

TUPPENCE AN HOUR!

THE VOTE

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

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, MAY 22, 1925

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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TUPPENCE AN HOUR!

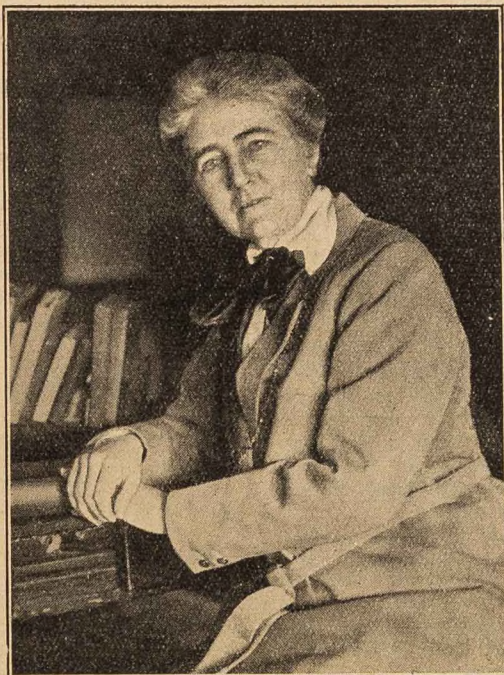
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WOMEN AND THE LORDS.

The Peeresses Bill, introduced by Lord Astor, which came up for its Second Reading in the House of Lords last Thursday, too late for us to report upon before going to press, not only had the warm support of 34 women's organisations behind it, but was backed by practically all the 21 peeresses in their own right, whose present political disabilities the Bill seeks to remove. Twelve out of the twenty-one attached their signatures to a comprehensive letter which appeared in *The Times* last Friday, and which pointed out that Lord Astor's Bill was merely the logical outcome of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act of 1919, and that organised women were in "remarkable agreement" as to its purpose. There was danger, however, the letter went on to say, that opponents of the measure might seek to confuse its simple issue by connecting it with the highly controversial question of the general reform of the House of Lords, and that an attempt might be made to defer it for consideration by the Cabinet Committee to be set up to inquire into the larger question, which would probably mean the indefinite postponement of the peeresses' claims. The earnestness of the letter, and the number of distinguished signatures attached, provide eloquent proof of the useful missionary propaganda Lady Rhondda has been carrying out among the peeresses ever since the temporary failure of her plucky initial campaign, which first set the ball rolling.



VISCOUNTESS WOLSELEY.

Photo by

[Elliott & Fry.]

There are at least 21 peeresses in their own right who would be entitled to receive the Royal Summons to the House of Lords, should Lord Astor's Bill become law. Their names are as follows:—The Duchess of Fife (Princess Arthur of Connaught), The Countess of Cromartie, Countess Roberts, D.B.E., Viscountess Wolseley, Viscountess Rhondda, Baroness de Ros, Baroness Fauconberg and Conyers (Countess of Yarborough), Baroness Furnivall, Baroness Strange of Knockin, Hungerford (1425) and de Moleyns (1444), Baroness Zouche, Baroness Beaumont, Baroness Darcy de Knayth, Baroness Botreaux (1367) Stanley (1456) and Hastings (1461) S.C. London, Baroness Berkeley, M.B.E., Baroness Wentworth, Baroness Clifton, Baroness Lucas, S.B. (Dingwall), Baroness Burton, Baroness Dorchester, Baroness Strathcona and Mt. Royal, and Baroness Ravensdale (Lady Irene Curzon). Four other Scottish peeresses, Baroness Herries (Duchess of Norfolk), Lady Gray, Lady Kinloss, and the Countess of Seafeld, are not eligible, however, for seats in the House of Lords until they have been elected by their

fellow peers assembled at Holyrood.

The holder of the oldest distinction among these peeresses is Baroness de Ros, whose title was created in 1264. It is interesting to note that Lady Rhondda, Princess Arthur of Connaught, and Lady Cromartie succeeded to their fathers' titles. Lady Cromartie is

the author of some six or eight books, extremely vivacious, and a clever conversationalist.

Countess Roberts and Viscountess Wolseley (whose portrait is here reproduced) are well known as the daughters of famous field-m Marshals. Lady Wolseley, who is such a great authority on gardening, recently offered Hove Town Council to establish at the Library a reference room and museum devoted to horticulture and agriculture, in memory of her father. Lady Wolseley has also founded a College of Gardening for women at Glynde, Sussex, and a training school for women smallholders.

Two of the peeresses are sisters, the Countess of Powis (who is Baroness Darcy de Knayth in her own right) and the Countess of Yarborough (who succeeded to the barony of Fauconberg in 1903, and to that of Conyers in 1888).

The youngest of the peeresses is Baroness Furnivall, who will be twenty-five this month, but Baroness Clifton runs her very close, and is only four months her senior. Lady Clifton has just passed her Bar Final, and is also a writer and artist of some ability. She was for a time on the staff of a daily paper.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A Famous Showwoman.

