

THE VOTE,
JAN. 25, 1924.
ONE PENNY.

SPEECHES OF WOMEN M.P.s.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

VOL. XXV. No. 744.

(Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage, but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.)

FRIDAY, JAN. 25, 1924

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

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WOMEN'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE.

The Women's Local Government Society held its Fifth Annual Conference of women councillors, guardians, and magistrates on Wednesday and Thursday of last week.

On Wednesday, the morning session was devoted to the problem of the unemployed juvenile, the chief speakers being Mr. Frank Briant, J.P., M.P., and Mr. Beresford Ingram, Inspector and Organiser of L.C.C. Centres for Unemployed Juveniles, of whom there are 40,000 in London alone. Alderman Miss Katherine Wallas, L.C.C., presided.

Mr. Frank Briant said he attributed the failure of the half-time system to the fact that boys were taken from the schools to which they were attached, whose teachers they knew and esteemed, and where *esprit de corps* operated, to schools where these things were inevitably lacking. He advocated, as a temporary measure to deal with present emergencies, that there be an additional class created in each elementary school for the continued education of the school children for six months continuously after the school-leaving age.

Boys and Trade Unions.

Mr. Briant also advocated that a chance be given of land work on the open ground around London. There many might prepare themselves for emigration to the overseas Dominions. He urged the trade unions to open the door wider for apprentices. Though he sympathised with those who feared that their living might be affected by a surplus of labour, no man nor woman had the right to bar boys from the opportunity of gaining a living. He thought the trade unions might consider whether they had a moral right to prevent boys from learning a useful trade.

Wednesday afternoon was devoted to a discussion on the work of Public Libraries, with special reference to children's departments, when Mr. Berwick Sayers, F.L.A., Chief Librarian of Croydon Public Library, who was the chief speaker, referred to this country as the greatest reading-country in the world. The Chairman at the afternoon session was Miss Bertha Mason (Chairman of the Women's Local Government Society).

On Thursday morning, the subject of "Probation" was discussed by Mr. Cecil Chapman, J.P. (Metropolitan Magistrate at the Westminster Police Court), and Mrs. Barrow Cadbury, J.P., of Birmingham. Mrs. Rackham, J.P., presided. Mr. Cecil Chapman said that, since the Probation Act was passed in 1908, an immense deal had been done in large centres of industry where there were expert magistrates. The evolution of all punishment in these cases ought to be the reformatory. The system had been adopted definitely in the case of all young persons up to the age of 15; but he urged that the reformatory age should be raised to 18. He did not know of a magistrate or judge who would be inclined to send to prison anyone between the ages of 15 and 17. The only thing to be done in such cases was to put the offenders on probation, and magistrates ought to have the power to send them to Borstal directly. A person who was put on probation was put into association with an expert in human sympathy, human understanding, and self-discipline, and was continuously and properly looked after.

Children's Courts in America.

Mrs. Barrow Cadbury (Birmingham) agreed that the age of treatment in the juvenile court should be raised, and that there should be remand homes or hostels to prevent young persons going to prison for a few nights while waiting for inquiries. She also gave some personal experiences of the probation system, and of children's courts in America, where, compared with this country, the treatment was almost idealistic.

Mr. Chapman expressed the opinion that the Borstal system had become too severe and too prolonged.

Thursday afternoon was devoted to the subject of "Paying Patients in Infirmaries," the chief speaker being Dr. W. E. G. Masterman, Medical Superintendent, Camberwell Infirmary, who described the system adopted at Camberwell, where paying patients were received if they did not interfere with the needs of poor patients, as working very successfully.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Unemployed Teachers.

Unemployed women and men teachers, of whom there are 300 in London alone, have formed an Association, with the object of bringing pressure on the Government to adopt an educational policy which would provide work for all. The organisation is known as the Association of Unemployed Teachers, with headquarters at 39, Gordon Square, W.C.1, where is also the National Union of Women Teachers.

A Youthful Hostess.

With the advent to office of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister, No. 10, Downing Street, promises to have the youngest hostess it has possessed for many a long day, in Mr. MacDonald's eldest daughter, who is not long out of her teens. Though shy in disposition, Miss MacDonald is extremely popular, and possesses a wide knowledge of the social problems of the day, particularly those affecting working-class women and children.

Turkish Polygamy.

Four hundred Turkish women of the educated classes have held a meeting in Constantinople, to discuss women's rights in family life, a subject concerning which new Statutes are being drawn up by the Angora Assembly. A general desire to suppress polygamy was manifested, especially as this has not been practised in the country for over 20 years. A Turkish Parliamentary Commission also reported recently in favour of the abolition of polygamy.

Economising on Women M.P.s!

Germany, in its efforts after economy, is seeking to reduce the present 460 members of the Reichstag to about 345, and a Bill for this purpose will shortly become law. This "reform" is expected to make serious inroads, at the next election, on the delegation of 35 women now sitting in the German Lower House, as on the preferential list from which Members of the Reichstag are selected women candidates are usually two or three places down.

Women Athletes.

The first Women's International Sports Meeting will be held at Stamford Bridge next August Bank Holiday, when most of the famous women athletes of the world will be seen in action. Teams are expected from the United States, Canada, France, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, Belgium, and Switzerland. Women athletes are reported to have increased enormously during the last three years.

