-forgotten horrors of the South African War.

GREEN, WHITE & GOLD FAIR.

Our Annual Green, White, and Gold Fair has been fixed for Friday and Saturday, November 23rd and 24th, in the Basement Hall, at the Central Hall, Westminster. In addition to many attractive Stalls for Provisions, Cakes and Sweets, Jumpers, Handkerchiefs, Woollies, Children's Clothing, Overalls and Aprons, Toys, Underclothing, etc., there will be a good Musical Programme and Competitions. The latter this year will be one of the most important items of the Fair.

Messrs. Weldon's and Co., 30-32, Southampton Street, Strand, W.C.2, have offered a prize of Two Guineas for the best Camisole made from one of their Patterns. The Competition is open to members and non-members. The entrance fee for this, and all other competitions, will be 6d., and competitors may use any materials they wish. All Camisoles sent in for competition will be sold afterwards for the good of the cause. A label bearing the number of Messrs. Weldon's Pattern, also the name and address of the competitor, must be firmly sewn to the Camisole.

All exhibits for Competitions should be addressed to the Hon. Fair Secretary, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1, and sent *not later than November 15th*. Particulars of other Competitions will appear later. (Hon. Fair Sec.) ELIZABETH BERRY.

GREEN, WHITE & GOLD FAIR.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 23RD & 24TH.

STRING BAND.

Amateur String Players are invited to give their services to provide a Band for the days of the Fair. The Band will be under the Hon. Conductorship of Mrs. Van Raalte. Application to be made to the Hon. Fair Sec., Women's Freedom League Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Women's Freedom League.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Monday, April 9th, at 3 p.m. "Fair" Sub Committee Meeting, at 144 High Holborn, W.C.1.

Monday, April 16th, at 6.30 p.m. Mid-London Branch Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. To Discuss Conference Agenda and instruct Delegate.

Monday, April 23rd, at 8 p.m. Hampstead Branch Meeting for Members only, at 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, N.W. 3 (by kind permission of Mrs. Harverson). Conference Business.

Friday, April 27th, at 2.30 p.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday, April 28th. Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Caxton Hall.

Thursday, June 7th, 2 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. Garden Fête at "The Hill," Hampstead (kindly lent by Viscount Leverhulme), Women's Freedom League, Green, White and Gold Stall.

Friday, July 6th, Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party, Caxton Hall, Westminster. Further particulars later.

PROVINCES.

Monday, April 9th. Middlesbrough. Annual Meeting at 231A, The Arcade, Linthorpe Road.

Tuesday, April 24th, at 8 p.m. Southend-on-Sea and District. Public Meeting at St. John's Ambulance Hall, 76, Queen's Road. Speaker: John W. Burrows, Esq. Subject: "Education."

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Tuesday, April 10th, 8 p.m. to 12.30 a.m. Dance and Reception at Bedford College, arranged by the British Rome Congress Committee. Tickets 5/- on sale at this office.

Wednesday, April 11th, at 8 p.m. Women's League of Union, Oak Room, Kingsway Hall. Speaker: Miss Vera Brittain, B.A. Subject: "The Situation in the Ruhr."

BRANCH NOTES.

HAMPSTEAD.

A Members' Meeting was held (by kind permission of Dr. Knight) at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3, on Tuesday, March 27th, when the Resolutions and Amendments for the Annual Conference were discussed and voted on, and other business arranged. Mrs. Harverson presided, and kindly offered the use of the Isis Club for meetings once a month. This offer was gratefully accepted by the members present. The Branch undertook to provide two stalls, for Handkerchiefs, Antiques, and White Elephants, at the Green, White, and Gold Fair, at the Central Hall, on November 23rd and 24th. All members who were unable to be present are earnestly asked to do their utmost for these stalls during the year. Dr. Knight kindly entertained those present to tea. The Hon. Secretary is glad to report that twelve new members have recently joined the Branch.

(Hon. Sec.) ELIZABETH BERRY, 16, Denning Road, N.W.3.

BEXHILL.

A successful meeting was held at Glyne Hall, Sea Road, on March 23rd, when Mrs. Lathbury presided over a very appreciative audience who had come to hear Dr. Octavia Lewin lecture on "How to Prevent Diseases in the Home." The speaker pointed out how important it is to keep the nasal passages clear, and strongly pressed the points that children, including tiny babies, must use their own handkerchiefs, and not be at the mercy of friends who are in the habit of wiping a child's nose with any handkerchief that happens to be handy at the moment. A great many questions were asked, which were dealt with in a very satisfactory manner. Several copies of Dr. Lewin's "Alphabet" were sold. New members were made, and several "sympathisers" asked to have notices sent of future meetings, as the Women's Freedom League was making a name in Bexhill, and they wished to hear more about it.

We acknowledge with thanks the following subscriptions:—Mrs. Shoemith, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Lathbury, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Piper, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Hart, 1s.; Mrs. Turnbull, 1s.; Miss Muir, 1s.; Mrs. Williams, 2s. 6d.; Miss Iles, 1s.

(Organiser) MAUD L. WHITE, 8, Holmesdale Garden, Hastings.

In Memoriam.

March 26th.—ETHEL AVRES PURDIE, of 34, Hillmorton Road, Holloway, and Hampden House, Kingsway; aged 48 years.

TREASURY LIST.

NATIONAL FUND.

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ISIS CLUB, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, Hampstead. Feminist Rally, Wednesday, 11th April. Chair: Miss Abadam. Speaker: Miss Kate Raleigh. Friends welcome.

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