

THE VOTE

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1924

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

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BAILIE BARBOUR OF GLASGOW.

By LILLIAN LENTON.

There is no doubt that the life of a woman bailie is a busy one. Three times I tried to see Bailie Barbour before I was lucky enough to find her at home, and then she could only spare me five minutes, as she had to depart again immediately for yet another engagement.

Bailie Barbour, with Bailie Bell, can claim the distinction of being one of the first two women to be elected to this honour in Glasgow, and one of the first four women bailies in Scotland, the others being Bailie Millar, in Edinburgh, and Bailie Tasker, M.B.E., in Stirling.

Mrs. Barbour is a Labour Councillor, and is very glad to have been made a bailie, not, so far as I could gather, because of any personal gratification she may so justly feel, but because her new dignity will give her greater power to help the unfortunates to whom she has dedicated her life, and because her election marks yet one more step towards that still distant goal, *absolute* equality of opportunity between the sexes.

Mrs. Barbour assured me that her work was in all respects identical with that of a man bailie, "except, of course, that I shall be able to emphasise the woman's point of view," that point of view which, until the last few years, was never heard in a court of law unless a female prisoner dared to speak.

I asked for stories of her work at the police courts, but that day was her first day, and no case of

importance had come before the magistrates. A man and his wife were charged with being drunk and disorderly, a charge which is frequently met by the payment of a fine, but the woman bailie was present to point out that if fines were imposed on these two, their infant children would pay. The prisoners were

placed on probation for six months, a sentence they disliked far more than a fine, for it meant that they might not enter a public-house for that length of time. Bailie Barbour told me that such will be her method of dealing with all "drunks," and she believes, once this is realised, not many will come before her. Too lenient, in her opinion, were her male colleagues in another case, when they dismissed with a caution youths of about 16, charged with making a loud disturbance in the streets in the early hours of the morning. They too, she said, should have been placed on probation. Bailie Barbour has lived amongst the poor, and she knows how terribly trying it is, after a long day's hard work, to be awakened in the middle of the night by rowdy, irresponsible youths, "singing" and shouting beneath her windows.



BAILIE BARBOUR OF GLASGOW.
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Although the very short time at our disposal prevented Bailie Barbour telling me much of her work, I have heard from other sources of some of the steps she has taken to relieve the lot of the working woman. It is largely through her that subsidised "domestic help" is now available for some of the very poor.

Many a childless, middle-class woman in good health is greatly annoyed if the "servant problem" forces her to do all her own housework. What then must be the feelings of the careful but poverty-stricken housewife, the mother of babies under five, who, taken seriously ill, lies fretting in bed, knowing that her home and children must be neglected until she herself can struggle up to attack the arrears of work, the only assistance she has been able to obtain being that of the district nurse for half an hour or so each morning, or the kind offices of already overworked neighbours? At such times, and for such women as these, help is necessary, and, largely owing to the active representations of Bailie Barbour, is now obtainable in Glasgow. The scheme is worked through the Welfare Centres. If the poor mother of a child, or children, under five, is taken ill, and applies to the authorities for such assistance, a "domestic help" will be sent to her, whose duty it will be to attend to the housework and the children, as the mother herself would do were she able. No nursing is expected of her. The women employed, who are selected by the "Welfare" officers, receive payment at the rate of 5s. per day. Towards this sum the family assisted contributes what it can afford (generally about a 1s. a day), and the rest of the money is paid by the Corporation of Glasgow. This is a new scheme. So far not many women have taken advantage of it—not many women, we hope, are ill—and so far, not many "domestic helps" are subsidised from the rates, but it is a scheme capable of developing into an inestimable boon to hard-working mothers in their hour of need.

So long as she holds her present position, so long as the power is hers, we may rest assured that Bailie Barbour will do all that one person can to alleviate the sufferings of the needy, and, by the energy and ability she brings to the execution of her duties, give yet one more proof of the surely now indisputable fact that a woman is as capable as a man of fulfilling any task for which she may be appointed.

It will doubtless be realised that the position of bailie in Scotland is much more important than that of an ordinary English J.P. It is more like that of an ordinary English alderman. In Scotland, councillors are elected by public vote, and the bailies are chosen from these councillors. Bailie Tasker, for instance, was Stirling's first woman councillor. Unlike an alderman, a bailie continues to sit for the ward for which he or she has been elected, even after becoming a bailie. The senior bailie acts as Provost when the latter is abroad. Incidentally, a bailie acts also as a J.P. A bailie may resign after giving three weeks' notice, but would still retain the position of councillor.

A bailie has jurisdiction in questions of debt, and in possessory questions between inhabitants of a borough. His or her civil jurisdiction is as extensive as that of a sheriff in his own territory. They can forcibly sell "ruinous" buildings to the highest bidder if the owner refuses to carry out the necessary repairs. Criminal jurisdiction is confined to police court offences. A bailie's power is greater in the Royal Boroughs of Edinburgh, Perth, and Stirling than it is in other boroughs. In the larger boroughs the bailies attend the Licensing Courts.

