

THE VOTE,
APRIL 5, 1918.
ONE PENNY.

The Latest Danger to Women.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XVII. No. 441. (Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage, but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.) FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 1918

OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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CAN A WOMAN STAND FOR PARLIAMENT?

The attempt to secure nomination for a woman as a Parliamentary candidate has attracted considerable attention in the Yorkshire Press, and has beyond doubt caused some perplexity in party and official circles. If the old interpretations of "common law," which may always be reckoned on to penalise women, be adhered to, there are not wanting those who foresee with great clearness how much this will stiffen the backs of the new electorate of women and prejudice them against all who uphold the existing disabilities. It is a poor look-out for "party" in any case. Either men must abandon, and at once, their attitude of privilege and monopoly, or they must brace themselves for a struggle in which, for the first time, the women will be effectively armed.

The following letter has been addressed to the Home Secretary:—

The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, M.P.,
Home Office, Whitehall, S.W. 1.

March 26, 1918.

SIR,—I am going to Keighley to see whether the electors will support me in securing nomination as Parliamentary candidate. I am informed that, although no statutory disability exists, a woman candidate for Parliament would be inadmissible in common law, and that no Returning Officer would accept her nomination.

I wish, therefore, to ask for your reply to the following points, and if it be not within the scope of your Department,

to supply the information, whether you will refer this letter to the Attorney-General?

1. If a woman candidate for Parliament be inadmissible except by statute passed to enable her to sit, would not the same rule apply to the swearing-in of hundreds of women constables? No statute was passed to enable these women to exercise the powers of constables, and if the common law is enforced against my contesting a Parliamentary Division would it not be possible to challenge every arrest made by women police and to proceed against the authorities who sanctioned the granting of such powers to women?

2. Has not the old common law, as a matter of fact, been allowed to go by the board during the war, and can it be enforced piecemeal to penalise new effort and enterprise and to rob the newly-enfranchised women of the full effects of their citizenship?

3. Would His Majesty's Government undertake that no penalties would be enforced against a Returning Officer who, in response to a request from responsible citizens of his division, allowed such a matter to be tested by accepting the name of a woman candidate?

I should be greatly obliged if you could reassure me on these points, which will be most naturally of extreme interest to the women voters in view of the expected General Election.—Very faithfully yours,

C. NINA BOYLE.

A letter has also been addressed to Mr. Gulland, asking whether, in view of the fact that the Keighley by-election cannot be considered an important one (inasmuch as whoever is elected now will have to stand again in the autumn, and perhaps be swept away by the new electorate), the Liberals who have control of the seat will facilitate the settling of the

IF you Believe in Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men

Join the Women's Freedom League.

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Name _____

Address _____

vexed question. It would indubitably be greatly to the credit of whichever party were generous enough to waive a temporary advantage in the interests of constitutional right and liberty; and in view of the profuse offers made to women by Liberalism lately it would seem the least that could be expected. Mr. Herbert Samuel, for instance, in his lecture to the School of Economics, emphasized the fact that women were needed in Parliament. Now is his chance to assist in securing at least one! Mr. Runciman assured the world at large that it must be "now more than ever" the task of the Liberal Party to remove the remaining disabilities that hamper women's freedom. He is offered an opportunity of helping to effect this without delay. Mr. King, in his address to the Women's Freedom League, asserted that "what the Liberal Party had to offer women" was the task of bringing that party back to the paths of true Liberalism. True Liberalism, from which he admitted that the party had sadly strayed, cannot sanction monopolies in rights and opportunities, and the Liberal Party is invited forthwith to step back on to the track and confirm women in a complete and not mutilated citizenship.

From what it is possible to gather up to the present, there has been much consultation among officials and heads of party organisations as to the correct—and safe—attitude to take up. There has been some difficulty in securing a satisfactory Liberal nominee, most probably owing to the fact that the return will only be a temporary one, and that the election will come all over again very shortly. No decision will be come to until next Saturday, and no local man will come forward. The whole list from which the choice can be made consists of "carpet-baggers," and the only local contestant who may enter the lists is Mr. Bland, who fought Sir Stanley Buckmaster in the Socialist interest.

In a letter to *The Keighley News*, making clear her purpose in offering herself as a Parliamentary candidate for the constituency, Miss Boyle observes:

There is no law whatever debaring a woman voter from being chosen or from presenting herself for nomination, but common law, which represents in the main crystallised opinion, is supposed to be against any such innovation. As, however, common law has gone by the board during the war, and as we have women at the War Office, women constables and special constables sworn in with powers of arrest, etc., and many other strange things which have been accepted without demur and without an Act being passed to regularise them, I submit that custom and want of precedent can and should no longer be called in, especially when it is to debar citizens from their rights, and when it does not debar them from service. One cannot suppose that 6,000,000 women voters may be kept in the position that, although they may choose, they may never be chosen, and that, no matter whom they choose, it must not be one of themselves.

