

THE VOTE,
SEPT. 8, 1922.
ONE PENNY.

SCRAP OUR PRISONS!

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 8, 1922

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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IF I AM M.P.

MISS PICTON-TURBERVILL, Prospective Labour Candidate, N. Islington, is Vice-President of the World's Y.W.C.A., and member of the Executive Committees of the National Council of Women, and the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. Is widely travelled, having spent some years in India, and visited America several times on lecturing tours. Well known in social and religious work. Author of several books, her last one being on Internationalism, to which Lord Robert Cecil wrote a Preface.

I would try to get the Government to adopt a policy that would prevent unemployment. The terrible dread of unemployment is a horror haunting millions of workers to-day. A policy to prevent unemployment, rather than deal with it when it comes, should be adopted. This is not easy, but it is quite possible.

"A fair day's wage for a fair day's work' is as just a demand as Governed ever asked of Governing," wrote Carlyle, long ago. I agree with him.

Then I would try to secure equal pay for equal work, for men and women. It is an elementary law of justice that the job, whether it is done by man or by women, should receive the same remuneration.

I would concentrate on the Housing question. The infant mortality in some places is 143, and in one place 156, per 1,000, where families are compelled to live in two-roomed, and even one-roomed houses. Sir George Newman, Medical Officer of Health, tells us there are seven and eight persons, adult and children, living in one small room in Central London. I would call upon Government to deal with the trusts that force up high prices in the building trade.

Then I would work for the immediate enfranchise-

ment of women on the same terms as men; women under thirty should not be handicapped in the way that they are now. It will be an act of justice and improve home life; women who have the vote take not

less, but more, interest in the home. Pensions for widows with one or more dependent children are an urgent need; our present system is not only cruel, for it often takes the children from the mother, but most wasteful of public money. I would work for the extension of Trade Boards, which, though not exclusively to prevent the exploitation of women, yet affect women more than men, because it is a tragic fact that the worst exploited trades are those that employ mainly women. The Boards should be extended to all trades that need protection.

I would do my part in trying to get Parliament to build their International policy on the principle that Europe is an economic unit. I may add that the Labour Party is the only one of all the political parties that has pronounced in favour of all the reforms to which I have referred. I should work for an equal moral standard, not only as between men and women, but in private, national, and international life.

EDITH PICTON-TURBERVILL.



Photo by Lafayette.

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOLS.

Two very interesting International Summer Schools were held in Europe this summer, organised by the German and Swiss branches, respectively, of the Women's International League. The first one was held from August 1st to 14th, at Burg Lauenstein, a restored eleventh century Castle, on the borders of the Thuringian Forest. The second, originally intended to be held at Varese, in Northern Italy, was moved to Paradiso, a suburb of Lugano, on account of the Fascist riots and general unrest throughout Italy, and held from August 18th to September 2nd.

The German Summer School, presided over by Dr. Anita Augsborg, Fraulein Heymann, and Fraulein Gertrud Baer, was attended by some seventy women of many nationalities, from Hungary, England, France, Italy, the Ukraine, Jugo-Slovakia, and Roumania. These lived happily together for the fortnight, using German and English as their common tongue.

During the first week of the School, lectures were given by Bertrand Russell, Dr. Vogeler, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, and others, and in the second week M. Jouve and Mme. Raverchon lectured on French literature; Frau Laske, a German poetess, read her plays and poems, and joined with the French writers in a comparison and study of the French and German modern literature. Other lectures dealt with Psychology, and the Economic Crisis in Europe. The lectures were given in the Ritter Saal, or Castle Hall, a vast room of curious shape, hung round with ancient weapons and pieces of armour, where, on cold evenings, the students sat round a wood fire in the huge fireplace, listening to old German legends and music. All the lectures were much appreciated, and, after they were over, groups of people were to be seen discussing them with one another. Mrs. Bertrand Russell emphasised the women's point of view in China, after her husband had lectured on Chinese Problems. Silvio Gesell, a former Bavarian Minister of Finance, spoke on Economics, Dr. Engert leading a discussion on this subject. Walter Fabian spoke on the Youth Movement, which to-day is making rapid strides throughout Europe.

At the second International Summer School, at Lugano, some twenty nationalities were represented. East met West in the best sense of the phrase: Mexicans conferred with Americans, Irish and British hobnobbed, and young students from France, Germany, Austria, Italy, etc., helped one another over the language barrier with their respective tongues.

The morning lectures were held in the large Municipal Hall, the afternoon and evening ones in the Hotel. All were open to outside visitors for a small fee. Internationalism was the keynote of almost all the lectures, those of particular interest being by Graf Harry Kessler, of Germany, on "The League of Nations as it should be"; Mr. Ayusawa, on "Internationalism in Japan"; and Mme. Andree Jouve, on "Women's Part in the Development of the International Idea."

CAMP FIRE GIRLS.