Mrs. Eliza Baker, proprietor of Baker's Circus and Menagerie, and one of the best-known showwomen in Great Britain, died in her daughter's caravan, at Mitcham, aged 68, recently. With her husband, the late Thomas Baker, known as the handsome acrobat, she founded the Showmen's Guild. Their circus travelled the whole of the British Isles, and 30 years ago paraded over 100 horses.

Women Voters and Study Schools.

A nation-wide system of study schools designed to educate American women voters in the principal public questions of the day are to be established by the National League of Women voters in the United States. Special attention will be given to registration laws, the child labour amendment, the World Court, and such selected state problems as jury service for women, equalization of educational opportunity, and state child labour laws.

A Distinguished Poetess.

Miss Amy Lowell, whose death is reported from America, was one of that country's greatest poets. Though firmly standing for the rights of women, she was not, however, a champion of the intellectual equality of the sexes. On one occasion she even said that women were not intended for intellectual life, nor to possess the same mental equipment as men.

Norwegian Woman M.P.

Mrs. Helga Karlsen, temporary representative in the Storting for two months during the enforced absence of Martin Tranmael, is the first married woman to have a seat in the Storting, and also the first woman representative of Labour in the Norwegian Parliament. Mrs. Karlsen has been connected with the Norwegian Labour movement for nearly 20 years.

Women and Agriculture.

A large proportion of the students in the horticultural and agricultural departments of Reading University College are girls, and some of the higher positions in the Agricultural Faculty are also held by women.

Frenchwoman enters Lhasa.

Mme. Alexandra David, a Frenchwoman, has recently returned to Paris after 14 years spent in Tibet. During that time she lived for two months in the forbidden city of Lhasa, disguised as a beggar. For two years she lived in a cave in the mountains on the Indian frontier, 12,000 feet up.

Woman County Librarian.

Miss M. J. Powell has been appointed by the Surrey Education Committee as county librarian under the rural library scheme.

Woman Chairman of Council and J.P.

Mrs. Marshall, the only woman member of the Saltburn Urban Council, has been elected chairman for the ensuing year, and is entitled to a seat on the magisterial bench at Redcar.

Women Balloonists.

Two of the three British competitors in the Gordon-Bennett balloon race at Brussels this month are women—Mrs. John Dunville, wife of Lieut.-Colonel Dunville, the famous balloonist, and Mrs. Arthur Spencer.

First Woman Barrister in Spain.

Señorita Victoria Kent, a Spanish woman of English extraction is the first woman barrister to plead before a Spanish court. The Madrid newspapers comment on her brilliant defence of a man accused of homicide.

Woman Chairman Appointed.

Mrs. Beatrice Drapper, J.P., a Labour member of Deptford Borough Council, who was elected chairman of the Greenwich Board of Guardians recently, is the first woman to hold that position.

Women in Hungarian Upper House.

Membership of the Upper House, which is now to be added to the Hungarian Parliament, will be open to women.

Youthful Actress-Manager.

Miss Cicely Eldon, age 24, who is her own manager, and is financially responsible for a touring revue, is appearing at a Kingston-on-Thames theatre this week. She claims to be the youngest actress-manager in the country. Her company is touring an André Charlot revue.

LUNACY REFORM.

PROTEST AGAINST SECRECY.

Ninety Members of Parliament belonging to all Parties (including Mrs. Philipson and Miss Wilkinson) have signed a Memorial to the Prime Minister protesting against the decision of the Royal Commission on Lunacy Reform not to permit any "ex-patient" (however sane, or however unjustly certified) to appear in public. The memorialists point out that where ex-patients are ready to appear, this is the only effectual method whereby the veil of secrecy can be penetrated and the truth elicited. We entirely agree with them. The Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the whole administration of our lunacy laws, and the public have a right to know what has been seen and experienced by the persons who have themselves been inmates of mental hospitals.

The Royal Commission was appointed in answer to a widespread public uneasiness as to the treatment of mental patients, and this method of taking the evidence of all ex-patients in private defeats the object of its appointment.

AN AMERICAN WOMAN SEA CAPTAIN

Mrs. Jennie E. Crocker, of Cliftondale, Massachusetts, is probably the only woman in the world who is in command of a sea-going vessel. Her ship is the schooner "Ruth Martin," on which her husband acts as first mate. Her present rank, attained almost a year ago, enables her to hold the position of master of freight and towing steamships and sailing vessels of not more than 700 gross tons, but she intends soon to apply for the highest degree of master's licence. Mrs. Crocker is a graduate of Pugsley's Nautical School, where she studied navigation, nautical astronomy, and seamanship. For several years before this she spent much time with her husband at sea.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Old Age Pensions.

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN (U., Exeter) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the estimated cost of granting to all persons at present receiving an old age pension the full 10s. without any deduction? MR. GUINNESS (Financial Secretary, Treasury) replied that it would be impossible to disregard the means limit for existing pensioners, and to maintain them for future pensioners (other than those who will come under the new Insurance proposals). The cost of abolishing the means limit would be about £15,000,000 a year to commence with, and larger sums in later years.

Women Teachers (Scotland).