I am coming to Keighley to try my luck, and hope Yorkshiremen will give me a chance. The election is not

NOTICE.

At the Annual Meeting of the New Constitutional Society for Women's Suffrage, held on March 12th, it was decided to wind up its organisation as the reasons for its existence no longer obtain. All future communications to be addressed to Mrs. HARTLEY, 168, Adelaide Road, N.W.

an important one, as, no matter who goes in, he (or she) must stand again in the autumn, and perhaps be swept away by the new electorate. So it seems a fair chance to test a constitutional point. And I have preferred not to wait for the new electorate—not to appeal to the feelings of women who may feel furious at the idea that their new citizenship is sham and not real. I want the men who gave the vote to say whether they meant our citizenship to be given generously or grudgingly, so that we may make an end once for all of those irritating struggles and insulting disabilities."

The testing of this important question has aroused widespread interest throughout the country, and has been reported and commented upon by newspapers in London and the Provinces.

MAKE SURE OF YOUR VOTE. Registration Guide.

Qualifying Period, Oct. 15, 1917, to April 15, 1918.
The basis of the new census is the pink form A, which will be delivered at every house. This the householder must fill up. It has three sections.

- Section I.—(a) Men residents over 21.
(b) Men not resident but pursuing a business.
- Section II.—(a) Women residents over 30 and women occupying business premises value £5 a year.
(b) Married women over 30 whose husbands are in Section I.
- Section V.—Men over 19 and women over 30 serving in His Majesty's Forces, the British Red Cross, &c., who would have occupied the premises but for their service.

All members of the Women's Freedom League must make sure of their qualifications both for Municipal (at 21) and for Parliamentary (at 30) votes.

Married members must see that their husbands are upon the register and that they are themselves qualified as wives.

We have answered a large number of inquiries, and invite all who require advice to write at once to Headquarters (Registration Guide).

The new leaflet of instructions, "Women's Freedom League Registration Guide to the Next Election" is now ready, price 1d.

THE NEW FORCE.

Miss Abadam addressed the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society on March 23 at 40, Lowndes-square, under the kind auspices of its hostess, Mrs. Cameron-Head. The Hon. Mrs. Walter Roch presided. The subject of the address was the "New Force," which has come into British politics with the women's vote. The speaker warned her hearers that they themselves must shoulder the responsibility for the vote they cast if they are to bring to the State that new psychological contribution which was wanted and expected when this long-delayed measure was at last placed on the Statute Book. Above all, they must send the right men to Parliament; and she cited an Australian who assured her that the women's vote in Australia had resulted in a complete turnover in the kind of man who were elected before women had the vote. He had been "ashamed" at the type of member, and he thought women—who were always judging men!—were better judges of men's character than men are.

Miss Abadam held her hearers' deep interest while she related, in moving words, some incidents of the trial and condemnation of Joan of Arc, and a story from M. A. R. Tucker's *Ecce Mater*, illustrating the wonderful capacities possessed by the mother throughout nature. She recommended her audience to get this book and the pamphlet "Women Preachers" reprinted from *The Nineteenth Century*. Woman, she said, is the natural priestess of humanity, men the official priests, a sentiment which evoked applause.

["*Ecce Mater*" (3s. 6d.) and "Women Preachers" (3d.), can be obtained from the W.F.L. Literature Dept.]

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.
Telegrams—"DESPARD, MUSEUM 1429, LONDON."
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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS

Saturday, April 6.—Public Meeting, Spencer Hall, Dartmouth Park-hill, N., 4 p.m. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro. Subject: "All About the Women's Vote." Chairman: Miss F. A. Underwood. Admission free. Collection.

Wednesday, April 10.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Mr. J. W. Williams on "The Great Menace: Need for Sex Education." Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café if desired (6d. each).

Thursday, April 11.—Mid-London Annual Branch Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 6.30 p.m. Delegate's Report of Conference.

Saturday, April 13.—Clapham Branch Drawing-room Meeting, 46, Lynette-avenue (by kind permission of Mrs. Samuel), 3 p.m. Subject: "The Women's Freedom League Programme." Speaker: Mrs. Tanner. Chair: Mrs. Samuel. No tea. Collection.

Wednesday, April 17.—Women's Freedom League Settlement Sale (by kind permission of Mr. P. H. Miller), at "The Studio," 1, Campden Hill-road, Kensington High-street, W., 2 to 6 p.m. To be opened by Mrs. Despard.

PUBLIC MEETING, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Miss Margaret Hodge on "Divorce Laws of the Dominions Overseas." Admission free. Tea can be obtained if desired in the Café; 6d. each.