"Keep the 'game spirit' running throughout all your work." This was the advice given by an experienced Camp Fire Guardian at the Training Camp held recently in Weardale. It is that spirit of joy underlying the Law of the Camp Fire Girls which causes such enthusiasm in its members. There was no lack of it during the week's "camp" in the North, where Guardians from Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, London, and the Tyneside area met to discuss their work, and to gain fresh inspiration and ideas for the future.

The blending of the ideal with the real, the theoretical with the practical, was one of the most conspicuous features of the Training Course. The Conferences were led by Miss Margaret A. Backhouse, Chief Guardian of the British Camp Fires, and those present were brought to a fuller understanding of the psychology of the girls with whom they were dealing, and to a realisation of how completely the Camp Fire programme could satisfy the needs of those girls.

But the practical side of the work was by no means set aside, and Guardians will not easily forget the routine of a well-run camp. "Setting-up" exercises before breakfast, followed by tent inspection, started the day. Then squads for various duties set about their tasks of washing up, dusting, etc., and illustrated the discussion which had taken place on the necessity for the team spirit amongst girls.

Singing, handcraft (including stencilling, wood-blocking, bead work, and leather work), and bathing, all played their part in the morning's activities. It was with a satisfactory sensation of repose well earned that students parted from one another after the mid-day meal, each seeking a quiet and picturesque spot in which to enjoy the silence of "rest hour," so necessary for girls in camp.

Two afternoons were spent in blazing and tracking trails of different varieties. Several out-door suppers were prepared under the shadow of the pine trees. Only those who have tried can know the thrill of cooking eggs, biscuits, bread, potatoes, and even water, without the use of recognised cooking utensils!

The trees themselves were a revelation to many. Who would have believed that it was possible to hold a ceremonial meeting out in the woods round a blazing fire, when the rain was falling? This was done, and, after their impressive talk round the fire, as they filed slowly out of the woods into the open, each Guardian felt more deeply than before her responsibility as a leader of the coming womanhood of the nation.

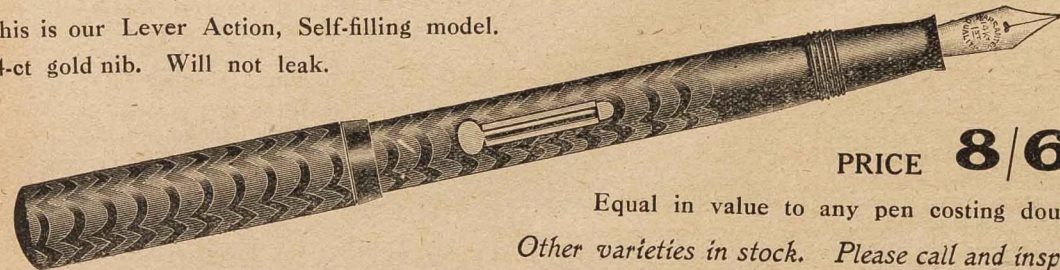
A second Training Camp, run on very similar lines, has just been held at Seaford, Sussex. This week's course was attended largely by London Guardians. The handcraft done there was of a varied order, and bookbinding, tablet and loom weaving, were very popular. Lumps of chalk found near the cliffs were ingeniously carved into useful and original articles.

As a result of these Camps, well over a quarter of the total number of Guardians in England have received a training which will result in more efficient co-operative work during the coming winter among the girls of our country.

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WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Woman Lawyer's Triumph.

Great stir has been caused at the Palais de Justice in Paris by the appointment of the advocate, Mlle. Jeanne Rospars, as secretary of the Conference. She is the first woman who has ever been called to that honour. The Conference of Advocates is an organisation which, created in the 17th century, was suppressed by the Revolution of 1789, but re-established in 1810. Many of those who have been, at one time or another, secretaries of the Conference, are or have been prominent personages in magistracy, politics, or literature.

Public-spirited Kansas Women.

Kansas women are showing themselves notably enthusiastic in public affairs. In the 105 counties of the State, it is estimated that there are some 350 women candidates for various public offices, ranging from the Governorship to places on Town Boards. Two women are among the seven candidates for the Republican nomination for Governor, one woman is putting up for a congressional nomination, three of the four women who served in the House of the State Legislature in 1921 are seeking re-election, whilst one woman is offering herself as State Superintendent of Public Instruction for a third term.

A Young Scientist.

Probably the youngest member to address the British Association at this week's meeting in Hull will be Miss Frances Waight. Although in her very early twenties, she has spent two years in attempting to measure the effect of gravity on certain plant organs, and is to read a paper embodying her results before Section K. It will interest readers of THE VOTE to know that Miss Waight's researches have been entirely under the direction of another woman—a member of the Women's Freedom League.

Newnham College Awards.

A grant of £50 offered by the trustees of the Ida Freund Memorial Fund to a teacher of physics for purposes of travel and study has been awarded to Miss E. M. Ridley, Natural Science Tripos, Cambridge, 1920, science mistress, Kentish Town Secondary School. A travelling scholarship of £200 has been awarded by the trustees of the Mary Ewart Trust Fund to Miss D. A. E. Garrod, Historical Tripos, Cambridge, 1916, diploma in anthropology (with distinction), Oxford, 1922.