Miss Baylis Honoured.

Miss Lilian Baylis will be the guest of honour at the supper given by the Elizabethan Society to-morrow (Saturday), when Sir Sidney Lee will take the chair. Miss Baylis comes of musical stock on both sides. At the age of 11, she was playing the violin in public, and six years later was organising her own concert parties, the foundation-stone of her successful method of organisation at the "Old Vic."

Women as Masons.

Twelve women, after finishing their training in Long Island City, America, have just taken on work as masons. The contractors, tired of difficulties with men in the building trade, have employed these women. Their salary is 13 dollars a day, and it appears that they have performed their work more quickly and better than the men employees. They themselves seem to be delighted with their work.

A Useful Present.

A cot was endowed, last week, in the Royal Free Hospital, by the pupils, past and present, of Sandecotes Girls' School, two of whom are now students at the Hospital and one an assistant almoner, as a birthday gift to their Headmistress, Miss Agnes Grainger Gray, on the occasion of her 21st year at the School.

Honours for Women—in France!

Mlle. Bignon, Doctor of Science and Honorary Professor, and Mme. Lateuligne (Sister Léonide), Superintendent of the Prison at St. Lazare, have just been made Knights of the Legion of Honour. Mme. Bear de Jouvenal, a well-known Frenchwoman scientist, has also been decorated with the Legion of Honour, in recognition of her work at the Pasteur Institute.

Queen of Norway's Book.

Queen Maud of Norway has recently completed a novel, which will shortly be published, under a pseudonym, both in this country and the United States. The book will deal with certain aspects of modern life in rather novel and striking fashion.

Women Presidents.

Miss Margaret Gold has been elected President of the Edmonton branch of the Alpine Club of Canada. Miss Courtauld has been elected President of the Essex Agricultural Society. Miss Courtauld farms extensively in Essex, and is a member of the family holding large interests in the famous silk firm of that name.

WOMEN M.P.s OF OLD.

From the "Dundee Evening Telegraph and Post."

The old saying, "There's nothing new under the sun," may be said to be equally applicable to what most people regard as unprecedented—the fact that to-day eight ladies took their places in Parliament. For, unless history lies, the present number of ladies at Westminster has been exceeded on at least one occasion, and more than once the sex has had representatives, varying in numbers, long before the advent of Lady Astor, whom we are accustomed to regard as our first lady M.P.

Away back in the ancient days of the Saxon Witenagemots, the forerunners of Parliament, women of birth and quality, according to the old writer, Gurdon, in his "Antiquities of Parliament," sat in the highest Council of the land. When Wighfried held his famous Council at Beconcelde, in the year 694, a number of Abbesses deliberated with the clergy, nobles, and King, and five of the ladies put their signatures to the decrees passed by this Assembly.

During the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I., four Abbesses were summoned to take their places in Parliament, these being the Abbesses of Shaftesbury, Barking, St. Mary of Winchester, and St. Mary of Wilton. Again, in the thirty-fifth year of Edward III., no fewer than nine ladies of high birth acted as Members of Parliament, their names being—Mary, Countess of Norfolk; Alienor, Countess of Ormond; Anna Despenser; Philippa, Countess of March; Johanna Fitzwater; Agnetta, Countess of Pembroke; Matilda, Countess of Oxford; Catherine, Countess of Athol; Mary de St. Paul; and Mary de Roos.

Thus it will be seen that a lady bearing a famous Scottish title sat in the English Parliament at that early date, and it is a curious coincidence that the first Scottish lady to be elected a Member of Parliament by popular vote should be the present-day holder of that title, the Duchess of Atholl. It is strange that there is so little mention of women in connection with the Parliaments of Scotland in pre-Union days, for in local public affairs women of Scotland in those days took a prominent part. There is very reliable authority for saying that in the oldest Scottish burghs women were admitted to the burghship on exactly the same terms as men. A Spanish diplomat who was at the Scottish Court during the reign of King James IV. left behind him in his chronicles the interesting statement that the women of Scotland in those days were "absolutely mistresses in their own houses, even of their husbands."

IN PARLIAMENT.

Education—Special Schools, London.

In reply to a question by MR. R. MORRISON (Tottenham, North), the President of the Board of Education (MR. EDWARD WOOD) said that the number of children on the rolls of London special schools for physically and mentally defective children for the week ending December 21st, 1923, was 12,243, showing a decrease of 328 on the figures for the similar week in 1922.

Certificated Teachers—Employment.

MR. WOOD, replying to a question by MR. HANNON (Moseley), said that out of about 7,000 students (1,775 men and 5,218 women) who left training colleges in England and Wales last summer, roughly 2,000 (489 men and 1,517 women) were known not to have secured positions, but no doubt some of these had obtained appointments since the date of his information.

Size of Classes.

MR. EDMUND HARVEY (Dewsbury) asked the President of the Board of Education how many classes of over 50 children there were at present in public elementary schools; what was the corresponding number in 1914; and what steps had been taken by the Board during the last twelve months to reduce the size of those classes? MR. WOOD replied that he had no figures before 1919-20, and the latest year for which figures had been tabulated was the year ending on March 31st, 1922. The figures for 1922 and the two preceding years, for England and Wales, were as follows:—1920, 38,174; 1921, 35,137; 1922, 33,031. Steady progress in this respect was being made by more careful classification of children, and better distribution of teachers, but the problem was largely one of accommodation.