Friday, April 19.—Discussion Meeting, Minerva Café, 144 High Holborn, 6 p.m. Mr. F. Verinder (Gen. Sec. English League for Taxation of Land Values) on "Woman's Interest in the Land Question."

Saturday, April 27.—Drawing-room Meeting (by kind permission of Mrs. F. E. Smith) at 83, Earl's Court-road, W., at 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Chairman: Miss F. A. Underwood.

PROVINCES.

Saturday, April 6.—NOTTINGHAM. Café Chantant in the Theosophical Hall, Park-street, at 7 p.m. Admission, 6d. Light refreshments on sale.

Monday, April 8.—BATH. Public Meeting. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro.

Wednesday, April 10.—SWANSEA. Albert Hall, 8 p.m. Mass Meeting, organised by the combined women's organisations in Swansea to celebrate the enfranchisement of women. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle. Admission by silver collection.

Saturday, April 13.—READING. Victory celebration, organised by Suffrage Societies, Great Western Hotel. Speakers: Miss Jones, Miss Anna Munro, and others. Guests to be received by Miss Turquand, Reading's oldest suffragist, and Miss Olive Cobb. Chairman: Dr. Carew Hunt. 3 p.m.

Tuesday, April 16.—NOTTINGHAM. Delegates' meeting to "Equal Pay Council" in People's Hall, Heathcote-street, at 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24.—READING. Hickie's Lecture Room, Friar-street, 6 p.m. Women's Freedom League Conference with women's organisations on formation of Reading Women's Council.

We draw special attention to—

Mr. J. W. Williams's Lecture on "The Great Menace: Need for Sex Education," on Wednesday, April 10, in Minerva Café.

Woman's Suffrage News.

New Brunswick is to give votes to women. This will make Quebec and Prince Edward Island the only provinces where women are not enfranchised.

Among the measures to come before the present session of the Canadian Parliament is a Bill to extend the franchise to women.

The Franchise Committee of the Hungarian Chamber of Deputies has passed the Franchise Bill, which includes women, with one dissentient.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

Exemption for Solicitors.

Sir Auckland Geddes has stated that the stage has been reached at which the numbers of solicitors and their skilled clerks should not be further depleted.

In all other ranks of life men have agreed to the Government's proposals of the dilution of labour, and women are taking men's places in all the trades of the country. Why is it that the legal profession is allowed to keep its doors closed against women in spite of the Government's constant call for men? The House of Lords has passed the third reading of the Solicitors' (Qualification of Women) Bill. British women are willing and eager to qualify themselves for this profession, and in many instances women are already acting as solicitors' confidential clerks. This is a profession for which a great number of women are pre-eminently suited. Why does the Government refuse to find time for the passage of the Solicitors' (Qualification of Women) Bill through the House of Commons? Is it because there are so many members of the legal profession in the House of Commons? In that case women voters had better consider Miss Normanton's recommendation that the women's vote throughout the country should be organised in opposition to the return of any member of this profession to the House of Commons at the next General Election.

Women Wanted!

"All women voters of Hampton, Hampton Hill, and Hampton Court," says the *Surrey Comet*, "are invited to attend a public meeting at the Public Hall, Hampton, on Wednesday, April 10, at 7.30 p.m. Speakers: Miss Goring Thomas (secretary of the Women's Unionist Association) and Sir Philip Pilditch, prospective Unionist candidate for the new Spelthorne Division of Parliament."

This is certainly a timely recognition of women's new position, and we sincerely hope that all women voters in the district will accept the invitation extended to them. We especially urge local members of the Women's Freedom League to be present and to ask the candidate questions as to what he is prepared to do, if returned to Parliament, in the way of securing in the near future equal voting powers for men and women, equal opportunities for men and women to enter Parliament and all the high offices of State, and equal opportunities and equal pay for the sexes in all professions and trades, as well as his attitude on matters of special interest to women, such as better housing for the people, better education for the children, and an improved system by which the health of the whole community will be safeguarded.

Equal Pay for Equal Work.

The scheme going forward in Nottingham, to form a joint "Equal Pay for Equal Work Council," might usefully be carried out in other provincial towns as it will be in London. Delegates from 75 trades unions and other organisations have been invited to co-operate. The work of the Council will be to initiate a propaganda campaign on the question of equal pay, and to draw up practical lines of political action.

Woman Organiser for the Liberal Federation.

Miss Maud Illingworth has been appointed organiser of the Manchester Liberal Federation. For twelve years she organised the Women's Liberal Associations in the Shipley Division of Yorkshire, the constituency of her cousin, Mr. Percy Illingworth. Since Mr. Illingworth's death, Miss Illingworth has worked for three or four years at Reading. She is expected to begin her duties in Manchester early in April, and will devote herself mainly to the organisation of the women electorate of the city.

At Blackburn a woman organiser is likely to be appointed.

THE VOTE.