MR. STEPHEN (Lab., Camlachie) asked the Secretary for Scotland the number of women teachers in primary schools in Scotland, and the number of those teachers that were graduates? SIR JOHN GILMOUR (Secretary for Scotland) replied that the number of women graduates in primary schools in Scotland at 31st March, 1924, was 929 out of a total of 14,508 women teachers in such schools.

Teaching Staffs.

SIR E. GRIGG (Lib., Oldham) asked the President of the Board of Education what number of schools had only one teacher; and what number of schools had one certificated teacher and one assistant? LORD EUSTACE PERCY replied that statistics classifying departments by the number of teachers employed in them were last compiled for the year 1921-22. They showed 642 departments with one teacher only, and 4,446 departments with two teachers. The teachers were not shown in their grades, but since the number of uncertificated head teachers was between 500 and 600, it was probable that the great majority of head teachers in those departments were certificated teachers.

Government Departments (Women).

MISS WILKINSON (Lab., Middlesbrough, E.) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury how many Grade 4 temporary women clerks were employed in the Civil Service; in what departments they were employed; and how many were employed in each of the Departments concerned? MR. GUINNESS replied that exact figures in the form desired by the hon. member were not available, but he understood that the total number of Grade 4 temporary women clerks employed in the Civil Service was, approximately, 300, of whom 130 were employed under the Ministry of Pensions.

MISS WILKINSON asked how many temporary typists employed in the Civil Service and how many junior recruits from outside the service, respectively, passed the recent establishment examination for copying typists; and how many of each group, respectively, qualified in the examination but have not been so far called up? MR. GUINNESS replied that of the 150 candidates originally declared successful at the examination, 54 were employed as temporary typists and 96 were recruits from outside the service; of the further 177 candidates who qualified and were now being added to the successful list, 82 were employed as temporary typists, and 95 were recruits from outside the service.

Night Baking.

In reply to a question put by Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck (U., Nottingham, S.), SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND said that the Government had taken certain amendments to the draft Convention on nightwork in bakeries, and had informed the International Labour Office that, subject to those amendments being carried, they would be disposed to accept the Convention, provided they could be satisfied that the effect of its adoption would not be to cause an increase in the price of bread to the consumer. Since that time the Royal Commission on Food Prices had examined the question, and, in view of its findings, the delegates would state that the Government was unable at the present time to ratify the draft Convention.

Bastardy Bill.

MR. HURD (U., Devizes) asked the Minister of Health if he had any representations from the guardians of the Hungerford and Ramsbury and other unions urging that legislation be passed to empower boards of guardians to take legal proceedings, prior to the birth of a child, against the putative fathers of illegitimate children for the payment of the cost of the maintenance of the woman during such time as she was in the Poor Law Institution before the birth of her child and for the expenses of her confinement; and if he would see if facilities could be given for the Second Reading of the Bastardy Bill now before the House so that the matter might be fully discussed? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS, who said he had been asked to reply, stated he was afraid he was not in a position to hold out any hope of special facilities being given for progress with that Bill.

Juveniles (Unemployment Insurance).

CAPT. GEE (U., Bosworth) asked the Minister of Labour the number of boys and girls, respectively, who attained the age of 16 years during the year ended 31st December last, and to how many of each of these were unemployment insurance cards issued because they were then in insurable employment? SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND replied that the number of juveniles in Great Britain who attained the age of 16 years during the year ended 31st December, 1924, was approximately estimated at 421,000 boys and 416,000 girls. During 1924 the number of unemployment books issued to new entrants to insured trades of 16 and under 18 years was 352,817 to boys, and 254,610 to girls. It was not possible to distinguish separately books issued to juveniles of 16 years.

House of Commons (Refreshment Staff).

MR. WINDSOR (Lab., Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee if the whole of the staff were paid their wages for the Easter Recess; if not, could he state why; and would he arrange that in future, when the House was not sitting, the staff should be paid wages, as they were not eligible for unemployment benefit? SIR JAMES AGG-GARDNER replied that the staff were paid their wages during the last Easter Recess. With regard to the future, it was impossible to guarantee the action of other Committees, but he imagined that the course they had adopted during the Easter and Whitsun Vacations would be continued.

Married Women (Debts and Torts).

COL. DAY asked the Attorney-General if he was aware that in a recent action brought by a defrauded person against a husband and wife, although the husband was innocent of all knowledge of the cause of the fraud, the judge stated that under the present state of the law the husband was liable, and a verdict for £12,000 damages was secured against the husband; and, in view of the legislative changes that had been made in recent years in status and rights of married women, would he introduce legislation to alter the state of the law governing the liabilities of a married man in respect of his wife's debts and torts on wrongdoing? THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (SIR Douglas Hogg) replied that he could only repeat the statement made by the Lord Chancellor in another place that the Government were considering the matter, and they proposed at a convenient time to introduce legislation for the purpose of dealing with that grievance. He could not say if it would be possible to find time during the present Session, but, as soon as an opportunity occurred, proposals for remedying that grievance would be brought before Parliament.

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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 stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

TUPPENCE AN HOUR!