Women (Domestic Service).

MR. HANNON (Moseley), asked the Minister of Labour if he could indicate the number of women who had been in receipt of unemployment pay since their discharge from Government Departments or factories engaged on Government contracts; what was the longest period over which such payments had been made; and if, in view of the Report of the Committee on Conditions in Domestic Service, any steps were being taken to stop the payment of unemployment benefit to women who were fitted for, but unwilling to enter, domestic service? MR. BETTERTON (Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour) replied that it was not possible to distinguish women in the categories mentioned by the hon. Member from other women applicants for benefit. Generally, women applicants were entitled, under the statutory provisions, to receive benefit for the same length of time as men during the special periods which had been in operation during the past three years, and would be similarly entitled during the first benefit year now current. The hon. Member was no doubt aware that benefit was only paid to women who were normally employed otherwise than in domestic service, and standing instructions already provided that unemployment benefit should not be paid to women who were suitable for, and who refused, domestic service.

League of Nations.

LADY ASTOR (Sutton, Plymouth) asked the President of the Board of Education if his attention had been called to a resolution passed on September 27th last by the Fourth Assembly of the League of Nations, urging the Governments of the States members to arrange that the children and youth in their respective countries be made aware of the existence and aims of the League of Nations, and the terms of its Covenant; and if he would make a statement on the subject? MR. WOOD replied that the answer was in the affirmative. The resolution of the Assembly had the full sympathy of the Government, and he gladly took that opportunity of recommending it to the favourable consideration of the authorities of the schools.

Smoke Abatement.

SIR HARRY BRITAIN (Acton) asked the Minister of Health whether, in view of the acknowledged evil effect upon the health of the community, and the wastage of money caused by ever-recurring fogs in our great cities, he was able to state that his Department was doing all possible to expedite the passage into law of the Smoke Abatement Bill? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS (Minister of Health) replied that it was proposed to reintroduce that Bill, and he hoped that it might be found possible to secure its passage into law during the present Session.

Invalids and Election.

MR. A. M. SAMUEL (Farnham) asked the Prime Minister if he would consider the desirability of amending the law so as to enable invalids and inmates of hospitals to exercise the franchise at Parliamentary elections, and other elections, by a method similar to that applicable to sailors at sea? MR. LOCKER-LAMPSON, Under-Secretary of State for Home Office, replied that, so far as he was aware, that was a new suggestion. There would be great difficulties in carrying out the proposed arrangement, but he would have the point noted for consideration in connection with any reconsideration of the system.

Holloway Prison (Borstal Treatment).

MISS LAWRENCE (East Ham) asked the Home Secretary if he had licensed Ward F, of Holloway Prison, as a Borstal institution; and if he could inform the House as to what facilities for exercise and instruction would be provided, and in what manner the treatment of those girls would differ from the treatment of women convicts? MR. BRIDGEMAN replied in the affirmative, and said that that portion of Holloway Prison was for the accommodation of girls who had been trained at Aylesbury, but who, after being released on licence, had had their licences revoked for misconduct. Occasionally, also, a girl who, while at Aylesbury, persistently misbehaved herself, or exerted a bad influence, would be transferred there. Those measures had been taken in order that the training of the main body of inmates at Aylesbury might not be prejudiced by the presence among them of those who failed to respond. The treatment of the girls at Holloway would be on the same lines as at Aylesbury, so far as the buildings and surroundings would allow. Classes in physical training and general education would be taken by qualified teachers. The general routine would be that of the penal grade of a Borstal institution.

The above reply of the Home Secretary is an additional argument for our contention that the Governor of Holloway Prison, and, indeed, that the Governors of ALL women's prisons and women's sections of prisons, should be women, and not men as at present is the case.

F. A. U.

THIRTY YEARS IN PRISON!

Last week, Mr. Clarke Hall had before him, in Old Street Police Court, two men charged with theft. One of them, a man 70 years old, had been convicted 33 times, and had spent a total of 30 years in prison. For 50 years he had not been free for more than 12 months. The other man, aged 61, had been convicted 22 times, and had spent a total of 27 years in prison. Both men had served their first sentence when quite young, and their subsequent records are a complete condemnation of our prison system. In ordering a remand, the magistrate said, "It is heart-breaking to see two men whose lives have been ruined, as yours have been, from the beginning." We entirely agree with Mr. Clarke Hall, the most humane magistrate we know; but there are other magistrates who do not hesitate to give young people terms of imprisonment, and make very little use of the Probation system. Such magistrates are to a great extent responsible for the ruined lives of many future citizens.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors: THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
Offices: 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 25th, 1924.

EDITORIAL.

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

VOTES FOR WOMEN—NOW!