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

FRIDAY, April 5th, 1918.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—

To the Editor—on all editorial matters.
 To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
 To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.
 Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

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.

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THE LATEST DANGER TO WOMEN.

In the very early days of the present war the Women's Freedom League found it necessary to run vigorous campaigns, both at Plymouth and at Cardiff, against the attempts of the military authorities to re-introduce the discredited Contagious Diseases Acts against women, and in March of last year we initiated and carried through a strenuous opposition to various clauses in the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, the effect of which clauses would have meant the re-introduction of these Acts. The Criminal Law Amendment Bill was dropped because of the force of women's opinion against it, but now, under the Defence of the Realm Act, and during the Parliamentary Recess when no questions can be put to Ministers, the following 40 D. Regulation has been made:—

No woman who is suffering from venereal disease in a communicable form shall have sexual intercourse with any member of His Majesty's Forces or solicit or invite any member of His Majesty's Forces to have sexual intercourse with her.

If any woman acts in contravention of this regulation she shall be guilty of a summary offence against these regulations.

A woman charged with an offence under this regulation shall, if she so requires, be remanded for a period (not less than a week) for the purpose of such medical examination as may be requisite for ascertaining whether she is suffering from such a disease as aforesaid.

The defendant shall be informed of her right to be remanded as aforesaid, and that she may be examined by her own doctor or by the medical officer of the prison.

In this regulation the expression "venereal disease" means syphilis, gonorrhœa, or soft chancre.

After our Plymouth and Cardiff campaigns we had an assurance from Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister, that neither in the letter nor in the spirit would these Contagious Diseases Acts be re-enacted; yet, after nearly four years of war, the War Office authorities, having failed in their efforts to retain the establishment of the *maisons tolérées* in France, have secured the right of the further victimisation of helpless women by this new Order. The War Office view of the social evil was clearly expressed by Mr. Macpherson on February 25, when, in answer to a question put by Mr. Chancellor, he said:—

"The hon. Member for Northampton, if I remember aright, said that there were thousands of cases of unregistered women outside in the streets, and he went on to imply that relations took place between soldiers and those women. If that is so, human nature being as it is, I am not at all sure that it is such a bad thing to have a certain house where women are registered and kept clean."

It has already been pointed out to Mr. Macpherson that in one of these *maisons tolérées* in France there were fifteen girls and that they had been visited by between three and four hundred men in the course of a day. One's brain reels at the thought of "cleanliness" coming into this question, and it is certain that no soldier who visited such a house would be

guaranteed against any one of the diseases enumerated above. It does not occur to the War Office to impose any penalty upon any man who has transmitted these diseases to women, innocent or otherwise; but under its new regulation it proposes to make our streets unsafe for any girl or woman. If she is seen by the police talking to members of His Majesty's Forces she is liable to arrest on suspicion of having venereal disease and forced to undergo a humiliating medical examination before she can be proved innocent or guilty. She will be charged on police evidence only, and how reliable this is was well proved by the notorious Brentford case, when two innocent girls were compelled to submit to this unspeakable insult. The Women's Freedom League is determined at all costs to resist this new Regulation and to oppose this penalisation of women for the protection of men, and we appeal to all our readers who support our view that immorality is no more necessary for men than for women to rally round the flag and assist us with personal service and financial help in this great fight.

We call upon the country to insist that this Regulation shall be at once withdrawn, in the interests of our young manhood and the future of the race, and that the War Office shall cease to waste its energies in the abortive attempt to make vice "safe" for men, and shall devote itself to taking far more active measures than hitherto to discourage immorality and to impress upon the soldiers how close is the relationship of purity to patriotism.

E. KNIGHT.

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

The Right to Kill.

Mr. Justice Salter, at the Manchester Assizes recently, summing up in the case in which a soldier named Blackhurst Thompson, aged 28, was charged with wounding Thomas Nelson by attacking him with a hatchet, following a communication made by Mrs. Thompson, said there were too many instances of soldiers using weapons in cases of domestic unhappiness. There was a vague notion, added the judge, that because a man had served in the war he could come home, and if he found some wrong had been done, could slash and kill somebody, and not be responsible to the law. If a man was to be allowed to slay the seducer of his wife, then they must allow the wife to slay the unfaithful husband.

We call attention to the fact that the judge made this protest with regard to a case of an attack upon a man, not a woman, but we welcome his strong pronouncement and commend it to the careful consideration of his fellow judges and all concerned with the administration of justice.

W.F.L. Political Meeting.