Schoolgirls on Strike.

Two hundred and forty girls of Eastwood Council School, Keighley, last week struck as a protest against the dismissal by the Education Authority of the headmistress, after many years' service, in connection with staff reductions, whereby married women teachers are dispensed with. The boys and infant schools were unaffected by the girls' picketed at the school gates, but only six girls went in. There was some excitement.

Women Aviators.

Lord Incheape's third daughter, the Hon. Elsie Mackay, has just received her certificate as a pilot. She started her career in the air only six months ago, and now owns her own two-seater machine. There are at present about a dozen Englishwomen qualified as aviators. One of these, the daughter of the late Vicar of St. Peter's, Vauxhall, the Rev. George Herbert, is both a pilot and a skilled mechanic.

Woman Bridge Builder.

Miss Lou Alta Melton is the only woman to design or build bridges in the United States, and is now employed in the San Francisco district office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Public Roads. Miss Melton is a graduate of the University of Colorado, where she took up engineering. She is a member of the American Association of Engineers.

French Women Athletes.

Twenty thousand Frenchwomen, young and old, have been enrolled for competition in track and field events, and from this feminine army a team was chosen to represent France in the international games in the Pershing Stadium, last month. Before 1915, Frenchwomen were never organised for athletic efforts, except for horseback riding, tennis, hunting, and swimming.

Woman Dental Lecturer.

Mrs. Frank Cowlin, who is studying for her final medical degree at one of the London hospitals, is the first woman appointed in this country to lecture to dental students. The subjects are anatomy and physiology, and, later, elementary general surgery and pathology. Mrs. Cowlin considers there are great opportunities for women in dental surgery, particularly in the treatment of their own sex and children.

Muslim Woman's Success.

A Muslim woman candidate heads the list of successful candidates in the Bachelor of Law Preliminary Examination of the Calcutta University. This is the first time that a woman student has come out first in a Law Examination. Miss Begum Sultan is the daughter of the editor of a Mohammedan newspaper.

Spanish Feminist Paper.

A new Feminist paper, *Renacimiento*, the organ of Union de Mugerres de Espana, has just made its appearance in Spain. The first issue mentions the formation of a new Society in Spain for the Abolition of the State Regulation of Prostitution, and the establishment of an equal moral standard, legally as well as socially.

Woman Competitor for King's Cup.

Lady Anne Savile will be amongst the competitors in the fight for the King's Cup next week-end. Lady Anne is a daughter of the fourth Earl of Mexborough. She married a German Prince in 1897, and was widowed two years later. She became re-naturalised in 1918.

Link with Livingstone.

An interesting link with the great Dr. Livingstone has been broken by the death of Mrs. Colt, who for twenty years was caretaker of Ongar Congregational Church, where the famous missionary-explorer conducted his first pastorate.

Argentine Campaign.

The National Feminist Union of Argentine is organising a fresh campaign in favour of the municipal vote for women. A big petition is in train, and when ready will be presented to the Chamber of Deputies.

A Champion Letter Sorter.

Miss Nina E. Holmes, of Detroit, U.S.A., claims to be the champion mail handler of the United States, since, in eight hours, she can sort and distribute 20,610 letters. She is wondering whether any Post Office employee in England can do better than this, and whether she is not champion of the world!

Woman Rose Gardener.

Miss Elsie Webb, the 18-year-old daughter of a Hanger Hill florist, has been given practical charge of one of the largest rose gardens round London. She has herself budded twenty thousand roses this season.

Welsh Girl Singer's Record.

Although not yet 15, Decima Morgan, the daughter of a working man of Ammanford, South Wales, has won more than 500 prizes in Eisteddfod competitions, besides five Eisteddfod chairs, 12 medals, and six semi-national certificates. She belongs to a musical family, and a promising future is predicted for her.

Japanese Women Engineers.

The departments of engineering and medicine at the Kyushu Imperial University have just been opened to women students.

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EDITORIAL.

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

WOMEN & THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The Third Assembly of the League of Nations, which opens at Geneva this week, promises to be the most important gathering which has yet been held by this new force in international politics. The agenda includes subjects which range from Esperanto to the request of Hungary for admission to the League, while much interest will be aroused by the report of the Temporary Mixed Commission on Armaments. Many of the Advisory Committees, including those concerned with the traffic in opium, and in women and children, will present their reports, while the Commission of Inquiry into the Deportation of Women and Children in Turkey will place the result of its investigations on record.

To Feminists, and British women generally, this year's Assembly will be of special interest, as Great Britain, for the first time, has appointed on this occasion a woman substitute delegate in the British delegation, Mrs. Coombe Tennant. An Australian woman, Mrs. Dale, has also been appointed for the first time a delegate in the Australian delegation. The list of women now taking an active part in the deliberations of the League of Nations was published in last week's VOTE (p. 277). Some of these are members of various Committees, others are technical advisers or alternate delegates of their respective countries, and others are assessors on certain commissions. No woman has, so far, been appointed full delegate by the Government which she represents, although substitute delegates can sit and speak in place of one of the three principal delegates in the Assembly itself, and can also act as member of one or more of the Assembly Commissions, of which there are usually six.