The Government were defeated last Monday night, by a majority of 72, on the Labour Party's Amendment to the Address, declaring that the Government did not possess the confidence of the House. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald then moved that a vote be taken on the Address, with the addition of the words in the "No Confidence" Amendment, and this was carried by a majority of 77. The next morning, Mr. MacDonald was sworn in as a Privy Councillor, and, following the Council Meeting, had an audience of the King, when he was invited to form a Government, an invitation which he accepted. In the afternoon, Parliament was adjourned until February 12th, giving Mr. MacDonald three weeks in which to form his Government. We repeat that women have a great deal to hope from this new Parliament, and more especially from the new Government which is now coming into power with the support of the Liberal Party. The Labour and the Liberal Parties together form a majority in the House of Commons, and both these Parties are pledged to remove the political and legal inequalities of women. Already a private Member's Bill has been introduced into the House of Commons, endorsed by prominent members of the Labour Party, including its three women Members of Parliament, "to amend the Representation of the People Act," the Second Reading of which is down for February 20th. There would certainly be more than a working majority in the present House for this measure; but we hope that Mr. MacDonald's Government will not leave the further enfranchisement of the women of this country to the chances inherent in the passage of a private Member's Bill. A Government measure enfranchising women at the same age as men, and on a short residential qualification for both men and women, could not fail to secure the enthusiastic support of a great majority of the Members of the present House of Commons, as well as of a great majority of men and women outside Parliament. Such a measure would remove a great injustice to women, more especially to young women workers, and older women who have to live in furnished rooms, at home with their people, or in institutions—all of whom have at present no political power, and no means of voicing their grievances in the only way in which they can be remedied. This is a democratic age, but we cannot pretend that there is real democracy in this country while more than four and a half million women over 21 years of age are disfranchised. We therefore look to the Labour and the Liberal Parties to unite with our friends in the Conservative Party in this question, and together make it impossible for another General Election to take place at which women vote on unequal terms with men. The first object of the Women's Freedom League has always been to obtain equal voting rights for men and women, and we are determined to make an appeal to the new Government to grant this overdue reform without further delay at the Public Meeting which we are holding at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, on Wednesday evening, February 6th—the sixth anniversary of the final passing into law of the Representation of the People Bill, which partially enfranchised the women of Great Britain who were over 30 years of age. All readers of THE VOTE who can be in London on that evening are urged to come to Essex Hall, and help us make that appeal to the new Government as effective as possible.

MARRIED WOMEN TEACHERS.

The London County Council continues its persecution of married women employees. It is evidently determined that no married woman shall remain on its staffs, if this can possibly be avoided. In order to remove any doubt about the matter, if such doubt lingers anywhere, the General Purposes Committee recommends that the standing order shall be altered to provide that the marriage of a woman shall put an end to her contract of service with the Council, as from and including the date of her marriage. There is at present an exemption which applies to "married women whose husbands are totally or permanently incapacitated from supporting them," and the Committee expresses the opinion that this means totally or permanently incapacitated physically or mentally, and would not include mere inability arising, for instance, from a period of unemployment. The General Purposes Committee have therefore submitted a recommendation which would give effect to this view.

Once again we point out that there is an Act on the Statute Book, the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act (1919), Clause I. of which states that a person shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from being appointed to or holding any civil office or post, or from entering or assuming or carrying on any civil profession or vocation. Why is it that the London County Council and other local governing bodies are allowed with impunity to break both the letter and the spirit of this Act? Is it because the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act only refers to the interests of women? How long will the Government of this country refuse to deal impartially with the interests of its men and women citizens? As soon as Parliament reassembles, we urge that the Law officers of the Crown be asked to give a ruling on the meaning of Clause I. of this Act, and its application to married women employees of local governing bodies. If it is then found that this Clause is merely a pious resolution, without meaning, we shall urge upon the new Government that it introduce into the House of Commons, and pass through all its stages into law with the least possible delay, an amending Bill which shall effectively remove for women all sex and marriage disqualifications so far as their employment is concerned. The present Act is nothing but a sham, a delusion, and a snare, and until we have some ruling on its meaning, or want of meaning, the way is blocked for any real equality of opportunity for the sexes.

Women naturally resent the grandfatherly interference of members of the London County Council in taking away from them the right to earn money at the profession for which they have been trained. Whether women have husbands who are able (though perhaps not always willing) to support them, or not, is no business of these Councillors. Their business is to see that the children have competent teachers, and the only reason for dismissing teachers should be incompetence.

LADY ASTOR'S WAY.

Lady Astor has decided to give £10,000 to establish a housing trust in Plymouth, to be worked on similar lines to the Peabody Trust, of which Lord Astor is a governor. Her idea is to give a substantial impetus to house-building for the working classes. She has asked the Borough Council to co-operate in the scheme by providing a site for the first group of houses, and the income from the property is to be devoted, on the snowball plan, to the erection of further dwellings. Lady Astor puts forward a characteristic proposal in stipulating that, in the rent of all houses built under the Trust, a reduction shall be made to tenants in respect of every child under a certain age, so that the more children tenants have, the less rent they will have to pay. She calculates that with this £10,000, plus Government subsidies, a good number of houses can be built.

SPEECHES OF WOMEN M.P.s.

