

THE VOTE,
MAY 5, 1922.
ONE PENNY.

OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, MAY 5, 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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FIFTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER, April 29th, 1922.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS, BY COUNCILLOR MRS. SCHOFIELD COATES, J.P.

On behalf of the Executive and myself I beg to give a hearty welcome to the delegates to the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League.

We meet again to report progress, and to discover means of obtaining the removal of restrictions on the free development of women.

The Government has not made good its pledge "to remove all existing inequalities of the law as between men and women." Session after session passes, and we fail to secure on our Statute books the laws we demand on marriage, equal parentage, the guardianship of children (including the child of the unmarried mother), Criminal Law amendment, etc. This shows how very necessary it is for us to secure the removal of the remaining disabilities of women in respect of the franchise. In addition to our added power at the ballot-box, it will raise the status of women. Young people are still growing up believing in the inferiority of women, which man-made law definitely proclaims, by denying citizenship rights to women which are granted to men, whose claim is no better, but succeeds because of sex privilege.

The woman of 21 must be enfranchised. The qualifications as to age and residence of men and women voters must be the same. The House of Commons has just recently voted overwhelmingly in favour of this reform, and still the Government withholds it. Industrially and economically we are worse off than a year ago. We are now reaping the results of war. The huge accumulations of debt, the instability of the exchanges, continuing hatreds, and national and international calamities prevent the development of trade. Falling wages, labour troubles, unemployment of unprecedented dimensions, are dealing heavy blows at all those promised schemes of reconstruction.

Our Education and Health Services are being curtailed at a time when it is more necessary than ever it was to equip our youth for the competition that is bound to come in supplying the world with what it needs, mentally, morally, and physically. Women are the first sufferers in times of panicky economy campaigns, and when jobs are scarce. Women in the service of

the Government and local authorities are being dismissed, and in the workshops and labour disputes a war is being waged on the employment of women.

Men are taking the line of privilege. During the war it was proved that women, after little instruction, could do work as well as men who are supposed to have required apprenticeship, and here we have a problem that will have to be faced. The field of opportunity must be open to both sexes equally, and a wage must go with the job irrespective of the sex of the worker.

It is not a difficult problem if men will be fair. Women have opened the gate of opportunity, and they are not going to have it closed again. If we were equals and comrades during the war, we shall not rest as chattels and slaves after.

Marriage, despite the legislation of 1919, is proving a disability in the professional and best paid work. We are resisting the efforts being made to remove married women doctors, teachers, and others, but we are of the opinion that it is not merely marriage that is the disqualification in the male mind, but rather the relatively good remuneration. Work which carries less than a living wage is singularly free from attack.

The woman wage-earner suffers from the economic—or rather "uneconomic"—position of the married woman who is not a wage-earner in the usually accepted sense, but who is employed in the care of home and children, and we must concentrate on the solution of this difficulty, which bars the way to the satisfaction of our demand for equal pay for equal work. In Australia an experiment is being made to deal with this problem, and its operations ought to be carefully studied by women.

We shall, as a League, continue to resist the dismissal of Women Police, whose presence to-day is increasingly necessary on our streets. Those of us who are actively engaged in public life know we cannot afford to part with any factor that assists in restraining those who find such times as the present an invitation to acts of indecency and general moral laxity. Our

young people need the protection and guidance which the policewoman is specially fitted to give.

In the interests of international peace and prosperity the Women's Freedom League demands an adequate share in international negotiations. Unless this is accorded, time will again prove the futility and disaster of gatherings dominated entirely by the male outlook. Our experiences of recent years have demonstrated to us that women cannot afford to leave these matters to men, and we shall continue to press for our share of representation by women at International Conferences, and on all bodies dealing with international affairs.

The problems gather around us as we progress towards emancipation, for, as we step upward to the light, we see things more clearly, and find ourselves apparently beset by more and more difficulties. Whilst noting our difficulties, we must also congratulate ourselves on our gains, and these are not a few, and not least among them the addition of another woman Member, Mrs. Wintringham, to the House of Commons.

We have also succeeded in our efforts to abolish girl slavery in Hong Kong.

What we most need now is for women to come forward in big numbers and press our demands. The unjust opposition will yield if righteous indignation is expressed by sufficient numbers. *We who are in the van will not slacken our efforts, but will increase and intensify the work of our League*, the record of the remarkable activities of which is briefly placed before you in the various reports.

WOMEN AND THE LAND.

Last Monday evening, in the Minerva Café, Dr. Lilius Hamilton, Director of Studley College, Warwickshire, gave a very interesting lecture on "The National Importance of Women's Work on the Land." Mrs. Northcroft presided.