Mrs. Coombe Tennant's brilliant qualifications are probably well known to readers of THE VOTE. Apart from her numerous public services, she has read and travelled widely, has enjoyed the friendship of great men and women, and is an excellent public speaker. She is also a well-known Suffragist of many years' standing. In the days before the war, she was President of the Neath Women's Suffrage Society, and for some time worked with Mrs. Fawcett and others as a member of the executive of the old National Women's Suffrage Society. During the war she aided recruiting, was Vice-Chairman of the Glamorgan Women's Agricultural Committee, and took a leading part in the administration of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, and the work of War Pensions Committees. In politics a Liberal, she has recently been adopted as Coalition-Liberal candidate for the Forest of Dean Division of Gloucestershire.

As a far-seeing Internationalist, however, Mrs. Coombe Tennant probably has her best work in front of her, and in doing it will best aid the Women's Cause. Her suffrage experiences have already convinced her that those questions peculiarly affecting women must be dealt with internationally. From the first she has taken a great interest in the League, and the same enthusiasm which drove her into the fight for women's political emancipation will now rivet her attention on the League of Nations, where all women must realise that the fate of the homes of the world is eventually to be decided.

SCRAP OUR PRISONS!

With its men governors, men deputy governors, men doctors, and men chaplains in women's prisons, the whole prison system in England, especially in connection with women prisoners, is hopelessly out of date. A few years ago the first woman Inspector of H.M. Prisons was appointed—Dr. Mary Gordon. Her place has recently been taken by another woman, but there is still only one woman Inspector of Prisons. Dr. Gordon has rendered a great service to the cause of prison reform by the publication of a book on "Penal Discipline," in which she says:—

"During my service I found nothing in the prison system to interest me, except as a gigantic irrelevance—a social curiosity. If the system had a good effect on any prisoner, I failed to mark it. I have no shadow of doubt of its power to demoralise, or of its cruelty. It appears to me not to belong to this time or civilisation at all."

Nothing is done to reform the prisoner or to make her desire to live a decent life; but everything in prison seems designed to humiliate her, to take away all initiative and self-respect. The whole system has a deadening effect upon any man or woman who comes under it, and, as we have said before, it is almost useless to attempt to improve it; the whole system ought to be scrapped. Apparently Dr. Gordon agrees with us, for she says:

"I think our prison system creates a criminal class, and directly fosters recidivism, that our method is dead and done with, and in need of decent cremation . . . The new can never be grafted on the old, and penal discipline must go."

That our prisons are non-productive and wasteful is well known, and Dr. Gordon urges that our prisoners should be self-supporting; the work they do should be useful work, and they should earn money. She asserts:

"There is no reason in the world why, because a man or woman is put under control, he or she should not continue to earn an honest living. There is no sort of reason why other people should pay for the support of prisoners. Apparently the French are not as fond of pauperising their less valuable citizens as the British are. The prisoner's earnings in France go towards the support of herself and family, as a free woman's earnings might do."

We welcome every book on our prison system, because we are convinced that, once public opinion is enlightened on this subject, our present prison system will be doomed.

EVENING CHILDREN'S COURTS.

An experiment which we think is in the right direction is being tried in Dundee, in connection with juvenile offenders. Instead of trying children in the police courts, and at some time during the day, the magistrates at Dundee propose to deal with these young offenders in the City Hall, and in the evening, thus keeping them away from the atmosphere of the Courts, and enabling their parents to attend without losing time from work. This experiment is being watched with great interest by Scottish magistrates, and already those at Glasgow are contemplating following Dundee's example. We ourselves hope that it will not be long before magistrates and police courts will cease to have anything to do with these children, who certainly ought to be under the jurisdiction of the Education authorities. As a rule, the teachers understand their pupils and know something of their home life. If they are unable to deal with these children's delinquencies, there are the local Education Committees, on all of which there should be women, as well as men, and these committees should be made responsible for the children in the schools under their care. In the meantime we wish every possible success to the Dundee experiment, which will at least keep the children away from police courts.

OCCUPATION CENTRES FOR MENTALLY DEFECTIVE CHILDREN.

The Mental Deficiency Act of 1913 was the first Parliamentary effort towards alleviation of the lot of these unhappy victims of an evil heredity. Before that time, private and voluntary efforts were the only channels opened for relief.

After 1913, the mentally defective members of the community were divided into three grades for purposes of classification. These consist of the feeble-minded, who head the list, and who are so classified because, when full-grown, they have an intelligence of 8-12 years. These, as a rule, may be trained to earn their living. Secondly, imbeciles, so termed because, when full-grown, they never have an intelligence of more than 3-7 years. These cannot be trained to earn a living, but can be put to do easy jobs. Lastly, idiots, or those who are hopelessly insane. Binet tests are used to make these three classifications.