Quite early in the Debate on the Address, last week, Miss SUSAN LAWRENCE said she regretted that there was no mention of education in the King's Speech. She believed that the Board of Education were not merely pursuing a reactionary policy, but were actually violating the law which they had to administer. She criticised in particular their action in regard to limiting the grants in respect of the provision of meals for necessitous children. In 1921, Education Authorities were spending about £11,000,000 on the feeding of necessitous children, under the Provision of Meals Act, and the Board ordered them to cut down that expenditure to £300,000. The circular they sent out at that time was one of the most remarkable ever sent out by a Government. It stated that "the Government have decided that it is impossible to acquiesce in a continuance of the present arrangement, under which, in abnormal periods, part of the burden of poor relief may be borne on the education rate." That meant that the Government decided not to acquiesce in an arrangement sanctioned by Parliament. They had continued, from that time to this, this system of rationing grants for education, and she contended that they had not merely strained the law but broken the law. She asked the Board of Education to say whether they had taken the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown as to the legality of this rationing, and whether they would place that opinion before the House. Many local authorities in the provision of meals had spent above the amount allocated by the Government, and, if her view was right, those local authorities could claim a refund from the Government.

Taking part in the same Debate, the DUCHESS OF ATHOLL said that, as a new Member, she should not have ventured to address the House but for the fact that in the King's Speech there were announcements of the Government's intentions regarding various matters of special interest to women and to Scotland. One was the intention to develop juvenile unemployment centres, and provide additional facilities for general and technical education. It was a serious problem, though she believed the centres initiated by the Government had done a great deal towards mitigating the evil. There were people who advocated that the best way to deal with the problem was to bring into operation the clauses in the Education Act of 1918 which provided for compulsory day continuation classes, but she was of opinion, however desirable day continuation classes might be on educational grounds, it was better to develop these juvenile unemployment centres than to bring the continuation classes into operation. It seemed strange that Liberal Members were going to vote against a Government which made such a proposal. They would also be voting against a proposal to develop the probationary system of dealing with young offenders. Women were deeply interested in that. The system had not been taken full advantage of in Scotland. Another proposal which would give great satisfaction to women was the proposal to legitimise children born out of wedlock when their parents married subsequently. Liberal Members ought not to refuse English children the protection which Scottish children had. With regard to the measure for dealing with the property and endowments of the Church in Scotland, she asked Mr. Ramsay MacDonald whether, when he assumed office, he could introduce that measure, which would remove the last barrier in the way of reunion, and prove an untold blessing to the moral and spiritual welfare of the Scottish people. As to agriculture, she asked Mr. Lloyd George what guarantee he had that there would be the co-operation he suggested if he put the Government out of office. She welcomed the anticipation of the Government's naval programme to provide work in the shipbuilding industry. Were the Liberal Members, when they cast their votes on Monday night, going to cast them against this proposal for relieving unemployment in our great shipyards? She could imagine what it must mean to thousands of families on the Clyde and elsewhere if the advent to

office of the Socialist Government meant the cancellation of a policy on which, no doubt, already great hopes had been formed. The Leader of the Opposition had described the King's Speech as a miscellaneous collection of odds and ends, but she considered it to be a very comprehensive Speech, which showed an understanding of the needs of the many and varying sections of the people. Liberal Members were incurring a great responsibility if they refused to support a comprehensive, non-contentious programme of the kind put forward in order to bring in a Government—though it might be denied by Mr. Asquith and his followers—with a blank cheque and a blank programme.

On the last day of the Debate, Miss MARGARET BONDFIELD said that the points on which she wished to address the House had a great deal to do with the suffering that was going on in this country at the present time amongst unemployed women. Her criticism of the Government had been, and was, that much could have been done to mitigate the lot of the women, with very little expense, but with a certain amount of administrative common sense, and they had consistently refused to do but very little. We had about a quarter of a million women who had been unemployed during the last three years, some of them almost continuously unemployed. In 1921, by dint of great pressure from the Central Committee of Women's Unemployment, backed by the Trade Union Congress and by large bodies of entirely non-political public opinion, they succeeded in getting a grant of £50,000 allocated to the Central Committee. In 1922 they secured another grant of £50,000. At the end of December, the Central Committee had added from the funds at its disposal £150,000. The latest returns showed that there were still 250,000 unemployed women. The Central Committee on Women's Employment could have enormously extended its classes if the money had been forthcoming. Miss Bondfield said that the gravest criticism of the Government's administration ought to be delivered against their handling of the juvenile question. Boys and girls alike had been at the mercy of the world into which they had been flung, on their leaving school, in the most impressionable years of their life. With proper co-ordination, it would have been possible to build up an extension of evening-class work, so as to give clever children opportunities to qualify for positions in which they could give better service to the State. The absence of any co-ordinated efforts to deal with the juvenile unemployed would go down as one of the gravest marks against the administration of the Government. Dealing with Trade Boards, she said that many employers welcomed the coming of the Trade Boards Act, but the successful working of these Acts depended on the enforcement of the awards of the Trade Boards, and this enforcement was the business of Inspectors. The Inspectors' department, however, had been overworked and understaffed, and the lack of Inspectors tended to the undermining of the protective laws which had been passed in the interest of the whole community. They wanted more Inspectors. Many of them were proud of the records of British factory Inspectors, but the policy of the Government had brought into disrepute the very system of which they were so proud. She was glad the Labour Party were coming into power, because to them this was not a matter of statistics or dialectics, but of safeguarding what had been won at tremendous sacrifice on the part of those who were dead and gone, of securing a better standard of life, and of pressing forward in a sane, evolutionary, and orderly way towards a better status for the workers.

MISS LUCY BELL,

Teacher of Public Speaking. Lectures, Classes, and Private Lessons in or out of London; also Speech Club, meeting Saturday afternoons and Monday evenings.