For years past, the number of unemployed women and girls in this country has been in the neighbourhood of nearly a quarter of a million, the latest figures being 209,600 women and 32,000 girls. In spite of all the experience of these years, there are still Members inside the House of Commons, and members of the public outside, who consider they have said the last word about this matter when they suggest that every unemployed woman should immediately find refuge in domestic service. The only remedy suggested by successive Governments is more training for domestic work. Yet a glance at the following recent list of unemployed women on the live register of the Employment Exchange in Liverpool should persuade ordinarily intelligent people that all workless women are not specially adapted to domestic work, and that domestic work may not be the most suitable employment for all workless women:—Café and hotel workers, 1,004; laundry workers, 133; charwomen, 320; factory workers, 2,562; sewing trades, 218; printing trades, 233; shop assistants, 730; clerical workers, 305; professional, 70; making a total of 5,575. According to *The Morning Advertiser*, the action of an East End labour exchange in stopping the unemployment benefit of a woman who had refused to take work offered her in connection with domestic service was discussed last week by the Stepney Board of Guardians. The woman had refused to take a situation through the labour exchange where the wages offered her were 2s. a day working as a general servant from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Sundays included. The Ministry of Labour had been informed that the guardians for the district in which the woman lived strongly deprecated this action of the Labour Exchange Committee in depriving persons of benefit for refusing to accept employment under such terms; but the Ministry of Labour had stated that no further action could be taken to have the decision varied. Is there any *man* who would be expected to work for seven days a week, twelve hours a day, for 14s. a week? In the recent Debate on Unemployment in the House of Commons, some Members had a good deal to say about persons deliberately qualifying for the "dole," to which it should always be remembered the workers and employers contribute, as well as the State. Those Members, of course, may consider that they had very good reason to make those statements. We can only suggest that the Government has every conceivable power to deal with such persons; but in the case of this woman, and in similar cases, we submit that no Government and no official has any right to exact twelve hours work for 2s.—2d. an hour for each of the seven days of the week; and we think it a pity that there is no woman in the Government to put this point of view before the Minister of Labour; and, further, that this Ministry would be better served if there was a woman at the Head of it, or who acted as its Parliamentary Secretary. It seems simply grotesque to us that there is no woman in this particular Department to look after the interests of the quarter of a million unemployed women, whose numbers have remained practically unchanged for several years.

JUSTICE?

Last week, a case was reported in the Press which came before Mr. Justice Greer at the Old Bailey, of a married woman, aged 32, charged with the attempted murder of her four children, and attempted suicide by coal-gas poisoning. Mr. H. D. Roome, prosecuting, said that recently the husband had been away from home carrying on an intrigue with another woman, and had provided no money for the maintenance of his family. When arrested, she said, "I did it because I had no money." All that was found in the house was a halfpenny and a farthing, and two crusts of bread. On the mantelpiece was a letter addressed to her husband, which read:—

"It is now eight days since you came in to see how we were faring. I can face no more. It has been nothing to you that we have been in need. Do you think your one shilling has kept us for eight days? It is your heartlessness that has broken me, knowing your little ones needed bread and I did not know where you were. . . . Perhaps now you can marry the creature who has wrecked our home."

For the defence it was urged that this woman and her four children had been living on one loaf of bread, a quart of milk, and a little tea a day. There was little doubt that when she tried to end matters for herself and her children they were on the brink of starvation. Mr. Justice Greer, in passing sentence of five months' imprisonment in the second division, said that it would not be right to take the course dictated by his own personal feelings, or to give effect to his feelings of pity. We wonder what he meant? This sentence may have been in accordance with the law, but we fail to discover any justice or equity in it, or even common sense. What good can five months' imprisonment in the second division do this woman or her children? We notice that Mr. Justice Greer had no word of censure for the husband who was morally responsible for the woman's action. Is the law helpless in bringing home to the married father his responsibility for the welfare of his children? And are our prisons to be used as convalescent homes for our honourable, industrious citizens when starving, overwrought, and desolate? From the reports we have seen in the Press, we consider that this sentence was a scandalous miscarriage of justice.

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR.

An all-night sitting is becoming a habit of the London County Council. For two successive weeks it has indulged in this luxury, the last sitting, having begun last Tuesday afternoon at 2.30, did not finish until 1.36 the next morning. At midnight the Council was discussing the following amendment, proposed by Miss Agnes Dawson and seconded by Mr. Cruse, to the Education Estimates, which are £12,500,000 this year, "that where work is equal, women teachers should be paid the same salary as men, and that the Finance and Education Committee should report as to the submission of a supplementary estimate of £100,000, with a view to securing women teachers the first instalment of the application of this policy." Dr. Stella Churchill supported this amendment, and urged that the London County Council should lead the way in removing the injustice to women teachers. Mr. Angus Scott said that, as the Joint Committee had not yet reported to the Council, the time was inopportune for dealing with the matter. If the amendment were carried, it would cost the ratepayers in London £75,000 more a year. Mrs. Wilton Phipps, chairman of the Education Committee, pointed out that the Council were bound by the Burnham Award, and said that personally she would always be against equal pay for men and women teachers. The amendment was lost by 64 to 36 votes. Another amendment in favour of a supplementary estimate to secure wider opportunities for secondary education was also defeated. The Estimates were agreed to at 1.30 a.m. The proceedings of several other Committees were then passed, and the Council rose a few minutes later.