The only handicap in women's work on the land, said Dr. Hamilton, was that the average woman was inferior in muscles, size, and weight to the average man, and the only way in which she could get even was by increased and specialised knowledge. Far more girls and women were needed to-day to enter themselves for training for work on the land. Salaries were good, and the rule was an eight-hour day. British women had not yet realised the national importance of work on the land. In 1921, a hundred million sterling was paid out in doles to the unemployed, whilst, at the same time, we were importing eleven hundred million pounds worth of foodstuffs, three hundred millions of which could quite easily be grown in this country. Some things could not be grown in this country, such as tea, coffee, sugar, tropical fruit, rice, etc.; but we imported twenty-four million pounds worth of fish, which was not necessary, seeing that in Yorkshire, and in certain parts of the Isle of Man, herrings were being used as manure. If Great Britain was to be second to none in the world, it must be by better organisation of our national resources, by studying what other countries were doing in producing foodstuffs, and by sending less money out of the country. To-day we were importing 171 million pounds worth of pig-food, yet we were supplying the world with live pigs. Why did we not imitate the example of Denmark, Belgium, Holland, and Hamburg, and construct piggeries right on the docks themselves, where the animals could be fattened directly on the refuse that lay about the docks, which, in this country, was merely swept into the sea? The British system of feeding animals was highly uneconomic, and very different from the system pursued by other countries. It was women's business to be thrifty, and we ought to consider how best to run this country on a more economical basis. In Australia, land was let to women on precisely the same terms as to men, but in this country the Ministry of Agriculture had decreed that no public positions in agriculture were to be given to women, and that all the best posts in any department of Land Work were to be reserved for men. Yet to-day the most highly qualified land expert in this country, of either sex, was a woman, and working at Studley!

IN PARLIAMENT.

Sex Inequalities.

On April 26th, COL. JAMES GREIG gave notice that on that day three weeks he would call attention to the dissimilarity of the law between men and women, and would move a Resolution.

Unemployment.

DR. MACNAMARA, replying to a question put by MR. TREVELYAN THOMSON, last week, said that on April 10th, the latest date for which figures were available, the number of persons registered as wholly unemployed in Great Britain was 1,648,748. In addition, 203,684 were claiming benefit while on short time. The amount paid in respect of the week ending on April 5th in unemployment benefit, including dependants' grants, was about £1,000,000.

Educational Expenditure.

MR. FISHER, replying to a question put by MR. HURD, said that the cost of education for each unit of average attendance in public elementary schools in England and Wales, in 1921-22, was estimated at about £12. The average cost per pupil in grant-aided secondary schools in England and Wales, in 1921-22, was estimated at about £26. On October 1st, 1921, the number of pupils in these secondary schools who were under 10 years of age on the preceding August 1st was about 29,000.

Abyssinia (Slave Trade).

MR. ORMSBY-GORE asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been called to the reports of a recrudescence of slavery and the slave trade in Abyssinia; and whether any report on this matter had been received or called for from the British Minister at Addis Abeba? MR. PARKER said that the attention of the Secretary of State had been drawn to these reports, and communications were proceeding with His Majesty's Minister at Addis Abeba on the subject. Further information from the Minister was awaited before a decision was taken upon the course of action which could most usefully be taken.

Cambridge University.

MR. WILLIAM GRAHAM asked the Prime Minister if his attention had been drawn to the fact that the only opportunity of discussing the grants to British Universities, the position of women students and teachers at Cambridge University as settled by the recent decision, and the important recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, would be upon the Treasury Vote, and not on the Vote for the Board of Education; and whether, seeing that was not a satisfactory method, in view of the far-reaching character of the issues raised, he would be prepared to grant a separate day for the Parliamentary discussion of those problems? MR. CHAMBERLAIN replied that the Universities and Colleges Vote covered England and Scotland, and the expenditure was accounted for by the Treasury, and not by the Board of Education. Arrangements could be made for a discussion of this Vote on one of the days allotted to Supply, if a request was made in the usual manner. MR. MALONE inquired if the Government would be prepared to support a Bill to place women at Cambridge on the same equality? MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S answer was that it did not arise out of the question on the Paper.

CAPT. WEDGWOOD BENN asked the President of the Board of Education whether, in view of the unanimous recommendation of the Cambridge Committee of the Universities Commission in favour of the admission of women to full membership of Cambridge University, he was prepared to take the necessary steps to introduce legislation on this subject; and, if not, if he was prepared to recommend that a largely increased grant to the University should be made conditional upon the admission of women to membership? MR. FISHER said that the Report of the Royal Commission on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge was now under the Government's consideration, and he was not yet in a position to make any statement on the matter. F.A.U.

MINERVA CLUB RECEPTION.

A delightful afternoon Reception, organised by the Hampstead and Mid-London Branches, was held at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, last Sunday. Tea was served in the pleasant Club dining-room, after which a short musical programme preceded some excellent speeches.

Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., referred to the low ebb in the Woman's Movement clearly discernible since the war, but expressed the belief that recently the situation was slowly beginning to improve. Yesterday's Conference, she said, had been an inspiration. During the war, and also at its close, women had been somewhat apathetic over the necessity for certain social and political reforms, but their sufferings in the present economic stress had roused them to activity. In every economic crisis, Health and Education always suffered, and women's interests were the first to go to the wall. In Middlesbrough, when the Child Welfare Committee came under the jurisdiction of the Town Council, the women handed over to the authorities five well-equipped centres and £1,200. Since the local authority had taken over control, men had been in the majority on the Committee, big responsibilities had been undertaken, entailing great expenditure, and now economies were to be effected at the expense of the women employees and good service. The sanitary condition of Middlesbrough was not ideal. Pan closets were still in existence there to the number of ten thousand, although pressure had recently been brought to bear by the Ministry of Health for their removal. More money was being spent on this antiquated method than would be entailed by more modern devices. Most of the public economies now being effected were directed against women. In Middlesbrough, a woman Medical Officer, one or two women Health Visitors, a Police Matron, and three women clerks had recently been dismissed. Women were not yet sound enough on the question of married women's employment, partly because they did not realise how this subject affected the individual. The Women's Freedom League, in future, would need to be very well informed upon this point. Women, too, must not rest content merely by recording their votes, but should get to know the representatives for whom they were voting. Women should also press for representation on local bodies, and when they had gained experience there, should pass on to Parliament. Women Councillors were a source of education to their men colleagues. In the recent housing plans issued by the Ministry of Health, none of the bedrooms were nearly large enough, and the smallest of these would not have room for a bed. In Middlesbrough, the milk supply was easy to obtain, being an agricultural district; yet, owing to bad methods of organisation, it was sold in the streets 36 hours old. The high infantile death rate in this county was probably partly owing to this lack of fresh milk. Men did not take these matters seriously enough, and they badly needed women to point out their importance.

Inspector Olive Walton, of the Women's Auxiliary Service, spoke strongly against the proposed disbandment of the Metropolitan Women Police, and contended that these women had never been given a chance to put out their full power, because they had never been given the same power and status as the men police. The Home Secretary had minimised the work of the Women Police, although all the time it had been his own fault that they did not do more. To do away with the Women Police was a step backward. After the splendid work done by Women Police during the last eight years, it was very hard lines that a handful of men on a committee were permitted to make the gratuitous decision that they cost the State too much. Women had as much right to be in the service of the State as men—in fact, more right, since there were more women and children in proportion to men. It was up to every woman and man who was interested in the subject to see that the Women Police were not only reinstated, but given the same power and privileges as the men. It

was hoped that this question would be made a test one at the next General Election, and Parliamentary candidates must be bombarded until they agreed to put the subject of Women Police on their programme.

Mrs. Mustard drew attention to the unenviable position of Great Britain in being the most backward of all civilised countries as regarded women's enfranchisement. The chief aim of the Women's Freedom League was to get this state of things altered. The second great plank in the League's programme was to promote the candidature of women members of Parliament. This was the greatest of women's needs to-day. The present record in Parliament showed that every Bill of interest to women had been thrown out, and no headway made. It was too slow and too laborious a method to try and get men Members to see women's point of view. A much quicker method was to get the women themselves in as Members, when they could work directly, and not indirectly.

The cordial thanks of the Women's Freedom League are due to Dr. Octavia Lewin, who kindly presided as Chairman, to the speakers, to the kind entertainers—Miss Thomas (songs and piano playing), Mrs. Legge and Mrs. Hawkins (songs), Miss Shesgreen ('cello solos), Madame Stella Godwin (songs), and to the Hampstead and Mid-London Branches, who so hospitably provided the tea.

WELL DONE, MYSORE!

The Mysore Legislative Council has broken the record, so far, in India, in regard to Women's Franchise, as there was not a dissentient voice, vote, nor even a neutral opinion, when the subject was put to the vote in the Council Session at Bangalore on April 10th. A motion had been proposed by Mr. Venkatesa Aiyar, of Kolar, that "the Council recommends to the Government that the disability of sex be removed from the franchises of the Representative Assembly, the Legislative Council, and the Local Government bodies." For two hours the members spoke on the Resolution, Brahamanas, non-Brahmanas, and Muhammadans alike giving it their full support. One member at first thought this meant giving the vote to all women, and from that angle of vision took fright at it, but later voted for it, happily, when it was explained that the property qualifications would hold equally in the women's case. The tone of the speeches was very high, and permeated with an ideal and religious spirit. The presence of a number of ladies who are respected throughout Mysore for their fine public work undoubtedly did much to bring about the unanimous show of hands in favour of Woman Suffrage in Mysore when the Resolution was put.

The Mysore State is one of the premier native Indian States, with a population of six millions. It is noted for its progressive spirit, and already there are women on its University Senate and Economical and Educational Committees. The campaign for Woman Suffrage in that State was begun only last May by meetings arranged by Mrs. Cousins, under the auspices of the Women's Indian Association, which has a number of branches in Mysore. In July, Mrs. Jinarajadasa organised a representative and influential deputation of women to the Diwan (Prime Minister), who gave them a sympathetic reply, and promised to bring the matter early before the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council. Three months ago the former rejected the proposal for Woman Suffrage by a small majority, but now that the superior body, the Legislative Council, is so emphatic in its support, it is certain that it will be carried also at the Representative Assembly's next session, where it is to be again brought forward soon. There is no doubt that his Highness the Maharajah, and his Government, will now remove sex disqualification from the Constitution of the State. M. E. COUSINS (Mysore).