For further particulars apply:—

Miss LUCY BELL, 56 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1.

OUR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League was held at 144, High Holborn, last Saturday, those present being Miss Berry, Miss Alix M. Clark (Montgomery Boroughs), Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., Mrs. Dexter, Dr. Knight, Mrs. Legge, Miss C. Neal (Swansea), Miss M. I. Neal (Manchester), Mrs. Pierotti, Mrs. Whetton (Portsmouth), and the Secretary. Mrs. Schofield Coates presided. Reports were considered and adopted from the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Organising Secretary, and the Secretary, and from the Political, Literature, and VOTE Sales Departments. A very cordial vote of thanks was moved by the Chairman, and supported unanimously by Committee members, to Miss Berry, for all the work and trouble she had taken for the Green, White, and Gold Fair, held at the Central Hall last November. Miss Berry was congratulated on its good organisation and success. The Committee decided to hold a Spring Sale (by the kind permission of Dr. Lewin) at 25, Wimpole Street, on Friday, February 29th.

It was reported that Mrs. Dexter and Miss Underwood had represented the Women's Freedom League at the last meeting of the Consultative Committee, and also at the annual meeting of the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, at which the Committee's resolution on the necessity for sending women as fully accredited delegates to the Assembly and to the International Labour Conference had been passed; that Dr. Knight and Mrs. Hanscomb had represented the League at meetings of the British Overseas Committee; and Mrs. Legge at Conferences arranged by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, on Married Women's Income Tax, Pensions for Widows, and Reform of the Marriage Service. Mrs. Dexter and Miss Berry had been asked to attend the monthly delegate Conferences arranged by the Theosophical Order of Service to secure the Abolition of Capital Punishment; and other members had been nominated to represent us at the Conference on the Prevention of the Causes of War, to be held in May at the British Empire Exhibition.

The Committee sent forward an Equal Franchise resolution for our Annual Conference agenda, and in this connection urged that all our London members and friends should do their utmost to make our VOTES FOR WOMEN MEETING at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, on Wednesday evening, February 6th, a huge success.

Dr. Knight, Mrs. Legge, Miss Berry, Mrs. Pierotti, and Mrs. Abbott were nominated for the Agenda Committee, the first meeting of which will be held on Tuesday, January 29th. Miss Hunt and Miss Telling were nominated for the Conference Credentials Committee. It was also decided to have an outside speaker at our Conference at 5 p.m. on Saturday, April 5th.

In the recent General Election, our Hastings Branch had worked for, and supported, Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon's candidature; our Portsmouth Branch, the candidature of Miss Jessie Stephens; and other members of the Women's Freedom League had also canvassed, spoken, or worked in other ways for Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Mrs. Oliver Strachey, Mrs. Folland, Miss Susan Lawrence, Dr. Ethel Bentham, and Miss Palliser.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Seventeenth Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League will be held at Caxton Hall on Saturday, April 5th, at 10 a.m. Resolutions should have been sent in for the agenda by January 19th, but, as two branches report that they misunderstood the date, the Committee decided that the date should be extended until January 28th. Amendments, together with nominations for the Hon. Treasurer and for twelve members of the National Executive Committee, must be received at this office not later than February 28th. Delegates to the Conference who will require hospitality should communicate by that date with the Hospitality Secretary at this office.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS.

The following private Members' Bills, among others, have been introduced into the House of Commons:—

Representation of the People Act (1918) Amendment Bill, "to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1918," presented by Mr. William Murdoch Adamson (Cannock Division, Staffs), supported by Mr. Clynnes (Platting Division, Manchester), Miss Jewson (Norwich), Miss Bondfield (Northampton), Miss Lawrence (East Ham), and Mr. Lansbury (Poplar); to be read a Second time, Friday, February 29th.

Representation of the People Act (1918) Amendment (No. 2) Bill, "to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1918, in respect of the method of election," presented by Mr. Rendall (Thornbury Division, Gloucestershire); to be read a Second time, Friday, May 2nd.

Legitimacy Bill, "to amend the Law relating to children born out of wedlock," presented by Col. Campion (Lewes), supported by Sir Arthur Shirley Benn (Drake Division, Plymouth), Viscount Curzon (South Battersea), Col. Courthope (Rye), and Col. Windsor-Clive (Ludlow); to be read a Second time, Feb. 29th.

Guardianship of Infants Bill, "to amend the law relating to guardianship, maintenance, custody, and marriage of infants," presented by Mrs. Wintringham (Louth), supported by Viscountess Astor (Sutton Division, Plymouth), Lady Terrington (Wycombe), Mr. Foot (Bodmin), Sir Robert Newman (Exeter), Mr. Linfield (Mid-Division, Bedfordshire), Mr. Simpson (Taunton), Mr. Emlyn-Jones (Northern Division, Dorsetshire), Mr. Murray (Western Division, Renfrewshire), Mr. Pethick Lawrence (West Leicester), and Sir Philip Richardson (Chertsey Division, Surrey); to be read a Second time, Friday, April 4th.

Abolition of Capital Punishment Bill, "to provide for the abolition of capital punishment," presented by Mr. Climie (Kilmarnock), supported by Mr. Morgan Jones (Caerphilly), Mr. Lansbury, and Mr. Hayes (Edge Hill Division, Liverpool), to be read a Second time, Friday, April 4th.