Each of these classes is catered for by Government in the following way:—The feeble-minded are cared for in Special Schools, authorised by the Education Committee. The imbeciles are under the protection of the Asylums and Mental Deficients Committee, who depute voluntary visitors to pay quarterly visits to the homes of these people. The idiots are cared for in Institutions, such as Darenth and Fountains, in Kent, and The Manor, at Epsom.

Occupation Centres for mental defectives who are of too low a mental grade to benefit by Special Schools, but of too high a grade to be sent to an Institution, were originally devised by Miss Elfrida Rathbone at the Lilian Greg centre, King's Cross, W.C., and later at Toynbee Hall. Miss Rathbone realised the absolute impossibility for a hard-worked mother or guardian to give a defective child continuous and wise training; for, sooner than expose the child to the dangers of the street, it was apt to be kept shut up in the house, so

that its health doubly suffered from want of exercise and want of occupation. These pioneer Centres have now become extended to 16, five of which are in Lancashire, three in Somerset, three in London, and one each in Essex (East Ham), Ipswich, Portsmouth, Worcester, and Yorkshire.

Most of the Centres already established have been started by the local Voluntary Associations for the Care of the Mentally Defective, affiliated to the Central Association in London; but, in the absence of such an Association, there is nothing to prevent any other group of workers from undertaking it. The co-operation of the local Committee for the Care of the Mentally Defective, and also of the local Education Authority, must, however, always be sought. The expenses involved are not great, supposing a room can be obtained rent free, and the Centre carried on entirely by voluntary workers. A paid teacher, however, naturally increases the cost. There should be a piano, if at all possible, and a garden, as work in the open-air is particularly good for defectives.

The routine of a Centre, whether open for part or a whole of the week, is usually as follows, the small number of the children allowing for individualised attention:—For the first half-hour, drill and singing games, followed by a simple meal of cocoa, with cake or bread and butter brought by the children themselves. The preparation and clearing away of this meal forms a valuable part of the children's training. After this, varied occupations are pursued: bead threading, plasticine modelling, colour matching, raffia basket making, brick building, etc., which may all be varied according to the children's mental capacities. The wonderful improvement, both physical and mental, recorded by workers in these Centres, is a sufficiently eloquent testimony to the value of these institutions.

THE LADY CHICHESTER HOSPITAL.

The Lady Chichester Hospital, Hove, founded in 1905 by Dr. Helen Boyle, of Brighton, is the first Hospital in the United Kingdom to devote itself solely and entirely to the study and cure of early nervous and borderland cases among women and children. Its methods are, therefore, almost entirely preventive, by means of which it saves many from becoming a life-long burden on the rates, and restores them as workers for the nation. The Hospital is essentially a pioneer in the direction of similar hospitals and clinics for the detection and treatment of early nervous diseases all over the world—a need which has never been made more prominent than in the present day.

Patients come from all over the country, and many from London, particularly the East End. Irish, Scottish, and Welsh patients are included amongst the number. Their occupations range from artists, Admiralty clerks, convent novices, farm hands, hospital nurses, missionaries, University students, typists, telephone girls, school teachers, wives of every class, including the clergy and Army, domestic servants, shop assistants, etc. No one is refused on the score of funds, the destitute and friendless being admitted as well as those who have a small income, and no letters are needed for admission. The only exception made is that no one is admitted who can afford a Nursing Home.

Dr. Helen Boyle, the founder, was brought face to face with the necessity of providing this early treatment by a period as medical officer at Claybury Asylum, quite early in her career. After settling at Brighton, she opened a dispensary, with the help of Dr. Mabel Jones and a Committee, and later started a Hospital, realising the necessity of removing nervous patients from their immediate environment. Within the last two years the Hospital has been moved from Brighton to Hove, and has now blossomed out into a really beautiful little Hospital, standing in its own grounds, and known as Aldrington House. Accom-

modation is provided for 35 beds, and, needless to say, these are not only always full, but a long waiting list hovers ever in the background. The interior of the Hospital, originally a private house, has been divided into pleasant sunlit wards, some of the walls of which the patients have distempred themselves. A touch of originality lies in the pictures with which the walls are decorated. These are coloured railway and commercial posters, mounted on brown paper by the patients, which provides serviceable margins or frames, whilst the bold splashes of colour on the posters relieve the neutrality of their background. A lady visitor, who is also a delightful artist, has left traces of her handiwork in every room, whether in charming stencilled friezes—ships in full sail in one ward, trees in full bloom in another, and in the Children's Ward flocks of blue-birds, to denote happiness—or in decorative quilts and curtains. In the tiny Chapel, the same hand has painted the walls and ceiling in a scheme of cerulean blue, relieved by golden pomegranates, with stencilled clusters of mauve violets on the altar hangings. Each ward has its own prevailing colour scheme—pink, blue, yellow, the Children's Ward being particularly attractive with its Blue-bird symbolism on walls and curtains, Teddy Bear quilts, and toyland visions.