Miss Tooke's declaration on March 22 that political meetings were more necessary than ever, met with warm approval, and the audience in the Minerva Café listened with sympathetic interest to her appeal to educated women to take up Local Government work. Mental deficiency, outdoor relief, old age pensions, food control, maternity and infant welfare centres needed the help of women of independence of character and earnestness of purpose for the good of the community. Mrs. Despard supported Miss Tooke's appeal, and pointed out how already the power of women as voters was making itself felt. She insisted on the need for equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for girls and boys. Mrs. Whetton urged women to think for themselves and to set a high standard by coming into politics with clean hands and the determination to keep them clean. Miss Dorothy Evans spoke on the need for full representation of women on reconstruction committees, otherwise women's affairs and interests would receive scant attention. The Government and the 58 Central Committees appointed by Government must be made to realise that equal pay for equal work is women's demand. Miss Anna Munro presided, and moved a resolution, which was passed with enthusiasm, congratulating London women teachers on their successful stand against sex differentiation in salary.

NO HONOUR FOR THE N.U.T. PRESIDENT AT CAMBRIDGE.

Because she is a woman, Miss Conway, President of the National Union of Teachers' Conference at Cambridge, has received no honour from the University, although men of the union, occupying less exalted positions, have been deemed worthy of recognition. The following extracts from an interesting article by Miss L. Cutten, L.L.A., in a recent issue of *The Schoolmistress*, put the facts clearly and show how the penalising of women because they are women by the ancient University perpetuates injustice.

By a rather remarkable coincidence, in the only two years when the president of the National Union of Teachers has been a woman, a university town has been selected as the place of conference. When Miss Cleghorn was installed as president at Aberystwith the honorary degree of M.A. was conferred upon her, as the representative of a large and influential body of teachers. At Cambridge next year the president-elect will again be a woman, but as Oxford and Cambridge refuse their degrees to women Miss Conway can receive none.

The National Union of Teachers apparently have acquiesced quite cheerfully in this slight to their representative, and proceeded to nominate THREE MEN for the degrees—the former treasurer, the retiring president, and (it would be almost Gilbertian if not so deplorable) the *defeated candidate*. The person chosen by the collective vote of the Union was thus set aside in favour of the one who was rejected. It is true that the seconder of a hearty vote of congratulation to the three men said that he was "only sorry that Miss Conway, being a lady, was precluded from being in the list of honours." What a pity it is that no woman member of the executive expressed a regret "that the speaker, being a man, acquiesced in the insult thus offered to the Union in the person of its chief officer"! What would a trade union conference have said if their elected leader had been thus slighted? Would they have been "only sorry"? They would either have changed the place of their conference or regretfully declined an honour in which their chief representative was debared from participating.

Is it any wonder that self-respecting women are leaving this Union? Indifference, injustice, and insult do not attract the women of the present day.

Miss Cutten points out that the National Union of Teachers refused repeatedly to pass even a resolution of sympathy with its members deprived of citizenship simply because they were women. The vote is now won despite the Union's want of sympathy and support. As to the salaries question, she writes:—

Injustice was inflicted last year when the Union, through its executive, brought pressure to bear upon the President of the Board of Education to legalise, for the first time on record, the unequal payment of men and women teachers; and the Departmental Committee's Report is a result of that attitude. . . . Already scales of salaries have been adopted by local education authorities based on the Union's unfair suggestions. The harm has already been done, and the shower of pious resolutions on equal pay on the conference agenda are only painfully suggestive of flowers scattered over the grave of women's hopes in that direction. The National Federation of Women Teachers must work out its own salvation on this question as on many others.

Memorial Service to Nurses.

A Memorial Service will be held at St. Paul's Cathedral on Wednesday, April 10, at 2.30 p.m., for nurses who have fallen in the war. Queen Alexandra has expressed her intention of attending.

The Roll of Honour: Nurses Torpedoed.

All the nurses on the hospital ship *Glenart Castle*, torpedoed in the Bristol Channel on February 27, are reported as missing. Miss Kate Beaufoy, the matron, had occupied that position on several hospital ships, on which she had travelled 60,000 miles since the beginning of the war and had 30,000 patients under her care. She served as a nurse in the South African war; some years ago she taught nursing to Italian girls, and was decorated for her work by the Queen of Italy.

BRAVO, CROYDON!

Croydon has the honour of being the first borough to accord a civic reception to women citizens. The event will be recorded in its annals and will also be commemorated by placing in the Mayoral Chamber the loyal address presented by the women citizens in order, as the Mayor, Alderman Howard Houlder, observed, that his successors may have ever before them the remembrance of the way in which the great national reform of the enfranchisement of women was celebrated in Croydon on March 20, 1918.

"So far as in us lies, our endeavour shall ever be to uphold the right and secure equal justice for all, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community."