RAISING THE SCHOOL AGE.

Last September the Board of Education announced that: "For any authority which secures the voluntary attendance of elementary school children beyond 14, or adopts a by-law raising the leaving age to 15, the Board's contribution to maintenance grants will be calculated on a 50 per cent. instead of a 20 per cent. basis, with a view to compensating parents for loss of the pupil's earnings." Carnarvon is the first authority to make this by-law. Its Education Committee recently decided to raise the compulsory age to 15, and a new by-law to put the decision into effect was last week sanctioned by the Board of Education.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Woman Barrister's Triumph.

The first woman barrister to argue a case before the Court of Criminal Appeal is Miss Ida M. C. Duncan, who recently obtained the quashing of the convictions at Monmouth against Thos. Dwyer and Allen Ferguson for housebreaking. The Lord Chief Justice, in giving the judgment, said that Miss Duncan had urged the case for the appellants with clearness and with force. Miss Duncan, who is a member of the Oxford Circuit, was called to the Bar in January, 1923.

Woman Jewel Connoisseur.

Anna Szaphira, a Jewess, who has just died at Boston, Lincolnshire, was known throughout Europe as a judge of precious stones. Hatton Garden dealers used to take thousands of pounds worth of jewels to her in Lincolnshire for valuation. Anna Szaphira spoke French, German, Spanish, Italian, and four other languages.

A Grateful Government.

The Polish Government has presented to Miss Florence Barrow, of Birmingham, as representing the British and American Quaker Relief Mission, which has been working in co-operation with the Polish authorities for the restoration of Poland since the war, a beautiful bronze statuette, entitled "The Sower." Miss Barrow is known in Poland as "the never-tired."

Champion Woman Typist.

Miss Odette Piau, of Paris, is the champion typist of Europe. She won her title in an open competition in which French, Belgian, Swiss, and English champion typists participated. She struck the keys 10,943 times in 30 minutes, with only 21 mistakes. Her word rate was over 90 a minute. Miss Piau left the hall where the competition was held with a magnificent challenge cup, and 2,000 francs in prize-money.

A Useful Invention.

Mrs. Lillie Rae, a Scottish woman, has invented an electric hair drier, which works out at a cost of about one farthing for the entire process. The "Electrodome," as it has been called, is a dome-shaped apparatus which can be connected to an ordinary electric lamp socket, and quickly does its work, whilst the user can read or knit.

Mrs. Middleton and Wansbeck Division.

At a meeting of the Wansbeck Unionist Association held at Newcastle, it was unanimously agreed that Mrs. Mary K. Middleton, who contested the seat at the last Election, should be adopted as prospective Parliamentary candidate. In thanking the meeting for their unanimous decision, Mrs. Middleton said she was prepared to do her utmost to capture the seat.

A Woman Architect.

Miss Josephine Chapman, who is now on a visit to this country, is famous all over America as a pioneer of women architects. She is said to have made sufficient money, although only of middle age, to retire, and intends to settle in Paris, but keep in touch with London.

An "All-Woman" Company.

An "all-woman" limited liability company, to sell millinery, costumes, and leather goods, has recently been started at Brighton, under the title of "Cruley Ltd." Mrs. Lily Culler, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, is the chairman, and Miss Ivy Rothschild is a director.

Woman in House of Lords Gallery.

Miss Rebecca West was admitted into the Reporters' Gallery of the House of Lords last Tuesday. This is the first time that a woman has been so admitted.

Woman Sanitary Inspector Appointed.

Miss Edith Hamilton has been appointed a sanitary inspector for Kensington.

NO ROOM TO BREATHE!

Speaking at the Conservative Demonstration at the Albert Hall, last week, the Prime Minister said:—"We have to get rid of two things—the shortage of houses and the disgrace of slums." The same afternoon, Dr. Waldo held an inquest at Southwark on a three-weeks-old child, daughter of a news-vendor, who was suffocated while in bed with her parents. The jury found that the death of the child was due to the bad conditions in which the family was living. The mother said that she, her husband, and five children, including the baby, lived in a two-room house, for which they paid 9s. a week. To get possession of the dwelling, they paid £5 10s. "key money." All the family slept in one room, which was too small to hold a cot. There were five similar houses, each, with the exception of one, being occupied by families. A doctor from Evelina Hospital agreed with the Coroner that the overcrowding was dreadful, and enough to suffocate all the people. A next-door neighbour of Mrs. Butler said she paid £6 before she got the key of her house. In her case a girl of 20, a boy of 17, a boy of 13, and another child, all slept in one room, but not in the same bed. The Coroner asked, "What can you expect the country to come to? Things are so bad that something ought to be done at once. I have said that many times."

Last week, a coal hawker at Shrewsbury, who had unsuccessfully applied for a council house, seized one. Workmen who had been putting the finishing touches to the dwelling, left the key under a brick in the back yard. The coal hawker found it and moved in with his wife and three children in the early hours of the morning. He says he will remain until turned out. For two years, this man and his family had used a wooden shed as day quarters, and had spent the nights in a van in a field, sleeping five in a bed.