THE VOTE.

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 To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders,
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Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

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.

EDUCATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Fisher introduced what he described as a rationed estimate and a reduced estimate. He explained that last year they estimated their probable liabilities, and asked Parliament for the wherewithal to meet them. This year they began by determining the amount available, and required the claims upon them to be adjusted thereto. They imposed a limit on education authorities as to their expenditure in respect of elementary education and with respect to higher education, and announced that expenditure in excess of those limits would not be recognised for grants. A limit of £300,000 was imposed for the provision of meals for school children. He admitted that it had not been a pleasant task to make economies in education, but they had been compelled to postpone the overtaking of many of the war arrears in building and repairs, which had been accumulating for the last seven years, and also to forego many developments which they would have been glad to have seen undertaken. After careful examination the Government had decided that children under six should not be excluded from the schools. According to the Census of 1911, there were over 57,000 families of three or more persons living in one room, over 136,000 families of five or more, in two rooms, and over 130,000 of seven or more, in three rooms, and Mr. Fisher said that he did not imagine that the housing conditions were better in this respect in 1922 than they were in 1911; but he believed economy could be effected by staffing classes of children under six with women chosen with regard to their personal suitability and aptitude for the work, instead of trained certificated or uncertificated teachers. Further economies could be effected by making the head teacher of every school of 250 and under responsible for the teaching of a class, and by a revision of the staffing in certain areas where it was upon a somewhat lavish scale. Mr. Fisher's speech was subjected to varied criticisms. Mr. Ammon bluntly stated that the action of economising on education had been the biggest blow struck at the supremacy of this nation since the military attempt in 1914, and he deplored the fact that, in 1920, 11,134 children who had proved themselves capable of benefiting by secondary education were refused admission to secondary schools because there were no free places for them. Sir J. D. Rees waxed indignant because 30,000 officers had been sent to the Universities at the taxpayers' expense, and told the House that it took five years to eradicate the evil effects of a University education. Major Gray pointed out that the rich man's child suffered no loss under the Geddes Committee Report, or under the action of the Board of Education. The whole of the losses would fall upon the children of the poor. He also drew attention to the fact that there were village schools in this country in such an insanitary condition that they ought to be closed immediately, and it was nothing short of criminal to compel children to attend such schools. Mr. Marriott strongly criticised the speech which the President of the National Union of Teachers recently made at Torquay. Dr. Addison vigorously

opposed the economies on school medical service, provision of meals, special schools for defective children, the organisation of physical training, evening play centres, and nursery schools. He wanted to know what was going to be done for hungry school children, and said that simply to cut down part of this expenditure, and to make no other proposal for them, was an improper and discreditable suggestion. Sir Martin Conway declared that if retrenchment was necessary, we should call, not upon the young, but on the old. The children should be the last to be penalised. He also considered that the first factor in education was to build up a healthy body; the second, a sound character; the third, to provide skill of hand; and the fourth, to instil knowledge. If everyone was trained in skill of hand, they would all have far more respect for each other's occupations. Mr. Trevelyan Thomson said, that reducing the assistance in regard to school feeding would simply mean a transfer of burden from the education authority to the Boards of Guardians and the local ratepayers. Mr. Morgan Jones dwelt on the impossibility of a teacher giving a successful half-hour lesson to a class of 60 pupils, and also stated that 90 per cent. of the 2,500,000 children in our elementary schools will never have the chance of further education after fourteen years of age under our present system. Sir Frederick Banbury very much doubted that the education given to the children of the people at the present time was doing any good, in view of the fact that a large number of people in this country must be manual workers, and he concluded by saying that there always must be social inequalities. Mr. Acland said that he did not wish to try to make the children of this country pay for the cost of the war; and that it was urgently necessary that there should be an increase, not a decrease, of the percentage of free places in our secondary schools. He also advocated a better means of access from secondary schools to the Universities. As Chairman of the London School of Medicine for Women, and as a member of the governing bodies of the East London College and the London School of Economics, he said it was heartbreaking that all they could do, with the assistance of the State, was perhaps to screw out an exhibition of £10 or £15 to help the training of an extraordinarily promising student. Mr. Lewis, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, said, that in 1900 there were 341 inspectors of elementary schools; in 1922-23 there were only 260. The insanitary schools referred to were being repaired, and he ventured to prophesy that not a single child would go hungry because of the Department's decision to reduce the expenditure on the provision of meals.

A truly hotch-potch debate on a matter of vital importance to this nation! We wish that our women Members could have taken part in it, and we look forward to the time when there will be a woman Minister of Education, who will be courageous enough to safeguard the interests of education against all the onslaughts of our false economists.