Representation of the People Act (1918) Amendment (No. 3) Bill, "to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1918, by enfranchising women at the age of 21 years," presented by Mr. Hugh Edwards (Accrington), supported by Lady Terrington and Mrs. Wintringham; to be read a Second time, Friday, May 9th.

Children, Young Persons, &c., Bill, "to consolidate, extend, and amend the Children Acts, 1908 to 1921, and other enactments relating to persons under the age of 16 years, and certain enactments relating to offences against the person, and to make further provision with respect thereto and to certain minors, and to amend the law of marriage with respect to persons under the age of 16 years, and to extend and amend the law of homicide, and to amend the Street Betting Act, 1906, with respect to persons under the age of 16 years, and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid," presented by Mr. Ammon (North Camberwell), supported by Mr. Clynnes, Miss Bondfield, Mr. Wignall (Forest of Dean), Col. Wedgwood (Newcastle-under-Lyme), Mr. Turner (Batley and Morley), and Mr. Cecil Wilson (Attercliffe); to be read a Second time, Friday, March 7th.

FRENCH DECORATION FOR ENGLISHWOMAN.

The Minister of Public Instruction has conferred the Bronze Medal of Education on Mme. Paul Hyacinthe-Loyson (President), and Miss Gladys Slade (Secretary), of the Society "L'Enfant de France," for their work in connection with the establishment of school libraries, and general supervision and assistance to the children of fifty devastated villages in the Department of the Aisne during 1920-22. Subscriptions have been given by friends in America and England to enable this Society to provide village libraries, establish thrift clubs, and give occasional entertainments in ruined districts. This medal is a decoration very rarely conferred on Englishwomen, but Miss Slade has three previous decorations for her war services. She is a daughter of Mr. William Slade, of Hastings.

Women's Freedom League.

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

Hon. Treasurer—Dr. E. KNIGHT.
Hon. Organising Secretary—
Councillor Mrs. SCHOFIELD COATES, J.P.
VOTE Sales Department—Hon. Head: Miss ALIX M. CLARK.
Literature Department—Hon. Head: Mrs. PIEROTTI.
General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Wednesday, January 30th, at 8 p.m. Hampstead Branch Social Gathering, open to non-members, at the Isis Club, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, N.W.3 (by kind permission of Mrs. Harverson). Speaker: Miss Elsie Morton, M.B.E., on Proportional Representation. Chair: Mrs. Nevinson, L.L.A., J.P. Music. (Refreshments can be obtained at a small charge.) Three minutes from Hampstead Tube Station.

Wednesday, February 6th, at 8 p.m. Public Meeting at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.; to commemorate the anniversary of women's political enfranchisement, and call for its immediate extension to women on equal terms with men. Speakers: Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P., and Miss Dorothy Jewson, M.P.

Friday, February 29th, 3-7.30 p.m. Spring Sale (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin) at 25, Wimpole Street, W.

Saturday, April 5th. Caxton Hall, Westminster. Women's Freedom League Seventeenth Annual Conference.

SCOTLAND.

Saturday, January 26th, at 6-10 p.m. Glasgow. Whist Drive (Ladies and Gentlemen) in the West End College, Peel Street, Partick. Tickets 2/6 may be had at the College, and donations of cakes, etc., will be received there on 25th or 26th.

Tuesday, February 5th, at 7.30 p.m. Glasgow. Public Meeting in the Christian Institute. Speakers: Miss Eunice G. Murray, Miss Mary P. Grant. Collection.

PROVINCES.

Thursday, January 24th, at 7.30 p.m. Middlesbrough. Public Meeting at Suffrage Café. Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations." Tickets 1/- Refreshments.

Saturday, January 26th, at 6.30 p.m. Portsmouth. Whist Drive, Unitarian School Room, High Street. Tickets 1/6 each.

Monday, February 4th, at 7.30 p.m. Middlesbrough. Public Meeting at Suffrage Café. Speaker: Miss E. Morton, M.B.E. Subject: "Proportional Representation" and Mock Election.

Monday, February 11th, at 7.30 p.m. Bexhill. A Model Election at the Victory Hall will be conducted by Miss Elsie Morton, M.B.E.

Saturday, February 16th, at 2.30 p.m. Montgomery Boroughs. Monster Rummage Sale, for Head Quarters, Congregational School Room, Newtown.

Wednesday, February 20th, at 8 p.m. Brighton. Public Meeting at Hove Town Hall. Speaker: Miss Elsie E. Morton, M.B.E. Subject: "The Need for Women Members of Parliament." Chair: Miss Hare.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday, January 30th, at 8 p.m. Women's League of Union, Oak Room, Kingsway Hall. Speaker: Mrs. Barbara Wootton. Subject: "Nationalization."

Tuesday, January 29th, at 8 p.m. Kingston-on-Thames, Theosophical Lodge. Speaker: Miss F. A. Underwood, on "Brotherhood—from a Woman's Point of View."

BRANCH NOTES.

HAMPSTEAD.

A meeting of the branch was held at 16, Denning Road, N.W.3 (by kind permission of the Misses Berry), on Monday, January 14th. Mrs. Harverson presided, and there was an animated discussion over the resolutions for the Annual Conference, at the Caxton Hall, on April 5th.