Overcrowding, because of the housing shortage and the unspeakable slums of so many of our towns, has for years been a national scandal. They are a growing menace to the health of the people, and call aloud for determined and vigorous intervention on the part of the Government.

PRISON-BORN?

On November 21st, the Secretary of the Women's Freedom League sent the following letter to the Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, M.P.:

SIR,—At the request of The Women's Freedom League, I am writing to ask if you would consider the possibility of the temporary release of Iris Howe, who was sentenced at the Old Bailey last September to three years' penal servitude, for throwing vitriol over a man and a girl. We understand that she is expecting to become a mother this year, and, for the sake of the child, so that it shall not throughout its life bear the stigma of having been born in prison, my Committee asks if you could have Iris Howe transferred temporarily to a hospital or nursing home, so that the child could be born outside prison.

We understand that Mr. Henderson, when he was at the Home Office and was asked a similar question, stated that he had not the power to arrange the temporary release of a prisoner. If this is also your view, may we suggest that you ask Parliament for such power? Is it not likely that the great majority of Members, remembering that the child could have no responsibility for the offence committed, would readily grant the necessary power, if asked to do so?

In the hope that we may hear from you on this matter,

I am, Sir, etc.

The following letter, dated December 4th, has been received from the Home Secretary:—

MADAM,—In reply to your letter of the 21st November about the case of Iris Howe, who was recently convicted of throwing corrosive fluid with intent to do grievous bodily harm, and sentenced to

three years' penal servitude, I have looked into the matter, and I agree with the view taken by my predecessor, that I have no power to release this prisoner temporarily in order that her child may be born outside prison.

As regards your suggestion that in the absence of such power I should ask Parliament to confer it upon me, I can only say that I am prepared to consider on its merits any case of a woman in prison who is about to be confined, and that in the case of short sentences for minor offences the Prerogative of Mercy is often utilised, and the remainder of the sentence remitted at a suitable time, with the result that the prisoner is released before the confinement is due. I am not, however, in a position to promise legislation dealing with cases where a long sentence has been imposed.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) W. JOYNSON-HICKS.

Other Letters to Ministers.

The Women's Freedom League has written to the Prime Minister expressing its National Executive Committee's appreciation of the appointment of Mrs. Philip Snowden and Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan to the Royal Commission which is to investigate food prices, but pointing out that two women to eleven men is hardly a fair proportion, in view of the fact that food prices are of even greater concern to the majority of the women of the nation than to the men, and asking Mr. Baldwin if he can see his way to add to the number of women on this Commission.

The Women's Freedom League has written to the Minister of Health asking for the appointment of a medical woman in place of Lord Eustace Percy, who has resigned his position on the Royal Commission on Lunacy. We have reminded Mr. Chamberlain that we have all along been most anxious that a medical woman should be appointed to this Commission, and that, as we follow the reports of its proceedings, we are more and more convinced of the advantage and advisability of including a medical woman in its membership.

The Women's Freedom League has also written to the Home Secretary urging that, in view of statements in the Press to the effect that he was taking steps to increase the police force at the present time, he should consider the advisability of increasing the number of women police, more particularly in the Metropolitan area.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

At a meeting of the Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, held at the Engineers' Club last week, Mr. H. W. S. Martin said that we had not yet generally realised the great harm done by smoke pollution, but possibly very soon the health authorities would insist upon the smoke nuisance being stopped, or at least very greatly mitigated. Until then, air washers and filtering apparatus in connection with the heating and ventilating of public buildings were essential.

In a letter to Lord Newton, Mr. Neville Chamberlain (Minister of Health), writes:—"I am happy to be able to give you an assurance that the Government do contemplate introducing a Smoke Abatement Bill as soon as possible, but there is some doubt whether it will be desirable to do so in the coming Session. Probably no time would, in the end, be lost by waiting till 1926."

A WHITE LUNCHEON

will be given by

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at

THE HYDE PARK HOTEL, at 1 o'clock,

ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16TH.

In honour of Lady Astor and the members of the White List who have been returned to the House of Commons in the Election. Tickets 10/6, from the Secretary of the Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street. Telephone: Victoria 7175.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12th, 1924.

EDITORIAL.

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

THE KING'S SPEECH.

NO EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

After Mr. Baldwin's public pronouncement that he was in favour of equal political rights for men and women, it comes as a profound disappointment that no mention of equal political rights is made in the King's Speech. There are in this country nearly five million women over twenty-one years of age who have not the right to exercise a political vote. No woman, whatever she is, whatever she does, or whatever she has, can secure a Parliamentary vote before she reaches the age of thirty, while practically any young man, as soon as he reaches the age of twenty-one, can claim a vote. It must be remembered that the great majority of women earning their livings in professions, commerce, or industry, are under thirty years of age, and therefore without any political power to defend their own interests in employment, or, when unemployed. Not only are all women under thirty disfranchised, but a very great number of women over thirty also have no vote, because they cannot claim to be put upon the Register on a purely residential qualification, as men can. If a woman cannot prove that the furniture in the room she occupies is her own, and not her landlady's, or her relative's, she cannot get on to the register. It is simply political ineptitude on the part of successive Governments that this glaring injustice to women remains unremoved. The King's Speech contains no promise to remove it, so we again appeal to our friends to see that a Bill is introduced into the House of Commons at the earliest possible date, and the Government vigorously pressed to pass it into law without delay.