So ran the expression of the women citizens' resolve in their newly-won power of co-operation with their fellow-burgesses of the ancient town and important borough of Croydon. Striking and memorable was the scene when the Mayor, in official robes, with the mace-bearer and the town clerk, received the long procession of Croydon's women citizens of to-day and to-morrow—doctors, nurses, members of the suffrage societies, university graduates in cap and gown, and school children, granted a half-holiday to celebrate the event—who, after attending the dedication service at the Parish Church, marched to the Town Hall, headed by the Mayoress, Mrs. Mary M. Houlder, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Nina Boyle, and the members of the Executive Committee of the Women Citizens' Day. Banners of famous women—Mary Wollstonecraft, Josephine Butler, Elizabeth Blackwell, Emily Brontë, Alice Stone, Jane Austen, and others—glittered in the sunshine of a perfect spring day. Enthusiastic cheers from the great company of women greeted the Mayor's declaration that he was a suffragist of many years' standing, his appreciation of the victory which has at last crowned the long struggle for justice to women, and the hearty civic welcome he extended to Croydon's new citizens, with good wishes for their effective influence in the borough. The Mayor marched with the procession from the Town Hall to the Public Hall, where a great historic meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Mayoress. In her speech on "Lift Up Your Hearts," Mrs. Fawcett gave a graphic sketch of the events of the past fifty years, showing how victory to-day was based on the wider extension of education to women, and declared that the enfranchisement of women was the greatest step yet made in democratic government. Miss Nina Boyle's stirring speech was a rousing call to women to take part in the great things made possible by the suffrage victory; moral as well as material progress must be made; it must never more be said that "Politics are a dirty game unfit for women." Women must make politics clean. They must be in Parliament, in the Government, in official positions of responsibility. Tremendous enthusiasm greeted her statement that she was considering whether she would offer herself as a candidate for the forthcoming bye-election at Keighley.

The citizens of to-morrow—girls of the Croydon High School—had their share in this memorable meeting by singing "Land of Hope and Glory" at the beginning, and leading the National Anthem and "God Save our Splendid Men" at the close. High hope for the future was the concluding note of this important and historic celebration. The greatest credit was earned by the committee of suffrage women who organised the celebration, and members of the Women's Freedom League will be interested to know that Mrs. Marion Holmes, a member of the committee, wrote the loyal address, and that the clever artist who illuminated it so beautifully was her daughter, Betty, aged 14.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

Miss Alix M. Clark and Miss Munro and other enthusiastic workers have carried out a splendid campaign at the National Union of Teachers' Conference at Cambridge this Easter. They have devoted their holiday to the fight. Crowded meetings have been held, new members enrolled and much progress made. "Equality" was made the most important problem of the Conference.

There is still a deficit on the expenses of this very valuable campaign, and I feel sure that all who appreciate the vital character of our demand for equal treatment in the teaching profession will be glad to take this opportunity of joining in the fight by sending an immediate contribution towards the deficit.

144, High Holborn,
London, W.C. 1.

E. KNIGHT.

IN PARLIAMENT Differentiation Between the Sexes Upheld.

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

On March 20th Mr. Currie asked (1) the Under-Secretary of State for War whether a woman enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps wears an Army uniform, draws Army pay, and is subjected to Army orders, discipline, and billeting regulations; if so, why one interpretation is placed by the War Office upon the meaning of the clause in last year's Finance Act establishing a special military rate of income tax in a question with a male income taxpayer and another in a question with a woman to the disadvantage of the latter; (2) the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the military rates in income tax prescribed in last year's Finance Act are confined to men serving overseas with either the Navy or the Army; and whether women enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps liable to be sent abroad at any time, but still serving in this country, are denied the benefit of the military rate?

Mr. Forster: Some members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps wear a uniform approved by the War Office; they do not draw Army pay. The question of the application to them of the Finance Act is a legal question, and the War Office has recently been advised that under certain conditions the reduced military rates of tax will apply.

Beer.

On March 21 Mr. Arthur Richardson asked the Prime Minister if, in view of the shortage of beer for munition workers, engineers, shipbuilders, and kindred workers, he will immediately take steps to prevent any beer being supplied to women entering public-houses?

Mr. Clynes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food): I have been asked to reply. The suggested discrimination between the sexes would appear to be rather invidious. I may, however, state that the question of disposing of supplies in such a manner as to meet the reasonable requirements of the classes named is being discussed.

Sir J. D. Rees: If women do men's work, should not they be allowed to share the men's beer?

Mr. Clynes: That is a view held by many women.

Cost of Living (Committee of Enquiry).

On March 21st Mr. Herbert Samuel asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he could state the names and the terms of reference of the Committee to be appointed to inquire into the extent of the increase in the cost of living during the war?

Mr. Bonar Law: I have appointed a Committee, with the following terms of reference:

"To inquire into and report upon (1) the actual increase since June, 1914, in the cost of living to the working classes; and (2) any counterbalancing factors (apart from increases of wages) which may have arisen under war conditions."