Patients remain, usually, for about three months, though their stay may be lengthened to as long as six or nine months. The diet is wonderfully liberal—four good meals daily, with milk and cream in addition. A spirit of co-operation is encouraged by doctors and staff, all of whom are women, with the exception of one or two consulting medical men and the Hospital Dentist. Patients with musical or artistic skill are invited to exercise their gifts for the sake of those less gifted, and much useful occupational work is achieved by means of hand work of different kinds, gardening, games of all sorts, bathing, a club night, a House Magazine, and a certain amount of housework.

BALKAN WOMEN'S PROGRESS.

The feminist movement in the Balkans has made great progress since the war. Yugoslavia, or the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and Rumania each have flourishing feminist organisations. Bulgarian women have always enjoyed an exceptionally high status, and, although they have not yet been granted equality of citizenship, in actual fact they stand head and shoulders above their sisters in other Balkan nations. The Bulgarian Women's Union, formed in 1901, has worked unceasingly for the equality of the sexes, for political emancipation, and general reform. The recent appointment of Mlle. Nadejda Stancioff, as secretary to the Bulgarian Legation in Washington, marks the liberal tendencies of the Bulgarian administration towards the recognition of women's equality in general affairs. Almost as many women as men enter the Bulgarian Universities. In the schools the curriculum for boys and girls is exactly the same. In industry there is an eight-hour day, and in the Civil Service equal pay and equal opportunities for both sexes, with no penalisation by marriage. Serbian women proved themselves handsomely in the war. The peasant women actually raised better crops than their husbands, while the wives of shopkeepers and tradesmen improved and extended their husband's business. Serbian women of all classes showed initiative and resource in their country's crisis, and an amazing aptitude for organisation. Soon after the war Serbian women formed an Association for Women's Rights, and brought out a monthly paper called the *Women's Movement*. They have since carried on an active campaign throughout the whole of Yugoslavia, instructing the peasant women in hygiene, industry, economics, and national welfare. In Slovenia and Bosnia women are also forming societies, and insisting upon their political rights.

DUTCH WOMEN M.P.s.

Dutch women took part in the election of a new Parliament for the first time this summer. In some offices there were so many women at the ballot-box that one could imagine that only women had come to vote. Proportional representation is the voting system in use in Holland, and, although there are only seven real political parties, no fewer than 52 groups from all over the country delivered a list of over 400 different candidates at the Central Bureau, of whom 100 M.P.s had to be chosen. Out of these, seven women were returned. These are: (1) Mrs. Brousveld-Vitringa, of Hoorn, a teacher; (2) Miss Frida Katz, a lawyer, and the first woman appointed by the Government as Clerk of the Court; (3) Miss E. C. Van Dorp, also a lawyer, and the first woman in Holland to study law; (4) Miss Johanna Westermann, a teacher, re-elected M.P. for the second time; (5) Mrs. Betsy Bakker-Nort, another and very eminent lawyer, and Vice-President of the Dutch Society for Women Citizens, who has made a name in Holland by publishing a scheme for an up-to-date marriage law, with the same privileges and duties for both sexes; (6) Miss Suze Groeneweg, who has already been four years in Parliament, and is now re-elected; (7) Mrs. de Vries-Bruins, a medical woman, and specialist in nervous diseases.

BOOK REVIEW.

Memoirs of a Midget. By Walter De La Mare. (Collins.) 8/6. (Can be obtained at this Office.) "Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in the body." So runs one of the quotations on Mr. De La Mare's first page, and thus he strikes the keynote of the book. Since I first read his story, I have compared notes with several other readers; one said, "A tantalising, maddening book, but I had to read it twice over"; another, "A book so different from the usual novel that I feel I must possess it, and dip into it again and again"; and another, "A wonderful study of characters, good and bad"; and yet another, "Wonderful in descriptions, and cynical in outlook." We were all agreed on one point—this is a book to possess, as it shows us all life is more or less a discovery of limitations—of circumstances, character, health, mind, and so on; and too often our limitations are the Calvaries whereon we torture ourselves. In the "Memoirs of a Midget" we read the life history of a little creature, inexperienced, desolate, full of passion, with intense love of all things beautiful, interested in the normally sized creatures around, a lover of poetry and speculative conversation, a thinking, feeling woman-soul in the tiny, dainty, fairylike form of a nine-inch midget.

The author traces with consummate skill her courageous efforts to get interest into her secluded life—her adoration for Fanny Bowater, the landlady's daughter, of whom more anon; her gradual deterioration when she becomes the "pampered curiosity" of a rich and fashionable circle; and, finally, the terrible adventure by which she frees herself from these cruel patrons. Not one whit less clever is the description of Fanny—the heartless exploiter of Miss M.'s friendship—from her cruel intrigue with the wretched curate, who, helpless in Fanny's toils, cuts his throat when jilted; to her supplanting of the midget in the position of favourite in the rich lady's household. Throughout all her adventures, she is consistently and cruelly self-centred and calculating.