All members and friends are reminded that they should be present at the Isis Club, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, N.W.3, on Wednesday, January 30th, at 8 p.m., to hear Miss Elsie Morton speak on "Proportional Representation," a most interesting subject at the present time. Mrs. Nevinson, J.P., will preside. Mrs. Van Raalte has promised to play, Mrs. Legge to sing, and Mrs. Harvey James to recite. All friends will be welcome. (Hon. Sec.) Miss E. BERRY, 16, Denning Road, N.W.3.

GLASGOW.

An excellent meeting was held in the Christian Institute on the 15th inst. Miss Jane Thomson presided. We are indebted to our member, Miss Isabel C. Hamilton, of the Education Authority, for a splendid address on "Equal Pay." Often as the question has been treated, we have never heard a more informative or logical treatment of it, and this was followed by an enthusiastic appeal to train for it, to convert adverse opinion, to speak out and take our places; above all, to get the vote for the younger women. (Hon. Sec.) J. H. McLELLAND, 5, Hayburn Crescent, Partick.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Women's War on Profiteers.

The *Labour Press Service* states that the Housewives' Association of Melbourne, Australia, formed to check profiteering, proposes, as a means of bringing down the cost of living, to advertise daily names of tradesmen whose prices are reasonable, and the names of those whose prices are higher. They claim that this will force profiteers to lower their prices, or to lose heavily if they refuse to do so.

Lowestoft and its Teachers.

Twelve months ago, Lowestoft teachers refused to accept a second reduction of 5 per cent., which violated the terms of the Burnham Scale, and they were given three months' notice. The local Education Committee at once engaged persons to fill their places, but apparently used very little discrimination in their selections. The parents, in many cases, refused to send their children to be taught by these substitutes for the regular teachers. Seven Board of Education Inspectors reported that the efficiency of the Lowestoft schools had fallen seriously since last April, when the new staffs were engaged, and the Board decided to withhold the December instalment of the grant. The local Education Committee is asking for a reconsideration of the Board's decision. It will be remembered that the dismissed teachers established welfare centres, which were attended by nearly 2,000 children, and attempts to break up these centres by prosecuting the parents proved unavailing.

Value of a Woman Inspector.

It is stated that the report of Miss Roberts, a woman Inspector of the Ministry of Health, who recently investigated the internal administration of the infirmaries controlled by the Swansea Guardians, contains a number of recommendations concerning the general future administration of the institutions. This report is to be discussed in detail shortly.

Housing Accommodation.

Over 77,000 houses were completed in this country last year. It is anticipated that, in the present year, 105,000 houses will be built. That was the number built in 1908.

At a meeting of the South London Catholic League, a former Mayor of Lambeth moved a resolution urging the Government to undertake the rebuilding on the slum areas in South London. He declared that the slum areas in South London, particularly those opposite the Houses of Parliament, were a disgrace to the Metropolis.

Unemployed Women.

At Preston, classes have been formed for women in connection with the Preston Employment Exchange Home Makers' Course. Fifty young women are being instructed in laundry, infant welfare, and health subjects. Experienced teachers have been engaged, and the students receive 17s. 9d. weekly, instead of unemployment benefit.

Unemployed men and women took part in a demonstration at the City Temple on the day Parliament was opened. When the Rev. Dr. Norwood addressed the audience as "men," feminine voices reminded him that he should add "women."

Convicts' Examinations.

It is reported that seven convicts in Maidstone Prison have passed an examination in bookkeeping, and that twelve have been successful in an examination in shorthand. These are, of course, men convicts; we should like to learn that women convicts were given similar opportunities.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGHES.

At the Caersws Poor Law Institution, last week, Miss A. M. Clark was presented with a handsome walking-stick, cut from the Christmas tree, in the name of all the inmates, in recognition of her kindnesses to them.

At the Board Meeting, on the same day, Miss Clark was again on the warpath in pursuit of "true economy," with a resolution for the detailed auditing of all expenses of officials and members when attending conferences, etc., for the Board, to prevent unnecessary spending of the ratepayers' money.

Jumble Sale.—Will members and friends please post their contributions to Miss Clark, 11, Severn Street, Newtown, Montgomeryshire? All will be very welcome.

WOMEN AND HOUSING.

Twenty-four women's organisations, including the Women's Freedom League, are urging the following resolution:—"The undermentioned Societies wish again to draw attention to the urgency of the Housing problem, and the increasing shortage of accommodation. They beg to point out that under the Housing, etc. (No. 2) Act, 1923, comparatively little is being done to reduce the appalling overcrowding amongst the wage-earning section of the population, and that the number of people dwelling in slum conditions grows daily larger."

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND TEMPERANCE.

Three hundred Members of the present House of Commons gave favourable replies in the recent Election in regard to Temperance reform. The Temperance Group in the House held a meeting last week, when the following officers were elected for the Session:—Chairman, Mrs. Wintringham; Vice-Chairmen, Lady Astor and Mr. C. G. Ammon; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Cecil Wilson; Hon. Secretary, Mr. Isaac Foot.

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1924.

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NOTICES.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, January 27th. 3.30. Music, Poetry, Lecture. Dr. Dearmer. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden. Our Christian Faith: "God and the Individual."

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