The Committee is constituted as follows:—Lord Sumner (Chairman), Professor Sir W. J. Ashley, Professor A. L. Bowley, Mr. W. Coggan, O.B.E., Mrs. Knowles, D.Litt., Mr. J. J. Mallon, Mrs. Pember Reeves, Mr. Newton E. Smith.

Why six men to two women on a Committee dealing with what is generally supposed to be peculiarly women's affair?

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK. Women Teachers' Great Demonstration at the Albert Hall.

"Well done, women teachers of London!" This was the keynote of the great demonstration at the Albert Hall on March 23, organised in less than a week by the National Federation of Women Teachers. The full chord on which the memorable meeting ended was the determination to go forward in the fight, despite difficulties, until equal pay for equal work had been won.

The tribute to the women teachers of London was well deserved. "To have accepted the proposed scale of salaries submitted to the London County Council would have stamped the teaching profession as a secondary career," said Miss Susan Lawrence, L.C.C., in a vigorous speech, fully supporting the revolt of the women and associating herself whole-heartedly with their demand for equal pay for equal work. "Those ten thousand women who in a few days signed the protest did a magnificent service for the future of education. Their sudden and spontaneous outburst was irresistible; not more than six members of the London County Council voted in favour of the discredited scale of salaries." The new Education Bill, good on the whole, depends entirely on teachers, she added; an efficient teacher with a class of reasonable size means that education is a success; an inefficient teacher with an unwieldy class means that education is a failure.

"Slackness in the teaching profession is worse than illness," declared Dr. Christine Murrell, in insisting that unequal pay was an injustice to the State, for underpaid teachers were unable to keep body and mind efficient. She warmly commended the Canadian plan of one year's holiday on full pay for the purpose of travel every fourth year of service.

The only travel possible to women teachers would be to travel out of the teaching profession if the recommendation of the Departmental Committee were accepted, said Miss E. Phipps, B.A., President of the Federation, and member of the Women's Freedom League, who delighted the large audience by the efficient and good-humoured way in which she took the chair. Where else could women teachers travel, as desired by the committee, on £90 a year, rising slowly to £150? Do not be beguiled by sudden conversions of your opponents, she advised her hearers. Look up the record of every Parliamentary candidate and use the power of the vote in ensuring that promises are kept. Miss Phipps' statement that Miss Nina Boyle was determined to test the question at the coming bye-election at Keighley as to whether a woman candidate for Parliament would be accepted evoked an enthusiastic outburst. Cheap women, she went on to say, meant sweated labour; they are a danger in every kind of work. "Stick to the great work you have begun, women of London," she urged, "you are helping teachers and workers everywhere!"

Mr. Whitehouse, M.P., Sir Alfred Yeo, M.P., Mr. Harry Gosling, L.C.C., brought warm messages of encouragement. The power of enfranchised women, it was stated, had made itself felt in the action which the War Office had been compelled to take with regard to *maisons tolérées*; the Parliamentary vote would be a great power in the hands of women teachers in the difficult road to the goal in view; Labour was solid behind the women teachers for the sake of the children and for the sake of all workers generously included in their resolution demanding equal pay for equal work. Miss Margaret

BRANCH NOTES.

Glasgow.

The annual business meeting was held at 212, Bath-street, on March 21, when the reports for the year were submitted. The following office-bearers were elected:—Hon. secretary, Miss Janet Bunten; hon. treasurer, Miss Mina Steven. Miss Eunice Murray's resignation was received. It was decided to delete the office of president from the constitution, and to reduce the number of the Council from twenty to twelve. We wish to express our appreciation of the work Miss Murray has done for the Glasgow branch during the many years she has worked with us for a common cause.

Nottingham.

Bring all your friends to the Café Chantant in the Theosophical Hall on Saturday, April 6, at 7 p.m. Admission 6d. Send for tickets to Miss Petty, 43, Bingham-road. Light refreshments on sale. Offers of contributions in the shape of food, sandwiches, cakes, patties, etc., or cash, will be welcomed by Mrs. Buxton, 39, Gedling-street, Carlton, who has kindly undertaken the catering. The meeting of delegates to the "Watch the Courts Committee," announced for April 8, has been postponed for a few days. The date will be announced later.

Portsmouth.

The Suffrage Rally on March 27 was a distinct success. The room was gaily decorated in the colours of the League, with the addition of banners from the other Suffrage Societies. An attractive musical programme was provided by Mrs. Owen. After coffee had been handed round, short speeches were made by Miss Peacock, Mr. Blake Howell, Rev. G. W. Thompson, and Mrs. Whetton.

Reading.