HONG KONG CHILDREN.

PROCLAMATION.

The Governor of Hong Kong has issued a proclamation to the effect that—

Inasmuch as slavery is not allowed in the British Empire, it must be understood that *mui tsai* are not the property of their employers. Those wishing to leave their employers must be allowed to state their cases to the Secretary for Chinese Affairs. Masters and mistresses are warned against any attempt to prevent the *mui tsai* doing so.

The wording of this proclamation is a splendid triumph over the "terminological inexactitudes" of the Colonial Office, whose spokesmen in the House of Commons repeatedly refused to admit that "slavery" was a correct description of the "child adoption" system existing in Hong Kong, a British Colony. Apparently the Governor of Hong Kong has a more accurate understanding of the meaning of English words.

OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Dr. Knight (Hon. Treasurer), Miss E. Berry, Miss Alix M. Clark, Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., Councillor Ballard Dawson, Mrs. Holmes, Miss Elsie Morton, M.B.E., Councillor Anna Munro, Mrs. Mustard, Miss C. Neal, Miss M. I. Neal, Mrs. Pierrotti, Mrs. Whetton.

Emergency Resolutions:

1.—In view of the fact that the House of Commons recently declared itself overwhelmingly in favour of this reform, this Conference calls upon the Government immediately to introduce a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act (1918), so as to enfranchise women at the same age as men, and to remove the other disabilities upon women in connection with the Parliamentary vote; and to carry this Bill through all its stages into law as quickly as possible.

2.—This Conference calls upon the Government and Members of Parliament to make any grants to Cambridge University contingent upon the admission of women graduates to full membership of the University.

3.—Bodies of women who accept our objects, and who are approved by the National Executive Committee, may be affiliated to the Women's Freedom League on terms to be drawn up by the Committee.

General Resolutions:

Russia.

This Conference, realising in some small measure the agony of Russia and the impossibility of adequate assistance being given to the famine sufferers from private sources, calls upon the Government in the name of Humanity to intervene without delay to prevent the death of the millions who are on the point of starvation in that unhappy country.

This Conference calls upon the Lord Mayor, in the name of Humanity, to open a Mansion House Fund for the relief of sufferers in the famine areas of Russia.

"Geddes Cuts."

This Conference is of opinion that England is so backward in matters educational that she should spare no expense to put herself at once into line with the most progressive European countries—Scotland, Germany, Scandinavia, Denmark, and France—otherwise she will soon find herself on a level with such illiterate nations as those of Spain, Russia, etc. This Conference therefore protests against the proposed economy cuts in Education, calls upon the Women's Freedom League to do its utmost to prevent them, urges the Government to put the Education Acts of 1918 into full and immediate operation, and advocates that no class shall exceed 32 in number.

This Conference maintains that Health, Housing, and Education must be a first call on the public purse, and that if any stinting is necessary it must first be practised in those departments whose aim is the destruction of life, and not its conservation.

Election Policy.

This Conference urges that every Election shall be considered on its merits, but the policy of the Women's Freedom League shall be to support or run suitable women candidates, approved by Headquarters and our local Branch. Failing a suitable woman candidate, it shall be the policy of the League not only to question candidates and carry on general propaganda, but also to offer the strongest opposition to the return of candidates who do not definitely stand for the complete emancipation of women.

Conference.

The ultimate power of the League shall rest with the Annual Conference, which shall be held in Spring; the exact date and place to be fixed by the National Executive Committee, which should carefully consider whether holding some of the Conferences in the Provinces might not be advantageous.

At the first meeting of the National Executive Committee in the Calendar year there shall be fixed, and shortly after published in THE VOTE, the following arrangements for the Conference:—latest date for nomination of officials and Nat. Exec. Com. candidates; for sending in of resolutions; and for sending in and circulation of amendments. At that meeting of the Nat. Exec. Com. there shall be elected for the Conference an Agenda Committee and a Credentials Committee, whose respective duties shall be the orderly compilation

of the agenda, and the scrutineering of the delegates to the Conference.

That all resolutions for the Annual Conference must be agreed to at a meeting of the Branch, and sent in by the Secretary, and signed by the Chairman of that meeting. The delegate to Conference must be elected at a meeting of the Branch, and must be given full instructions how to vote.

Constitution.

The National Executive Committee shall meet at places of its own choice not less than six, and not more than ten times in the Calendar year.

That a Secretary and Treasurer be appointed for each Branch, and that a list of the Branch members, with their addresses, be sent to the Central Office two months prior to the date of the Annual Conference.

That it be a rule for a special letter to be sent from the Head Office to Branches after each Nat. Exec. Com. meeting, giving a summary of events, and indicating possible lines of activity.

Protection of Women and Children.

In the interests of the youth of both sexes, and as a means of lessening prostitution and diminishing venereal disease, this Conference calls upon the Government to introduce a Bill for the raising of the Age of Consent for girls to eighteen, with a similar protection for boys.