We notice that the King's Speech once again expresses grave concern about unemployment. We confidently hope that, during the Debate on the Address, the plight of unemployed women will be brought to the attention of the Government. A good deal is said about Housing, and one paragraph reads:—"The housing problem is not merely one of overcrowding, but also of the existence of large numbers of houses which fall below modern standards and sanitation." Readers of THE VOTE will find confirmation of this statement in another paragraph headed, "No Room to Breathe!" We sincerely hope that the present Government, with its huge majority, will insist that a great many more houses shall be built in the near future than have been built in the past, and that it will use all its powers and resources to clear away the slums, which are a disgrace to our nation.

A system of insurance for widows' pensions, and improved old age pensions, is foreshadowed. We are in hearty agreement with the provision of pensions for widows with children, and that the amount of old age pensions should be increased; but we emphatically disagree that the money for these pensions should come out of an insurance scheme for workers. The workers and the employers of this country are already overburdened with the dues they have to pay for sickness and unemployment benefit, and we do not think that they should also have to bear the greater part of a charge for providing these extra pensions. Pensions for widows with children, and pensions for old people, should surely be a national

concern, provided by the nation through its taxes, and not a burden upon any special sections of the community. We very much hope that this point of view will be voiced in the House of Commons.

We are glad to see that education is mentioned, and that the Government has decided "to promote the steady and continuous development of the public system of education." We suppose that the meaning of this decision will be made clearer during the Debate, and hope that a higher school-leaving age is what is intended.

We are glad that the Government is prepared to deal with the adulteration of food, and that the cost of Milk is to be considered. We should like to see a drastic policy pursued in regard to food adulteration, and also in regard to impure or dirty milk.

The Food Prices Commission is mentioned, and another paragraph reads thus:—"Bills will be introduced dealing with legitimation by subsequent marriage; separation, and maintenance orders; guardianship of children; and the improvement of the probationary system." We shall, of course, be glad to see these matters settled, but we hope that when the present Government brings in a Guardianship of Infants Bill, the real equality of the rights of fathers and mothers in the guardianship of their children will be recognised, and that there will be no insistence by the Government that the father must be considered the only head of the family.

We see that the Factory and Workshop Acts are to be amended and consolidated. Women's organisations must be watchful when these Acts are dealt with, and make it plain to the Government that restrictions upon women's work, which are not in operation in regard to men's work, are entirely unfair, and militate against women's endeavours to secure equal opportunities and equal rewards with men in industry. More women factory inspectors are an absolute necessity.

LADY ASTOR'S PICTURE.

We hardly expected the usually sober Board of Works to have added to the gaiety of nations, but it has certainly succeeded in making itself and successive Governments look exceedingly ridiculous in its dealings with the picture commemorating the entry of Lady Astor, our first woman Member, into the British Parliament. That indeed was an event of the greatest historic importance, a matter of great jubilation to the women who had for so many long years worked hard for our political enfranchisement, an event most worthy of national commemoration. One First Commissioner of Works evidently agreed with this view, accepted the offer of the picture, and approved the place where it should be hung. On his authority the picture was ordered, and the presentation made. Then a few disgruntled Members of Parliament put in some objections, and succeeded in so worrying successive First Commissioners that the present holder of the office, Lord Peel, after instituting a host of inquiries and consulting the majority of his colleagues, has intimated that the picture must be removed, saddling all his colleagues with the pompous assertion that, as a matter of principle, pictures or statues of living persons should not be accepted for the Houses of Parliament! (Let us safeguard the House of Lords in advance, lest woman's entry be commemorated there.) Could anything really be more childish?

ASSAULTS ON CHILDREN.

The Committee appointed by the Home Secretary to inquire into the prevalence of assaults on young persons, and of considering the law and its administration on this offence, has resumed its meetings. Child Welfare Societies or social workers who wish to make representations on the subject of child assault are asked to communicate with the Secretary—Miss J. J. Wall, Home Office, Whitehall, London, S.W. 1.

THE RISING PRICE OF FOOD.

By EMILY JUSON KERR, J.P.