SLAVERY AND THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Last week in the House of Lords EARL BUXTON asked if the reports on slavery for which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook to call in 1923 had yet been received; if the League of Nations had asked to be supplied with any available information and assistance on the subject of slavery, and what reply had been sent to the League of Nations; if the reports in question would be published, and if they would include any representations made to the Government by the Governments of territories raided by hostile units; if any representations had been made by the Government to other Powers on the question; and he moved for papers. Lord Buxton said that their Lordships might be surprised that it was necessary at this date to raise questions about slavery and slave-trading, but in some parts of Africa it existed, being largely due to disorganisation during the war and the necessary slackening of vigilance. Numerous cases had occurred in the last few years. In the last three years, however, a new factor had entered the question, and had profoundly modified the international position. The League of Nations had taken up the question, and was very anxious to do what it could by international agreement and discussion to bring international moral sense to bear on the matter. The question was, therefore, no longer local or national; it was international.

LORD OLIVIER said it was most important in the interest of the League of Nations that there should be no suspicion of an unsatisfactory atmosphere with regard to that matter. Great Britain was a member of the League of Nations and was pledged to do her best to put down slavery in all its forms.

THE EARL OF MAYO said that domestic slavery in the East was a custom, indeed, almost a rule, and it must not be thought that the slaves were badly treated. He had been waited on by slaves in Abyssinia and on the West Coast. They were well treated and were part of the family. But the cruelty occurred when the owner of those slaves died and his heir exercised his right to sell them. Then women were separated from their husbands. Easterns could not understand, and resented interference very strongly with this question of domestic slavery. He did not think it would be possible to stop domestic slavery, but it would be possible to stop the raids. He supported Lord Buxton's motion.

LORD RAGLAN, who also supported the motion, said that until they delimited the southern portion of the Abyssinian-Sudan frontier slave raids would continue.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said that one of the outstanding features of the present day was the increasing dependence of the civilised world on the products of tropical coloured labour. Rubber, cotton, and many minerals in daily use were instances. The danger with which they were faced at the present time was not the cruder forms of slavery, but a tendency to exploit a somewhat indolent form of labour and to force

it into extended production. It was the duty of the civilised world to see that, in meeting the demands which we made on the lower races, we did not abuse our powers.

VISCOUNT CECIL, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, replied that the attitude of the Government remained what it had been. They recognised to the full their duty in the matter, and they were most anxious to carry forward with the utmost of their power the suppression of slavery in general, and in particular the suppression of the slave trade. The situation had been modified by the fact that the League of Nations had undertaken an inquiry into the subject. The Government were acting as far as possible through and with the League of Nations, and they were only too anxious that the League should have all the necessary information in their possession. But a certain delicacy must be observed, as Abyssinia had become a member of the League, and had given assurances on the subject of slavery. Therefore it was only right and proper that in the first instance the League should look to Abyssinia for information on this subject. He was authorised to say that if, after considering the information that would be laid before the Slavery Commission, the Council of the League expressed a desire for further or more complete information, any such request would receive the most sympathetic consideration on behalf of His Majesty's Government. The Government had decided to give their representative, Sir F. Lugard, every scrap of information in their possession, to be used by him at his discretion. The question of slavery would be on the agenda of the League in September, and would therefore automatically come before the Assembly. On the question of raids, his information was that, as regarded Kenya, which was directly under Government control, there had been no slave-raiding within the last year or two, but he would make further inquiries. He repudiated the idea that the Government desired to practise a policy of secrecy in the matter of slavery. They were anxious to carry out the historic policy of this country which was associated with the name of Wilberforce.

LORD GAINFORD said that nothing but good could come from the publication of the information which their Lordships had a right to demand from the Government. Our areas had been raided, to the knowledge of our officers, on various occasions. British subjects had been taken into slavery across the Red Sea, and had even reached Mesopotamia, and he could not understand why the Government should hesitate to divulge information regarding those raids on British soil. If the Government had no information it was very surprising. The Treasury had paid various sums of money to redeem some of the persons who had been taken into bondage, but the House had no information of how much money had been spent in that way.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

ANGELA MORGAN AT THE LYCEUM CLUB.

Among the most gifted of present-day penwomen is Miss Angela Morgan, an American, who has for some time past been resident in London. By her work, Miss Morgan, who has achieved a considerable reputation across the Atlantic, is becoming well known to those in this country who are interested in current literature, and in the awakening social thought of which it is an instrument.

Those who were privileged to enjoy the hospitality of the American Circle of the Lyceum Club on April 23rd spent a delightful hour, the occasion being a reception given in honour of the poet by the members of the Circle.