This Conference urges the Government to make the Guardianship of Infants Bill a Government measure.

This Conference urges the Home Secretary at once to adopt and bring into practice the following recommendation:—Where a woman is charged with the murder of her infant child, and upon the trial evidence is given that at the time the offence was committed the woman had not fully recovered from the effect of giving birth to the child, the Judge may direct the jury that they may acquit the prisoner on the charge of murder, and convict her of manslaughter.

This Conference further urges that in every case where a mother is charged because of the death of her infant child, the Magistrate responsible shall ascertain from the father of the deceased child what provision he made for the mother before, at, and after her confinement. If the mother is committed for trial, the Crown shall subpoena the father to give evidence at the trial, particularly with regard to his fulfilment of paternal responsibilities.

This Conference also urges that the jury dealing with a case of infanticide, and any other case affecting women and children, shall by law consist of an equal number of women and men, and that if a prisoner challenges any member of the jury, and that member is disqualified, his or her place shall be taken by some one of the same sex.

That the Women's Freedom League investigate the conditions under which children and young people are licensed to appear in theatres, music-halls, and similar places, with a view to securing the raising of the licensing age, and improving the conditions, especially of those permitted to go on tour.

Venerable Disease.

This Conference regards the introduction of the system of prophylaxis for venereal disease as retrogressive and demoralising, and calls upon its Branches to offer a strenuous opposition to any suggestions for the adoption of this treatment if made by their local Medical Officer of Health.

Women Officials.

That the Women's Freedom League press for the appointment of Women Governors in prisons for women.

That the Women's Freedom League press for the appointment of (a) Women Lunacy Commissioners, (b) women on Asylum Visiting Committees, (c) women on the Committee appointed to investigate the present conditions in Lunatic Asylums.

This Conference is of opinion that the time has come when women doctors must be on the staffs of all Mental Hospitals and Poor Law Infirmarys where there are women patients.

This Conference considers that women should be appointed Stipendiary Magistrates.

This Conference considers that a woman coadjutor should be appointed in all Children's Courts where the presiding Magistrate is not a woman.

This Conference considers that more women should be employed in the Police Force, and that they should be given the same training and status as policemen.

The Women's Freedom League protests against the dismissal of Women Police on the plea of economy, and agitates for the appointment of police women in every town.

This Conference expresses its profound regret that no British woman has so far been included in an official capacity in the Delegation to the Assembly of the League of Nations, and calls upon the Government to rectify this mistake forthwith.

Married Women's Employment.

This Conference strongly protests against the dismissal of women employees of any and every grade on account of their marriage, for the following reasons:—

- It constitutes an interference with the private affairs of a woman employee which is not exercised in the case of a man employee.
- In the case of the Civil Service, and of women employed by Local Authorities, it contravenes the spirit of Clause 1 of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1919, which states that "a person shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from the exercise of any public function, or from being appointed to or holding any civil or judicial office or post."
- It tends to lower the whole standard of women's general and professional education, their work and standing in the professions, their position and value in industry, and their whole social and economic status, causing an apparent instability of the woman worker.
- It reacts injuriously on the national productivity, through imposing restrictions on the work of those able and willing to add their quota of goods and service to the national output.

Women and Unemployment.

This Conference demands, whenever public money is spent upon the provision of work for unemployed persons, that it shall be allocated to schemes for both unemployed men and unemployed women in proportion to the numbers of men and women out of work.

Care of Children.

Seeing that the task of rearing healthy human beings is of the highest importance to the community, it shall be the policy of the Women's Freedom League to promote legislation whereby every mother (or guardian in place of the mother) shall be assured of a sufficient sum for the care of each child during infancy and school life.

Milk Supply.

This Conference views with apprehension the cutting down of the milk supply to babies and nursing mothers, and calls upon the Government to continue the 50 per

cent. grant to local authorities throughout the coming year.

Housing.

That the Women's Freedom League make a protest to the Minister of Health, condemning the type of workmen's dwellings now being built, and calling for the provision of larger rooms and windows.

Proportional Representation.

This Conference is of opinion that Proportional Representation is the fairest method of carrying out Parliamentary and Municipal Elections, and that the Women's Freedom League should continue to work for that end.

Protection of Animals.

That the Women's Freedom League support any effort made to extend the existing laws for the Protection of Wild Birds and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in every form.

This Conference calls upon the Government to put an adequate export duty on all horses sent out of this country.

Propaganda.

That the Women's Freedom League ask the Executive to see that a leaflet is prepared making a special appeal to girls and women under 30.

[NOTE.—In place of the Resolution against Hong Kong child slavery, the Conference sent warmest congratulations to Commander and Mrs. Haslewood on the success of their work on behalf of the *mui tsai*.

At the beginning of the Conference a message of love and greeting was sent to Mrs. Despard from all present.]

WOMEN'S BAR SUCCESSES.