Then, too, there is the tragic figure of the little misshapen lover—scarcely larger than Miss M. herself, but clumsy and misshapen—whom, in her love for beautiful Fanny and all things naturally lovely, the tiny, elflike heroine thrusts almost harshly from her. Yet in the moment of her greatest misery he gives his very life to help her, proving also that "the soul is not the body, and the music not the flute." Other excellently drawn characters—such as that of the unfortunate curate, with his genteel mother, weak in will, with the courage of cowardice only; the kind, reticent landlady, Mrs. Bowater, with her own sad history; and the macabre picture of the gipsies and their circus—all combine to make up a remarkable and fascinating book. Add to this Mr. De La Mare's poetic descriptive gift, his felicitous choice of words, and love of nature, and it is easy to realise that this is no ordinary story *pour passer le temps*; but one in which most readers will find delight. And if the end leaves us guessing—well, is not life itself only too full of riddles? and can any onlooker at others' destinies ever mark clearly the movements of the soul from birth to maturity and death?

The call came to Miss M.; she heard it and was gone. The cage door was opened, the bird escaped, and she who had only so shortly before laughingly stated, "There is not room in me for all that's there," was freed in some strange way and by an unknown hand.

The end leaves us guessing, for we can but hope that all was well. To sum up, this is a book one cannot forget, because it describes so real a thing, in so delicate a way—the struggle between the human being and the limitation—the cage—of life, where the "caged and ample spirit fluttered and pined for breath." J. M. T.

Women's Freedom League.

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

Hon. Treasurer—Dr. E. KNIGHT.
General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO
BE FREE.

Friday, September 8th, at 6.30 p.m.—Mid-London Branch Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
Monday, September 18th, at 7 p.m., at Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Public Meeting. Speaker: Miss Lucy Bell. Subject: "Public Speaking." Chair: Mrs. Northcroft.
Friday, September 22nd, at 6 p.m.—Organisation Committee, 144 High Holborn, W.C.1.
Saturday, September 23rd, at 10 a.m.—National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Wednesday, September 27th, at 3 p.m., at Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Public Meeting. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge. Subject: "Travel as an Education." Chair: Miss Reeves.

Monday, October 2nd, at 7 p.m.—At Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Public Meeting. Speaker: Mr. Edward Cecil, who will open a discussion on "That our Public Schools corrode the character, stultify the intelligence, blunt idealism, and turn out their victims unfitted for the battle of life." Chair: Mrs. Dexter.

Friday, October 6th, 3.30—7.30. Mid-London Branch, Pound Tea, at 25, Wimpole Street (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin). For further particulars, see Branch note.

Friday and Saturday, November 10th and 11th.—"Green, White and Gold Fair," Central Hall, Westminster.

PROVINCES.

Friday, October 6th, at 7.30 p.m.—Hastings.—A Model Election conducted by Miss Elsie Morton, M.B.E., will be held at the Chintz Room, Clarendon. Candidates drawn from the various political parties will stand for Election. Further particulars later.

Monday, October 9th, at 7.30 p.m.—Bexhill.—A combined Meeting will be held at the Sisterhood. Speaker: Dr. Octavia Lewin. Chair: Miss Thornton.

Tuesday, October 17th. Ashford. A Meeting will be held at the Women's Adult School. Speaker: Dr. Octavia Lewin. Chair: Mrs. Banks.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

MR. CHURCHILL AND P.R.

SIR,—Mr. Churchill stated that, in the recent Irish elections, P.R. threw "its baffling cloak over the defeated minority." It is a subtle phrase, capable of several interpretations, of which the most simple is that Mr. Churchill has not yet found time to study the P.R. system. P.R. certainly did not "baffle" the Irish electors. Mr. Churchill himself spoke of the clear-cut revelation of the minds of these electors as shown not only by their first choices, but by the second and third choices expressed on the ballot papers. Irishmen have used the new system with intelligence and with discrimination. But the expression has in some quarters been taken to confirm the entirely erroneous view that P.R. saved the Republicans from extinction. The truth is quite otherwise. P.R. may or may not have baffled Mr. Churchill, but it certainly baffled the organisers of the "pact"; in fact, it defeated the "pact." P.R. withdrew from the Republicans the protecting cloak of this "pact."

Consider the actual facts of the situation. Some 17 Republican candidates were returned unopposed. In the uncontested areas the protecting cloak of the "pact" was completely effective. What would have happened in the rest of Ireland but for P.R.? A much larger number of Republican candidates would have been returned unopposed. For under the single-member constituency system, wherever a Republican was nominated in accordance with the terms of the "pact," no panel supporter of the Treaty could have entered the field, and few Independents would have faced the risk. P.R. encouraged Independents to come forward. They needed in some cases only one-eighth of the votes to win one of the seats. Under P.R., wherever even one Independent was nominated in any constituency, the "pact" became ineffective. The electors under the proportional system were compelled to express their first choices either for a Treaty candidate, or for a Republican. The result told practically always against the extremists.