At the close of Miss Morgan's readings, Sir John Ross—who, like the writer, was a visitor—in thanking Miss Morgan, mentioned that he had been particularly charmed by her poem, "Water." This is indeed very beautiful, but does not lend itself to fragmentary quotation; it should be read in full.

A keen advocate and worker for peace, Miss Morgan

was among the brave women who early in the war went to Holland in the hope of doing something to stay hostilities. Her splendid poem, "The Battle Cry of the Mothers," is helping in the fight which women in this and other lands are waging against war.

"To be alive in such an age!
That thunders forth its discontent
With futile creed and sacrament,
Yet craves to utter God's intent,
Seeing beneath the world's unrest
Creation's huge, untiring quest,
And through Tradition's wooden crust
The flame of Truth's triumphant thrust
Below the seething thought of man
The push of a stupendous plan.
Oh! age of strife!
Oh! age of life!
When Progress rides her chariot high
And on the borders of the sky
The signals of the century
Proclaim the things that are to be—
The rise of woman to her place,
The coming of a nobler race." M. G. E.

MISS WILKINSON AND PENSIONS.

Speaking in the Debate in the House of Commons, last Monday, on the Contributory Pensions Bill, Miss Wilkinson said she was Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee of the Women's Industrial Organisations. Affiliated to that were nearly 3,000,000 organised women, including co-operative, trade union, and political associations. Those women had expressed themselves unanimously against a contributory system. "Let us get rid of this cant about women getting something for nothing," said Miss Wilkinson. She wished hon. Members would get it into their heads that a non-contributory scheme would not be a dispensing of charity, but a very definite payment for services that the widow had rendered to the State, and that it should enable the woman to bring up the children properly. What would it mean for a woman to get 18s. a week on which to bring up two children and to maintain herself? Was it a conceivably possible proposition? She also wished that, instead of giving pensions to the young widow, the question of the woman with an incapacitated husband had been taken into consideration. From the financial point of view the position of a woman of that kind was much worse than that of the widow. She also urged that pensions for children should be paid up to 16 instead of 14 years. Miss Wilkinson said that the proposed scheme would operate very harshly in the case of single women in industries. There were something like from 1,500,000 to 2,000,000 women who, owing to the war and other causes, would not normally

marry. Most of those women were going to be employed in industry all the days of their lives, and they would be paying 2d. a week for a benefit which they could not possibly get, except a reduction of the age at which the old age pension was payable, from 70 to 65. A woman who started paying at 16, and paid for 30 or 35 years until she was 45 or 50, and also into the Unemployment Insurance Fund, might become unemployed and exhaust her unemployment benefit. After being driven about for weeks and months, she would be told at the employment exchange that there was no reasonable prospect of her getting further employment, and therefore she would be excluded from further insurance benefit. That woman was just as tragic a figure as the widow. Was it not possible to provide a woman who had paid in her contributions for so many years with an alternative pension when there was no prospect of further employment for her? Miss Wilkinson said it was a great pity that the scheme had been made into a rather doubtful piece of class legislation. A definite class would have to pay for it, the class that was already contributing far more than its share in indirect taxation. If the Minister of Health had taken a bold step and brought forward a non-contributory scheme, which would have supplied to those who really needed it—the mother and her young children—the means for a happy home apart from the labour market, Miss Wilkinson assured him that he would have had his warmest friends on her side of the House.

THE PASSING OF THE WOMEN'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIETY.

Women all over the country have learned with very real regret that the Women's Local Government Society has decided to wind up its affairs and pass on its work to other societies. Nearly forty years ago a committee was formed to promote the return of women to local governing bodies, and its gallant fight on behalf of Lady Sandhurst and Mrs. Cobden Unwin is still remembered by many women. In 1893, the Committee transformed itself into the Women's Local Government Society; and the names of Miss M. S. Kilgour and Miss Leigh Browne will always be remembered as its leading spirits, and Miss Marian Berry's as one of the most capable of secretaries. This Society was a veritable mine of information on all local government matters, and every inquirer could rely absolutely on the accuracy of the information supplied from its office. This non-Party organisation did much to clear the path for the enfranchisement of women. Its history ought to be written, and no better service could be rendered to the Woman's Movement if Miss Leigh Browne, Miss Kilgour, and Miss Berry could be persuaded to write it.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

The Seventh International Labour Conference is taking place this week at Geneva. Among the items on its agenda which delegates are to discuss are: (1) Compensations for accidents during work; (2) Equal treatment for the victims of such accidents, whether natives or foreigners; (3) Weekly suspension of work for 24 hours in glass-manufacturing processes where tank furnaces are used; (4) Nightwork in bakeries. The full list of the delegates and their advisers from this country has now been issued. The *two men* Government delegates are to have with them *eight men* advisers; the *one man* delegate representing the employers is to take with him *six men* advisers; and the *one man* delegate representing the workpeople is to have with him *five men* advisers, and *one woman* adviser, Miss Julia Varley. The Secretary to the delegation is, of course, a man. Whatever these gentlemen do in Geneva, we hope they will remember that they have not been given any mandate from the *women* workers of this country, and that they have no authority to suggest or acquiesce in any differential treatment for men and women workers.