Will all members and friends do their utmost to make the "Suffrage Victory Celebration" a success on Saturday, April 13? All Suffrage Societies are co-operating, and we look for a large gathering at the Great Western Hotel at 3 p.m. A special interest of the occasion will be the reception of guests by Miss Louisa Turquand, Reading's oldest suffragist, and Miss Olive Cobb. Miss Anna Munro, Miss Margaret Jones, and others will speak on "Our Plans for Future Work." Dr. Carew Hunt will preside, supported by Miss Dale. Tea. Collection.

On Wednesday, April 24, a conference organised by the Women's Freedom League will be held at Hickie's Lecture Room, Friar-street, at 6 p.m., to consider the formation of a Reading Women's Council. Delegates from all women's organisations will be present.

Swansea.

The Swansea branch has combined with the other Suffrage Societies and women's associations in the town to hold a mass meeting in celebration of the enfranchisement of women. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10, at 8 p.m., at the Albert Hall. Mrs. Coombe-Tennant will take the chair, and Miss Nina Boyle will speak on "The Vote and its Responsibilities." A cordial invitation is extended to all members and friends. A jumble sale will be held early in May. All kinds of saleable articles are urgently needed.

Waterloo.

A series of drawing-room meetings has been arranged for members and friends. The first took place on March 15, by kind invitation of Mrs. King, and the attendance taxed the utmost capacity of the room. The hon. secretary emphasized the need for fuller representation of women on all local committees of National Welfare and for emergency measures. Women, she insisted, must prepare their future policy and programme now, and not wait for the General Election. A good discussion followed, and many questions were asked as to the policy of the W.F.L.

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JUMBLE SALE.

The London Branches Council wishes to thank all those friends who sent parcels for the jumble sale. Nearly everything was sold, and a good sum received for the funds of the League. Many thanks also to all who helped with the sorting and selling on the day of the sale.

Literature Department.

Now on sale, excellent photographs of the Women's Freedom League "Victory" Conference; large size, mounted, 15 by 10, 2s. 6d. each; unmounted, 1s. 6d.; smaller size, 10 by 8, mounted, 1s. 3d. each. Postcards 6d. each.

Bondfield, Dr. Marion Phillips, Mrs. Ogilvy Gordon, and Miss Somers added assurances of support from the organisations they represented.

Miss Anna Munro, representing the Women's Freedom League, which has equal pay for equal work on its programme, proposed the resolution of congratulation to the London women teachers for their splendid effort. She told how in Reading an inspector of nuisances was appointed to deal with infant welfare, and how Arbroath offered a scavenger £101 a year and a teacher £80. Every gain was a gain for everyone in the struggle, and the higher the recognised status of the teacher the more important was it that adequate remuneration and opportunities for development should be given.

The banners of the National Federation of Women Teachers decorating the hall showed how the country stood by the London women in the campaign for equal pay for equal work, and the meeting, which will be historic in the annals of the women teachers' organisation, was supported by the following societies:—

The Federation of Civil Servants, The National Women's Labour League, The National Union of Women Workers, The Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries, The Women's Freedom League, The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, The Free Church League for Women Suffrage, The National Union of Women Suffrage Societies, The London Society for Women Suffrage, The Art Teachers' Guild, Professional and Industrial Women's Suffrage Society, The National Union of Clerks.

Important Meeting at Nottingham.

A project is on foot in Nottingham, says *The Nottingham Express*, to form a joint council to consider the question of equal pay for equal work for men and women. Representatives of a number of trades unions and women's societies met at the People's Hall on March 26 under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League, and passed the following resolution:—

That this meeting of men's and women's trades unions and social organisations considers it essential that the principle of equal pay for equal work for both men and women should be established, in the interest of the workers of both sexes, and agrees to form a joint council to consider the question in its application to the various trades affected, and to take what steps are necessary to secure its immediate application to industry as a whole.

Miss Dorothy Evans (presiding) said that at all costs the regrettable antagonism between men and women workers must be averted after the war. The undercutting of men by women was the cause of it, and to try to turn women out of certain sections of industry was no solution. The only satisfactory solution was equal pay for the same work, so that men and women might compete together on equal terms and the most efficient worker get the job.

Mr. W. Wesson (president of the Nottingham and District Trades Council) said the custom of paying a woman less for any work for which she applied arose from the tradition of woman's inferiority that had been handed down from ages past. Minimum wages would soon be fixed for many trades, and they should be fixed regardless of sex.

Miss Gill (National Federation of Women Teachers) said that work which was paid for below its worth because it was done by a woman was sweated labour, and this tended to lower the whole standard of living. Men and women teachers took exactly the same examinations and fulfilled the same duties, often in the same schools; yet women were paid sometimes as much as £60 less than men of the same length of service.

Mr. Chambers (National Union of Shop Assistants) supported the resolution, saying that the principle was obviously just, and what was just should also be expedient. Mr. Annable (National Union of Clerks) and Miss Burgis, B.A., also supported the resolution. Further meetings will be held.

FRIDAY,
APRIL 5,
1918.

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