Great stress has been laid upon the change in the political situation wrought by the elections. Without P.R., no lesson could have been drawn from these elections. The old Dail would have been elected practically unchanged. Over a wide area, perhaps over nearly the whole of Ireland, no contests would have taken place. To P.R. one owes in large degree the very explicit revelation of the mind of the Irish people which the elections have shown.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN H. HUMPHRIES, Secretary,
The Proportional Representation Society.

BRANCH NOTE.

MID-LONDON.

Will all London members and friends read this carefully, please! On Friday, October 6, Dr. Octavia Lewin has very kindly consented to allow us the use of her house at 25, Wimpole Street, W., to hold a POUND TEA. Please help to make this a great success. We want everyone to "bring a pound and buy a pound." From £1 in cash, to a pound of anything. Food (tea, sugar, coffee, chocolates, fruit, jam, marmalade, cake, etc.), or wool, material, flowers or anything useful. Anyone may bring £2, or two pounds of food, etc., in fact any number of £s—pounds—will be gratefully received. There will be two or three speeches, music, singing, character delineations, etc. We want this to be a really successful beginning of our social winter work. All the proceeds will be devoted to Mrs. Despard's Birthday Fund for the work of the League. Come yourself and bring a friend.

(Hon. Sec.) Miss C. M. SPARKMAN, 10 Winchester St., E.16.

TO ALL BRANCHES.

Do not forget that the date of the Fair is drawing near. Are your preparations well forward? The hall this year is larger than usual, and will require more goods to fill it, and we must utilise every corner.

THE CLYDE CAMPAIGN.

Speaker: DR. LILLIAS HAMILTON.
Hon. Organiser: MISS ALIX CLARK.

The Clyde Campaign came to an end on Friday last, September 1st. Miss Clark, who has organised many such campaigns, says it has been the most difficult in all her experience. During the six weeks, there have been 25 wet days; there have been fewer holiday makers, and there has been a very evident shortage of money, though this has by no means decreased the price of food. But for the real interest shown by intelligent listeners, who had evidently given the subjects brought forward but little attention before, the meetings would, on several occasions, have been discouraging; but the sale of THE VOTE and of literature generally has been excellent, considering the numbers that have been able to afford seaside holidays this year.

Many short water expeditions have been made to neighbouring towns and villages, to cover as much ground as possible. During the last week, Largs, Dunoon, and Helensburgh were visited, and meetings held. The Life of Dr. Elsie Inglis has excited much interest, but it is satisfactory to find that the booklets on the work of Mrs. Josephine Butler and the Misses Becker and Buss were still asked for. The pamphlet on "Child Outrage" has, however, been in greatest demand, and after that "Women Police," on which subjects much was said at the meetings.

Dr. Hamilton's suggestions regarding the necessity for reform in all agricultural laws were well received, for the most part, even by farmers. She expressed the greatest admiration for the women, most of them quite new to the work, who, with a few men unfit for war service, had increased the area of wheat production by 1,175,000 acres, and of oats by over 1,000,000 acres, during the war, under the organisation of the War Agricultural Committees. When Land Nationalisation was pressed upon her, Dr. Hamilton invariably gave as her opinion that, as long as townsmen, who knew practically nothing about land questions, were in the majority at Westminster, it would be suicidal to place our greatest national asset in their hands. In her opinion, an increase of the power now vested in the County Agricultural Committees would be a much wiser proceeding. Land conditions varied greatly in different parts of the country, and experienced local authorities were in a much better position to tackle fairly the many problems that needed prompt attention, than were men, however able, far removed from the scene of the difficulty.

Both the present and ex-Provosts of Rothesay have shown interest and sympathy. The former is a member of the League, and said that the work done by the League workers in Rothesay during the many campaigns that had been carried on from there, must bear fruit. Miss Clark, who is well known there, is, he said, the wonder and admiration of the tradespeople in the town, who are well acquainted with the rattle of the coins in her collecting box.

To Members and Readers.

The Clyde Campaign, with all its success and all its rain and discomfort, is now over, but the expenses have not yet been made up. Please send your contributions to me as speedily as possible, and show your appreciation of the splendid hard work put in by our Speaker and Hon. Organiser, who have so generously given their time and energy for the good of the League and the furtherance of its ideals. Our General Funds, too, are now low, and require the help of all good members without delay.

E. KNIGHT, Hon. Treas.
144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

FRIDAY,
SEPT. 8,
1922.

THE VOTE

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EDUCATIONAL.

THE PIONEER CLUB has re-opened at 12, Cavendish Place. Entrance fee in abeyance *pro tem.* Town Members £5 5s.; Country and Professional £4 4s.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, September 10th, 6.30 p.m., Miss Maude Royden. "England's Opportunity."

WANTED energetic School Mistress with capital to open Girls' School in West of England town. Good prospects. Apply R., Minerva Publishing Co., Ltd., 144 High Holborn, W.C. 1.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

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