BOOK REVIEW.

First Report of the Royal Commission on Food Prices. (Published by H. M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.) Price 3s. 6d. net.

We have nothing but congratulations to offer to the compilers of this Report for the admirable way in which they have carried out their work. Everything appears to be in order; the Report has an excellent Index, the print is easy to read, and the style of writing throughout its many pages is concise and clear. The Commissioners were appointed on 29th November, 1924; there have been 34 public and 40 private meetings; and 90 witnesses (only four among whom were women) were examined. Our readers will remember that there were *fourteen men* members of this Commission but only *two women*—Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan and Mrs. Philip Snowden. The Commissioners were "to inquire into the conditions prevailing in the wholesale and retail trades in articles of food and general consumption so far as they affect prices, particularly having regard to the difference between the prices received by producers and the prices paid by the consumers, and to report what action, if any, can be usefully taken." All this the Commissioners seem to have done in regard to meat and bread, and their generalisations and recommendations are set out in this Report. The one thing that may happen as a result of it, is the establishment of a Food Council without statutory powers, this Food Council to consist of ten men and two women. We do not think the housewife will find anything helpful or cheering in this Report, but we think she should read it. It may not induce her to think highly of the usefulness of Commissions, but she may be inclined to think of other measures, not suggested in the Report, which might succeed in bringing down prices. F. A. U.

OUR LENDING LIBRARY.

"Women in the Factory." By Dame Adelaide M. Anderson, D.B.E., M.A.
 "What I Remember." By Millicent Garrett Fawcett, J.P., LL.D.
 "Ancilla's Share." An Indictment of Sex Antagonism. Anonymous.
 "The Police Court and Its Work." By Henry Turner Waddy.
 May be borrowed from the Literature Department at 6d. per week.

WHERE TO GO. WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, May 29th, at 3.30.
 Hampstead Branch. "At Home" at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3. (By kind invitation of Dr. Knight.) Mr. Montague Fordham will lecture on the Housing Problem.

PROVINCES.

DARE TO BE FREE.
 Monday, May 25th, at 4.
 Bexhill Branch. Whist Party at the Albany Hotel (by kind permission of Miss Skinner). Tickets 1/-. Tea 9d. Prizes.
 Thursday, May 28th, at 3.30—5.30.
 Portsmouth Branch. "At Home" at 25, Shaftesbury Road. Hostess: Mrs. Brading.
 Friday, May 29th, at 3.
 Ashford Branch. Public Meeting at the Hempstead Street Hall. Speaker: Dr. Octavia Lowin. Subject: "Education from a medical woman's point of view." Chair: Mrs. Miles.
 Wednesday, June 3rd, at 3.15.
 Portsmouth Branch. Public Meeting at 2, Kent Road. Speaker: Miss O'Shea. Subject: "Singapore and the C.D. Acts." Chair: Mrs. Poole.
 Monday, June 8th, at 5.15.
 Political Sub-Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
 Friday, July 3rd, at 7.
 Birthday Party at Caxton Hall.
 Saturday, July 4th, at 10.
 National Executive Committee Meeting at 144 High Holborn, W.C.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Monday, May 25th, at 5.
 Women's Institute, 70, Victoria Street, S.W. Speaker: Miss Lilian Baylis, M.A. Subject: "Pioneer Women: Emma Cons."
 Monday, May 25th, at 8.15.
 National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, at Red Lodge, 51, Palace Court, W.2. Addresses by Canon Lewis Donaldson and Major the Hon. C. Lowther. Invitations can be obtained from Miss D. Matthews, National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, 3, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1.
 Tuesday, May 26th, 8 p.m.—2 a.m.
 Save the Children Fund. Sun-ray Carnival Ball, at the Palais de Danse, Hammersmith. Tickets 3/6, from Save the Children Fund, 26, Gordon Street, W.C.
 Thursday, May 28th, at 3.
 Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women. Public Meeting in the Small Hall, Central Hall, Westminster.
 May 30th, 31st, June 1st, at 10—7.
 International Fellowship in Arts and Crafts. Exhibition of Pictures, Sculpture, Miniatures, Jewellery, Pottery, Weaving, Woodwork, etc., at the Marylebone Hall, Great Central Hotel, Marylebone Road, N.W. Address at 6.15 by Dr. J. H. Cousins (of Adyar, Madras).

BRANCH NOTES.

PORTSMOUTH.
 Mrs. Slatter very kindly entertained the work party at 14, Festing Grove on Thursday, May 14th. On Thursday, May 28th, an "At Home" will be held at 25, Shaftesbury Road, by kind invitation of Mrs. Brading. There will be music and tea, and Mrs. Brading will give a report of the Women's Freedom League Conference to which she was delegate. The proceeds of the tea (6d. each) will go to the local funds. The last public meeting of the season will be held on Wednesday, June 3rd, at 2, Kent Road. Miss N. O. Shea will speak on "The C.D. Acts and Singapore." The chair will be taken by Mrs. Poole at 3.15 p.m., and members are earnestly requested to attend.
 (Hon. Sec.) MRS. WHEATON, 89, Festing Grove, Southsea.
 MIDDLESBROUGH.
 A Whist Drive was held on May 11th, and a very pleasant evening was spent, but I should have liked to see a better attendance of members and friends.
 (Hon. Sec.) MRS. E. A. THOMAS, 74, Harford Street.