During the last few months the cost of existence (some people call it living!) has risen 12 per cent., and is still rising. This state of things is likely to continue, unless very drastic measures are taken. Is the present Government, with its great majority, strong enough to face the clever manoeuvring of the various Combines? Can they prevent their buying prolifically in time of "glut," then holding up vast stores and pronouncing a "world shortage"—thus forcing up prices till one wonders if their aim is to consume the consumers? Three Governments have come and gone since matters became acute—yet nothing has been done. What of the Linlithgow Inquiry that entered into the details of food prices? Nothing happened in consequence to arrest the upward progress of the veriest necessities of life. Women housewives agitated until the taxes were taken off tea and sugar, yet prices rose in spite of their being taken off! The only comforting fact is that, had not the agitation proved successful, To-day we should have been paying what we are paying, plus the taxes! What can we do now? I have been asked to let readers of THE VOTE know what can be done, what must be done, by those who earnestly wish to help the nation, as well as themselves, in the present acute crisis. A Royal Commission has been formed, with two women members only—we must make the best of these two who represent our sex! We have heard of Royal Commissions before; they have usually resulted in a formal statement of the result of their inquiries, then vanished from view, draped in a mantle of lethal nebulosity. Again nothing happened.

This time, we women must see to it that this Royal Commission is kept alive, and results in a live action that will lessen our sufferings—and how? We must make it our duty to attend in person every meeting

of this Commission, and persuade our friends to accompany us. We must watch the proceedings as closely as cats watch for mice! We must send written questions to the women members—c/o Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1—when we note omissions, or on special points for which we wish for answers. In this way we shall circumstantially convince the Prime Minister and his Cabinet how vitally the women of the country feel on this important question. Government has the power to arrest the progress of combines, monopolies, trusts, and rings—let us see that it uses its power! The Royal Commission on Food Prices meets in public. The first meeting was held on December 10th, at noon, at the Board of Trade Office, Whitehall. After that, they will meet at least twice a week. All meetings will be announced in the Press. It is to be hoped that women will attend every meeting in such large numbers that many will have to leave owing to want of space! Let us lay aside other engagements, so pressing even as Christmas ones are, and realise how intensely important this one "engagement" must be made by those of us who live in London. We can comfort ourselves for the inconvenience by realising that by this means we shall keep alive the work of those chosen by the Premier to help us in our troubles. We shall at least prevent this Royal Commission from dying a graceful death, as many of its predecessors have. Instead of depending solely on the sixteen Members of the Commission to "cut a way out," we must each of us help "cut the way out." Each meeting must be attended by as many women as possible—alive, alert, and in earnest. If this Commission fails, we must plan another way out; but it need not fail, if we do not "weary in well-doing." We must attend, attend, attend—until a successful issue is attained!

MEN, WOMEN, NATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND GOVERNMENT.

That men disagree with one another on some matters is well known to our readers, who may nevertheless

The *Dorset Daily Echo* reports that, at the Dorchester Debating Society, Mr. T. R. Owens opposed the granting of equal suffrage for women and men. He said we had our women voters—the maturer women. "Parliament is not everything," he declared, "and the laws of this country are not everything; they really don't make much difference to us." The average young married woman and young mother had plenty to do without bothering about these other questions. The next question was whether such an extension of the franchise would really be of much benefit to the nation. Were four million flappers to be given the vote on equal terms with business men, he asked? Was it right to give a young woman of that age the right to vote to send a representative to Parliament, on the same terms as a trained and experienced business man? After all, Parliament was a business concern, and could they seriously suggest that such a proposal would benefit the nation? Would it not rather be a national disaster? If they had a large and irresponsible section of voters, would it not mean that the country would be governed in a more or less irresponsible manner?

When the resolution was put to the meeting, 80 women at the same age and on the same terms as votes were cast for the granting of the suffrage to men, and 46 against it.

be interested in the following extracts from our Press cuttings received last week:—

According to the *Daily Graphic*, the subject, "Are Women Fit to Govern?" was discussed at the Anglo-Swedish Society the same evening. Sir Sidney Low said:—"Public life is a career most successfully followed by those who will fail in private life. The politician's main qualification is, of course, ignorance. Most careers require some training. In addition, a politician ought to be exceedingly conceited—also exceedingly voluble, and exceedingly insensitive. Cannot these qualities be found in a certain number of women?" Sir Sidney Low added that the apprehension which kept him awake at night was the question as to whether there were enough men holding all these qualifications, and whether in the near future the number would fall short. It followed, therefore, that if we could not find enough men for politics, we should have to call upon the women. He proceeded, "Wherever you have had women in politics they have been able to penetrate to the heart of things through their logical clearness. This is to be found in history all through the ages." Sir Sidney's conclusion was: "Woman in politics is justified by the past, and in the future it might be advisable to look to the ability of women, and enlist their services in public life."

Miss Lind-af-Hageby caused amusement by stating that, according to some extremists, the day would come when there would be no men at all!

Surely the world would certainly be a little dull if there were no men to entertain us with their views about us, our capacity, and our limitations!

KING'S SPEECH MEETING.