Twenty-one women were successful in the Bar Examinations held in March. Seven women passed in Roman Law: the Misses Anne Hastings, Edith Price, and Kathleen Sissmore, who obtained First Classes; Miss Irene Willis, who obtained a Second Class, and the Misses Elsie Bowerman, Cicely Leadley-Brown, and Jessie Wall. Three women passed in Constitutional Law and Legal History: Miss Evelyn Sanderson, who obtained a Second Class, and the Misses Sybil Campbell and Cicely Leadley-Brown. Two women passed in Criminal Law and Procedure: Miss Agatha Monroe, who obtained a First Class, and Miss Evelyn Hope. Seven women passed in Real Property and Conveyancing: the Misses Edith Hesling and Maria Westell, who obtained Second Classes, and Dr. Letitia Fairfield, and the Misses Henrietta Gibbs, Chrystal Macmillan, Sydney Malone, and Rita Reuben. One woman passed in Hindu and Mohamedan Law: Miss Mithan Tata, who obtained a Second Class. Two women were successful in the Final Examination: Miss Lilian Dawes, who obtained a Second Class, and Miss Mercy Ashworth.

Nine women have now passed the Final Bar Examinations. They are: Dr. Ivy Williams, and the Misses Monica Geikie Cobb, Ethel Bright Ashford, Helena Normanton, B.A., Theodora Llewellyn Davies, Lilian Dawes, Mercy Ashworth, Olive Clapham, and A. Doherty. Of these, Dr. Ivy Williams has not only passed her final, but kept the full number of terms. She is expected to be "called" at Inner Temple on May 10th, which is "call" day at each of the four Inns of Court. In that case she will become the first woman barrister in England. It will be remembered that two women have already been called to the Irish Bar, Miss Kyle and Miss Deverell, the former of whom is now engaged in legal work in Belfast.

Miss Cornelia Sorabji, who for many years has acted as legal adviser and consulting counsel on behalf of purdah women in several Indian Courts, and who became a Bachelor of Civil Law at Oxford as long ago as 1893, is now in process of being entered at Lincoln's Inn, with a view to passing the prescribed examinations and keeping the requisite terms, which, in her case, under special privilege, will extend over one year only.

Women's Freedom League.

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

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**FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.
LONDON AND SUBURBS.****DARE TO
BE FREE.**

Monday, May 8, at 6.30 p.m.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Speaker: Miss Belle Rennie. Subject: "The Dalton Scheme of Education, which aims at Developing Children as Individuals."

Wednesday, May 10, at 3 p.m.—Public Afternoon Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Speaker: Miss Florence. Subject: "Where the present Insurance Act is unfair to Women Contributors."

Friday, May 12, at 6.30 p.m.—Mid-London Branch Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Monday, May 15, at 3 p.m.—"Fair" Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Monday, May 15, at 6.30 p.m.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Speaker: Dr. Marion Phillips. Subject: "Women in Industry."

Wednesday, May 17, at 3 p.m.—Public Afternoon Meeting at Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge. Subject: "Local Finance and the Ratepayer."

Monday, May 22, at 6.30 p.m.—Public Meeting at Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Speaker and subject to be announced next week.

Monday, May 29, at 6.30 p.m.—Public Meeting at Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Speaker and subject to be announced next week.

Saturday, May 27, at 10 a.m.—National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Thursday, June 15, at 7 p.m.—Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

Friday and Saturday, November 24 and 25.—Caxton Hall, Green, White, and Gold Fair.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday, May 10, at 8 p.m.—Women's League of Union, Oak Room, Kingsway Hall, W.C. Speaker: Lady Horsley. Subject: "Opportunities for Women To-day."

Sunday, May 14, at 6.30 p.m.—Kingston Church of Humanity, Orchard Road, Fairfield West, Kingston-on-Thames. Speaker: Dr. Octavia Lewin. Subject: "Nasal Hygiene and Spiritual and Mental Development."

BRANCH NOTE.**ASHFORD.**

A meeting, at which many local women's organisations were represented, was genially presided over by H. Lee, Esq., J.P., at Ashford, Kent, on April 27th, at 7 p.m. Mrs. Haslewood spoke on Child Slavery in Hong Kong, and the efforts made by Commander Haslewood and herself to get attention drawn to it; and a resolution was unanimously passed, to be forwarded to the Colonial Secretary, couched in the following terms:—"That at a meeting of various women's local organisations, held at Ashford, Kent, on Thursday, April 27th, it was resolved to send their hearty appreciation for the help rendered by the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill to the cause of children in Hong Kong, and petition him to do all in his power to hasten their complete liberation." Several present voiced their admiration for all that Mrs. Haslewood had done, and a vote of thanks to the Chairman brought a successful meeting to a close.

(Hon. Sec.) E. G. KITHER, Glengariff, Ashford.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

An important meeting has been arranged in the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., on Wednesday, May 10th, at 3 p.m., when Miss Florence (of the Clerical and Professional Women's Insurance Society) will open a discussion on "Where the Present Unemployment Insurance Act is Unfair to Women Contributors." We cordially invite all women interested in this subject to attend this meeting next Wednesday afternoon, and to join in the discussion following Miss Florence's address.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MISS PHIPPS.