WHITSUN HOLIDAYS.

The Offices of the Women's Freedom League will be closed from Friday May 29th, at 5.30 p.m., until Tuesday, June 2nd, 9.30 a.m.

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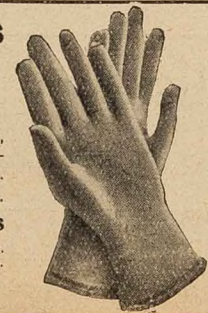
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OUR OPEN COLUMN.

Women and Insurance.
 To the Editor of THE VOTE.

MADAM,—Does the nation realise that the Government is inaugurating a new form of so-called insurance, and is to become an insurance society itself, with arbitrary powers? The immense reserve fund of 40 million in the men's health insurance has shown it, not that the employer and the taxpayer have paid excessive contributions, but how enormously profitable it can be made. The insurance is to be compulsory, which ensures its success, not for those of high pay who may make better and more secure terms with private insurance societies, but for the poor and more helpless. Further, the Government reserves to itself the right to decide which insurances it will pay by various arbitrary restrictions, and though it says the widows' insurance will issue accounts at the end of 10 years, it does not say how any possibly enormous profits are to be applied, and in the case of the teachers' insurance there is to be no funding system at all. For instance, in the widows' insurance, if a widower over 60 re-marries and dies within five years, his widow receives no pension until she is 65, thus annulling all the husband's payments, all those of his first wife as well as those of the second, not to mention those of employer and taxpayer.

Then, if an insured widow receives a pension, she is to be arbitrarily deprived of all the benefits of her health and unemployment payments, and if she falls ill or into unemployment will be infinitely worse off than if she had no pension. If she marries again she is deprived of her pension, the fruit of her own and husband's and employer's and taxpayer's payments, and presumably will have to insure for health and unemployment again as a new entrant. She is in the same plight if she cohabits with a man, which is not a legal offence, and does not apply in the case of any man with an insured or even uninsured pension, very much the contrary, as we saw during the war at the wronged wife's expense.

In the teacher's insurance the right is given on retirement of return of contributions with compound interest at 3 per cent., but no right of voluntary contribution for pension, and again all the employer's and taxpayer's contributions are sunk; but what of a teacher dismissed for misbehaviour or incompetence, is he to forfeit all his compulsory payments, is he not entitled not to lose them? We see now how the sweated women teachers are penalised all through their lives, even in old age, for their sex, because refused the equity of equal pay for equal work. The Report, for I have not yet seen the Bill, appears to take it for granted that women teachers who marry must retire, as though this were the law of the land and a mockery of the Sex Disqualification Act, whereas the edict is merely the bullying of local authorities, who deprive women of well-paid work for which they had served long apprenticeships during their entire youth.

And the ratepayer as represented by the local authority, and the taxpayer by the Government, but in both cases the same unfortunate beast of burden, is to continue his payments with no knowledge as to whether they are excessive, while the pensions are dependent on variable and arbitrary regulations, and the teacher has no absolute legal right to any pension in return for his forced contributions.

In fact, this is a new gigantic tax to be levied on the nation (not only on industry), for the principal beneficiary will soon be the Treasury, whose scheme appears to lack common financial honesty.

B. S. PIGOTT.

Capital Punishment.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR EDITOR,—Will you kindly allow me to call the attention of our members to the movement which is on foot for securing the abolition of the Death Penalty.

The National Council has been formed "in order to focus this widespread desire into an organised campaign." To secure the end in view it will be necessary to enlist the help and active co-operation of all who sympathise with the movement.

We, in Hastings, have formed ourselves into a Divisional Council, and have already secured something like 60 or 70 members. Will not many of the branches of our Women's Freedom League follow suit?

I shall be very grateful if you will support this appeal in THE VOTE.
 Yours very truly, JANE STRICKLAND.

[The Women's Freedom League being affiliated to the National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, we cordially recommend all our Branches to use their existing machinery to work locally for this object, and to invite the co-operation of all local residents interested in the subject. Special literature, prepared by the National Council, may be obtained from 144, High Holborn.—Ed.]

MISS PICTON-TURBERVILL AT ST. BOTOLPH'S.

In connection with the forward movement of the Y.W.C.A., Miss Picton-Turbervill is preaching at St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, on Sunday evening next, at 6.30 p.m. The title of her address will be "Women of Yesterday and To-day." The service has the approval of the Bishop of London, and we feel sure a large number of women will avail themselves of the opportunity of hearing Miss Picton-Turbervill on a subject on which she is an authority. St. Botolph's Church is near Liverpool Street Station.

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FFELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, May 24th. 3.30. Music. Lecture: J. M. Bullock, Esq., M.A., LL.D. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden: "To those who have given themselves up in despair."

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