A meeting was held at the Minerva Club last Tuesday evening to discuss the contents of the King's Speech. All the speakers deplored the omission of an equal franchise measure from the Government's programme. Miss Hall made an excellent criticism of most of the points in the Speech, and emphasised the need for more women factory inspectors. Miss Pearson declared she would not rest until women had absolute equality with men in our franchise laws, nor would join or work for any political Party until they had. Miss Reeves called attention to the indefiniteness of the Government's pronouncements on matters referring specially to women's interests in this Speech. Miss Sparkman regretted the reference to Imperial Preference, which she maintained would add to the already high prices of food. Miss Jessie Stephen dealt with the necessity for equal franchise, declaring that there was no valid argument against it. She herself was considered old enough to serve, and did serve, on a public body when she was twenty-four years of age, but not old enough to have a Parliamentary vote until she was thirty. The majority of the electors in the country were in agreement with the cause of the equal enfranchisement of women and men, and she strongly urged every member of the Women's Freedom League to work with renewed vigour to secure it at the earliest possible date. Miss Stephen also put in a strong plea for the provision of work for unemployed women. In one borough with which she was connected, more than a million pounds had been spent since 1918 on providing work for unemployed men, but nothing had been spent on schemes of work for its unemployed women. She repudiated the idea that schemes of training in domestic work were sufficient for unemployed women, and maintained that twelve weeks were not enough to train a woman to take up domestic service. Twelve months in a proper training home would be more to the purpose. Miss Stephen insisted that schemes of training in industry and professions, similar to those devised for workless men, should be initiated for unemployed women.

Mrs. Juson Kerr urged all present themselves to attend, when possible, and persuade all the women they could to attend, every meeting held by the Royal Commission on Food Prices. The price of food was a matter of the greatest importance to all women, and women must show the Government that they were watching the proceedings of the Commission very closely. If the Government could not effect reductions in food prices, then women must take the matter in their own hands and, by deciding in very great numbers to boycott certain foods, themselves succeed in breaking the power of the Combes.

A discussion followed these speeches, the meeting being presided over by Miss F. A. Underwood.

FOOD PRICES COMMISSION.

The first formal meeting of the Royal Commission on Food Prices was held last Wednesday, at the Board of Trade Offices, Whitehall, under the Chairmanship of Sir Auckland Geddes. It is the desire of the Government that the report of the Commission shall be presented at the earliest possible moment. It was decided to take official evidence at the first meeting as to the trend of wholesale and retail prices, and that statistics should also be supplied concerning the index figures on which the cost of living is based. The Commission will also take evidence of a general nature on the same subject from outside sources, and will then proceed to investigate trading transactions on wheat, flour, and bread.

BOOK REVIEW.

In the House of my Pilgrimage. By Lilian M. Faithful, M.A., J.P. (Chatto & Windus.) 10s. 6d. (Can be obtained at this Office.)

Miss Faithful, who, it will be recollected, performed the onerous task of succeeding that famous educationalist Miss Dorothea Beale, as Principal of the Ladies' College, Cheltenham, has here set down in the evening of her retirement an absorbing and interesting account of her early life, Oxford days, and the various educational positions she held previous to her appointment to the most famous girls' school in England.

College Days.

As noted in the Dedication of this volume, Miss Faithful owed the Higher Education at Somerville College she was fortunate enough to obtain, to the penetration and foresight of her mother, who, in addition to rearing a family of eight children in the 'seventies on comparatively small means, yet contrived not only to teach the said children, and make their clothes, but also to contribute articles to magazines, write a History of England, and carry out as well daily a quantity of extremely solid reading. Somerville College, in 1883, when Miss Faithful first went there, had only been established four years previously. The students only numbered 25 in her first term, but increased to 40 during the three years she spent at Oxford. Some of these students were women long past their youth, who were inspired to join the younger students by sheer love of learning, and eagerness to grasp the new opportunities now beginning to widen in women's lives.

Miss Faithful's first educational appointment was at the Oxford High School, one of the schools belonging to the Girls' Public Day School Trust, which has recently celebrated its Jubilee. These schools were the pioneers before the main boarding schools for girls, with the exception of Cheltenham, had started. In 1889, Miss Faithful became English Literature lecturer at Holloway College, which she describes as the most splendid gift to women of the later nineteenth century, and the only college for women which has never been crippled by debt. From Holloway she passed into the Women's Department of King's College, London, where she acted as Vice-Principal for a number of years, and was extremely happy. In 1906, somewhat reluctantly at the outset, she stepped into the shoes of the illustrious Miss Beale, at Cheltenham Ladies' College, with its thousand girl students.

Schoolgirls and the War.

The great war caused surprisingly little interruption in the normal routine of the Cheltenham Ladies' College, so that the account of the war work voluntarily accomplished by the girls during this period reads most remarkably. In addition to supporting a hospital for 50 patients, a sum of money was collected sufficient to supply a mobile X-ray apparatus of the latest pattern, which was presented to the War Office, and was in the field by the spring of 1915. After the war this gift became the property of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital. Two thousand old students gave their services either as hospital nurses, ambulance drivers, teachers of handicrafts, clerks, masseuses, dispensers, land workers, or canteen helpers, whilst at home in the College workshops the total output was just over 55,000 articles.

Although Miss Faithful obtained part of her earliest education in a large boys' school, where her uncle was headmaster, she is not an enthusiast for co-education, though in favour of a mixed staff in both boys' and girls' schools; and though she speaks sympathetically of various modern educational developments—the Montessori schools, the Dalton system, the Dalcroze Eurythmics, etc.—it is quite evident to her readers that she remained constant to those older traditions of discipline and concentration which obtained to so large an extent in the great School over which she ruled.