Our old Swansea member, Miss Phipps, B.A., Editor of the *Woman Teacher*, and the Independent Parliamentary Candidate for Chelsea in 1918, has entered as a Law student at the Middle Temple. We are delighted, and wish her every possible success.

G.B.S. COMPETITION.

The photograph of George Bernard Shaw, so kindly given to the League by Miss M. I. Neal, has been won by our member, Mrs. Cunningham (Welwyn). The competition realised £4 1s.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.**The Budget.**

Women, who have usually less money than men to deal with, must be thankful for small mercies—the Budget does not provide them with any large ones. The proposals most interesting to women are: a reduction of 4d. per lb. on tea duty; 12s. per cwt. on cocoa; and 2d. per lb. on coffee and chicory. Letter postage is to be 1½d. instead of 2d., postcards 1d. instead of 1½d.; and Income-tax is to be reduced from 6s. to 5s. in the £. The sugar and all other duties are to be maintained at their present level. We are particularly sorry that the present high price of sugar is to remain. As we approach the fruit season and its jam-making possibilities, sugar is a very expensive item to the housekeeper.

Married Women and Employment.

Lancashire Education Committee has decided not to sanction the appointment in future of married women as teachers in Elementary Schools. We understand that the National Union of Teachers had a test case on the dismissal of a married woman teacher; but the case was lost. It is time that women obtained some statement from the Head of the Government as to what the Government itself is prepared to do to ensure that its own Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act shall not remain a dead letter. Employers in industry are following this bad example set by Local Government bodies. Quite recently a manager had "sacked" all the married women from his department, but afterwards had a big order which he was only able to get out in time by re-employing these married women. We think it is a pity that circumstances obliged them to help him out of his difficulty.

Another Injustice to Women Teachers.

When women teachers asked to be freed from their school duties to do war work as nurses, etc., they were assured that their war service would count as equivalent to teaching service in qualifying for their pensions, *as in the case of men*. These women are now notified that only men's war service is to be considered in this matter. In two circulars issued by the Board of Education in regard to this matter, the Board definitely states "men-assistants," and this has either been interpreted by the Local Education Authority to exclude the women, or else they have instructions from the Board definitely to exclude the women. This matter is being taken up with the Board of Education.

Mr. Chamberlain and Women Supporters.

This week, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, M.P., the Leader of the House, is to address a women's meeting at Queen's Hall, under the auspices of the Women's Unionist Organisation. We wonder if he will talk to them at length of the way in which the present Government has tried to carry out its pledge to remove all existing disabilities of the law as between men and women?

Mrs. Orford's Kiosk.

Last Saturday, Mrs. Orford, who had received notice from the Office of Works to quit her kiosk the following Monday, was informed that she would be permitted to remain at the kiosk until a new refreshment kiosk is built, and would have the preference of renting the new place when erected.

Brighton Morals.

Mrs. E. J. Smith, our Brighton magistrate, is insistent that Brighton's morals must be improved, and states that she is beginning to take courage. It was reported recently, she said, that two women were charged at Tower Bridge Police Court with soliciting, and the magistrate refused to convict them because the men they were alleged to have annoyed did not come forward. In another case two men were charged with accosting women, and the magistrate, in fining them, declared: "You men are as bad as the worst kind of women." "I feel very grateful to this magistrate," Mrs. Smith said. "It is encouraging to know he, at least, is prepared to help us women in our demand for the same law for women as for men. I also take courage because I am authoritatively informed that the question of having women police is one purely for local authorities to answer. Brighton, with all its moral pitfalls for young women, needs women police more than any other place, and, if I can do anything, I am determined that our women police shall be reinstated."

Women and Newspapers.

In an article appearing in the *Yorkshire Post*, last Monday, Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher says, that now women have votes, they ought to read newspapers; and she discusses at length the kind of subjects in which women readers might be interested. We, ourselves, are convinced that all women would be the happier and the wiser if they took in and read *THE VOTE* regularly. And it is only 1d.!

What Women Know.

"The Bench and Bar are greatly helped in matters of sex by women on the jury," said Mr. Justice Roche at the Old Bailey recently. "Their knowledge of the female mind is invaluable."

SUPPORT YOUR LEAGUE.

Our funds are again at their lowest Spring level and urgently require replenishing—weekly bills must be met and rent be paid. Members and friends of the Women's Freedom League only have to be told of their League's starving condition to come to the rescue. Please send your contributions at once before you start on your holidays.

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

E. KNIGHT,
Hon. Treas.

FRIDAY,
MAY 5,
1922.

THE VOTE

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PUBLIC SPEAKING. MARION MCCARTHY. Specially graduated course re-opens Tuesday, May 9th. Apply 16, Hallam Street, Portland Place, W.1. Langham 2530.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W. Sunday, May 7th, 3.15, Dr. Percy Dearmer. 6.30, Miss Lena Ashwell.

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