D. M. N.

Women's Freedom League.

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

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

1925.

Saturday, January 24th, at 10 a.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Monday, January 26th, at 8 p.m. Thames Valley. Public Debate on an Imperial Preference Policy, at the Parish Hall, Elleray Road, Teddington. Chairman: The Viscountess Rhondda, J.P.

DARE TO
BE FREE.

Saturday, March 7th, at 10 a.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Friday, April 24th, at 2.30 p.m. National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday April 25th, at 10 a.m. Annual Conference at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

PROVINCES.

Monday, December 15th, at 7.30 p.m. Middlesbrough. Members' Meeting at "Agecroft," Linthorpe. Fair Report by Delegates, and to make arrangements for opening Concert in January.

1925.

Thursday, January 1st, 4-6 p.m. Hastings. At 1, St. Paul's Place, St. Leonards-on-Sea. Thé Chantant (by kind permission of the President, Mrs. Darent Harrison).

Monday, January 12th. Middlesbrough. Annual Meeting at "Agecroft," Linthorpe.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday, December 17th, at 8 p.m. Oak Room, Kingsway Hall, W.C. Women's League of Union. Carol Singing for Mission Funds.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Women's Freedom League Offices will be closed from Wednesday, December 24th, 5.30 p.m., until Monday, December 29th, 9.30 a.m.

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S
ORGANISATIONS.

A new departure has just been made by the Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations, to which The Women's Freedom League is affiliated, and which held its November Meeting on Thursday, 27th. Up till now only representatives of the constituent Societies have been entitled to attend the Meetings, but it has now been decided that approved individuals may be present on payment of a small annual subscription. This will enable a much wider circle to profit by the valuable discussions of this Committee.

Among the subjects considered yesterday was one of great topical interest, namely, the separate taxation of married people's incomes. This involves several complicated questions, and so many practical difficulties were brought to light that further investigation is to be undertaken before any decision is made, and it was agreed to see how far the principal, that no one shall be penalised by marriage, can be secured.

An Urgency Resolution was moved by Miss Boyle, and endorsed by 23 Societies, urging the Prime Minister to appoint an additional woman on the Royal Commission for Lunacy Reform, in place of Lord Eustace Percy who had resigned. It is felt that the small number of women at present on the Commission, welcome though their appointment was, should be reinforced by another.

A protest is being sent by a group of Societies within the Committee to the Party organisations, deploring the selection of women for forlorn hopes with regard to constituencies, and urging that they should be given a better chance in the future.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby, the new Vice-Chairman, gave an address on money-lending among women, which has been the subject of recent investigation. There were two types of money-lenders, she stated, those who had offices, and, though asking high charges, were more or less reputable; and those, very often women, who usually made the exorbitant charge of 1d. per 1/- per week, or 433 1/3 per cent. per annum, and kept no written record of the transaction. Working women, who lived up to the margin of their incomes and could give no security, were often the victims of money-lenders who made a good income by trading on the ignorance of others. Legislation was urgently needed on various points, including a clear statement of the contract, a maximum rate of interest, and no registration of money-lenders without proper qualification.

IN SYMPATHY.

It is with very great regret that we hear of the sudden death of Mrs. Schofield, of Manchester, mother of Councillor Schofield Coates, J.P. All our members wish to unite in deep sympathy with our President in her grief and sad loss.

BRANCH NOTES.

THAMES VALLEY.

This Branch is arranging a Public Debate to take place at the Parish Hall, Elleray Road, Teddington, Monday evening, January 26th, to discuss Food Prices, Unemployment, and Imperial Preference. The following resolution will be moved by Mrs. Costello, of the Conservative and Unionist Association, and opposed by a member of the Women's National Liberal Association:—

"That by establishing Free Trade within the Empire, the economic bonds between all parts of the Empire would be strengthened, the supply of foodstuffs and raw materials for Great Britain would be secured for all time, and the unemployment problem lessened. Therefore this meeting is of opinion that Imperial Preference is vital to the prosperity of the Empire."

Members of the audience will be invited to ask the speakers questions, and all members and friends in or near Teddington will be very cordially welcomed at this meeting. The Chair will be taken by the Viscountess Rhondda, J.P., at 8 o'clock. Admission is free, but there will be a collection for the expenses of this meeting.

(Sec.) MISS BREWER, 15, Fleece Road, Ditton Hill, Surbiton.

SOUTH-EASTERN BRANCHES STALL.

The organiser thanks all those who so kindly sent articles for the above Stall. She also thanks Mrs. Kither, Mrs. Clayton, Mr., Mrs., and little Margery Dunhill, who helped her at the Stall.

(Organiser) MISS M. L. WHITE, 8, Holmsdale Gardens, Hastings.

GLASGOW.

Notices of the resolution passed at the meeting on November 29th have been forwarded to all the Members for Glasgow, the four women M.P.s, and the Prime Minister.

A "business meeting" for new and old members is being arranged for Saturday, December 13th, at which it is hoped to appoint new office bearers, a new committee, etc. This meeting will take place in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street. Others not yet having done so, but wishing to join the Women's Freedom League are also invited.

(Organiser) LILLIAN LENTON, 59, Waverley Gardens, Crossmyloof.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Romford Guardians, Nurses and Bobbed Hair.

It gives us great pleasure to quote the following paragraph from the *Church Times* of November 14th:—"We have rarely come across a more flagrant example of the insolence of elected persons than the action of the Romford Board of Guardians in forbidding the infirmity nurses to bob their hair. One of the common-sense minority, opposed to this petty interference with personal liberty, made the admirable suggestion that a full-size model of Mr. Bumble should be erected in the nurses' home. Nurses are notoriously overworked and underpaid. It is adding insult to injury for Guardians to dictate the length of the nurses' hair. Is it believed that a woman's hair must be long before she is competent to take a temperature or measure out medicine? As a matter of fact, short hair—we do not attach importance to the mysterious difference between 'bobbing' and 'shingling'—has obvious advantages for working women, and particularly, as it seems to us, for infirmity nurses. We suggest to the Ministry of Health that these Romford tyrants should be sharply rapped over the knuckles."

Mrs. Nevinson's Reminiscences.

Our old friend and colleague, Mrs. M. W. Nevinson, L.L.A., J.P., has been persuaded to write her reminiscences. All through our struggle for political enfranchisement, Mrs. Nevinson was one of our ablest, and most untiring workers. She shirked nothing, taking her full share in caravan suffrage tours, election work, and public meetings—indoor and outdoor, when the crowds were most hostile—while her caustic letters and articles to the Press, on the motives and the professions of those who denied political liberty to women, were most damaging to the opponents of our cause. Mrs. Nevinson has met many interesting personalities, and has been active in a great deal of social work, so that, remembering the shrewd humour she displayed in her former books, we can look forward with the greatest pleasure to reading her reminiscences. The book will be published by Black, and we understand that it will be ready by Easter.

How to address Women Barristers.

Miss Monica Cobb, a barrister, recently told a London audience of the various forms of address she had received from witnesses. Sometimes she was addressed as "Madam," more often as "Sir," and once as "My Lady." The other day a kind old lady solved the difficulty by calling her "my dear."

THE SIX POINT GROUP.

In place of the usual "At Home" on Monday, December 15th, there will be an American Sale and Tea at 92, Victoria Street, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. There will be attractive stalls, a Caldonian Market of second-hand goods and antiques, tea served at 4 o'clock, and a few short speeches by Miss Ada Moore and others between 5 and 6.

Tickets for the White Luncheon at the Hyde Park Hotel, December 16th, at 1 p.m., in honour of Lady Astor, and the members of the White List who have been returned to the House of Commons in the recent Election, can be had from the Secretary, 92, Victoria Street, S.W., price 10s. 6d.

FRIDAY,
DEC. 12,
1924.

THE VOTE

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MINERVA CLUB, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Open to non-residents. Restaurant. Smoking Room. Papers. Library. Bedrooms available at holiday times. Membership, £1 1s. Entrance Fee suspended during present year. All particulars from the SECRETARY. Telephone: Museum 4791.

PIONEER CLUB, 12, Cavendish Place, Oxford Circus, W.1. Bedrooms. Debates. Concerts. Town Membership, £5 5s.; Professional and Country, £4 4s.

NOTICES.

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

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, December 14th. 3.30. Music. Lecture, Lady Barrett, M.D., M.S. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden. "An Incomplete Theology."

TRADE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

64-PAGE BOOK ABOUT HERBS AND HOW TO USE THEM. 2d. Send for one.—TRIMNELL, The Herbalist, 144, Richmond Road, Cardiff. Est. 1879.

ANCONAS lay the largest eggs. Hand-some birds, good layers. Sittings 6/-. Chicks 12/- doz., carriage paid.—PARRIS, Danecroft Poultry Farm, Bagshot.

WANTED.—Second-hand Clothing, best prices given; parcels sent, valued, and money sent by return. Stamped addressed envelope for reply.—RUSSELL, 100 Raby Street, Byker, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

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REST AND HOLIDAYS.

BOURNEMOUTH.—"Loughtonhurst," West Cliff Gardens. Food Reform Guest House. Best situation. Old established. Proprietors, Mr. and Mrs. Hume.—Apply SECRETARY.

JERSEY.—Paying Guests received. Every Comfort. Terms from 2 guineas per week.—PROPRIETRESS, Ashton House, Rouge Bouillon, St. Helier, C.I.

CORNWALL.—Superior Farmhouse board-residence, one mile city and River Fal. Splendid centre. Moderate terms.—LAMBESSOW, Truro.

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Please enrol me as a Member of the Women's Freedom League.

Name

Address

I enclose £ : s. d. as my first Annual Subscription.
Minimum Annual Subscription, 1s.