

THE VOTE.
APRIL 2, 1926.

THE WASTAGE OF CHILD LIFE.

By J. M. TOOKE

THE VOTE

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 1926

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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XXIII.—IF I WERE M.P. (SEE PAGE 106.)

MRS. CECILIA STREETEN.

Mrs. Cecilia Fancourt Streeten. Prospective Labour Candidate for the Aldershot Division of Hants. President of the Tonbridge Branch of the I.L.P. Served on the Tonbridge Urban District Council from April, 1922, to April, 1925.

As a prospective Labour Candidate it seems to me that it is better to teach oneself to say "When I am M.P." instead of "If I were M.P.," for the law of auto-suggestion is a powerful force. We can generally obtain that upon which all our mind is set, but if we wobble we do not get very far.

But why should I desire the strenuous existence of an M.P. instead of the peaceful existence of a private citizen? One of my reasons for wishing to enter Parliament is that it seems to me we are in danger of taking short views, and also of valuing material possessions more than human beings.

How often we sacrifice human lives to our greed of gold, and how constantly we forget that the only real joy in life is Service and Brotherhood!

My political ideals are "Peace, Brotherhood and Progress," and my slogan, "Trust the People." People can only be at their finest when trusted, and the character of our people will only be seen to its greatest advantage when we all realise that a true spirit of Brotherhood runs through the nation, if we would only call it out by our faith in our own countrymen and countrywomen.

I would do my utmost to foster Art and Science, and to make people realise that money is only a necessary evil and to be used as a means,

not an end in itself. Naturally, as a woman and a mother, my thoughts would turn to the children of the nation. I would have all children laugh instead of cry, and do my utmost to encourage Infant Welfare Centres and education of mothers.

Mothers need education, and the truly loving mother snatches eagerly at every opportunity of increased knowledge in order to render her children more healthy and more happy.

We can only build up a healthy, self-respecting nation upon the sound basis of a proper wage; and when we realise that a human being is more valuable than any machine invented by man, we will pay more attention to human beings, and realise that by treating people fairly and generously we are doing the best for ourselves and the nation.

We must also do our best to teach the worker to be his own master, as it is not ideal for any man to be another's servant, but all should have an equal honour and dignity in work. Any man who does his best, however humble his part, in a business undertaking, is just as worthy of respect

as the head of the business. The science of psychology, if properly studied and taught, would place the nation on a sound basis, as in this science we discover the hidden motives and forces which, if ignored, are bound to cause trouble. A man is sure to work better



MRS. CECILIA STREETEN.

for a big ideal than just in order to make Tom, Dick or Harry a little richer than at this time last year. Men should work for their country's welfare and for the welfare of humanity, and I have faith enough to believe that people will, and do, work better for a big ideal. We were told the other day that in America the ideal of service to humanity is far more instilled into the worker than in this country, and with happy results.

If I were in Parliament, it would be my first endeavour to make people see that what is needed in England is Courage and Enterprise and Brotherhood instead of Greed and Snobbishness and Cowardice.

Then we should enter a new age and be able to say—

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven."

CECILIA STREETEN.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A Woman Professor of Literature.

From the Norwegian *Nylaende* we learn of the death of Carolina Michaelis de Vasconcellos, Professor of Philology and Philosophy at the ancient and celebrated University of Coimbra, Portugal. Born and educated in Germany, she married the Portuguese Professor Vasconcellos and settled in Portugal, where she was appointed Professor of Literature, first at Lisbon and afterwards at Coimbra. Among many other books, her "History of Portuguese Literature" has been characterised as a work of marvellous learning which alone would have been a life's task, and which won world-wide renown for the author.

Woman's Air Exhibition.

Mrs. C. Elliott-Lynn, well known in the world of athletics, is giving a series of exhibitions in "stunt" flying for the Southern Counties Aviation Co., of Brooklands Aerodrome. These will take place at Hereford, Swindon, Chippenham, Bristol, Bath, Burton-on-Trent and various other towns, and will include looping the loop, rolling, spinning, nose-dives and other acrobatics hitherto unattempted by women. Mrs. Elliott-Lynn will also carry out a number of parachute descents.

Austrian Woman Journalist.

The death is announced, in a Reuter telegram from Vienna, of Frau Bettina Wirth, who was for many years correspondent of the *Daily News* in the Austrian capital. Frau Wirth was in her 78th year. She was one of a trio of able women journalists who represented this paper abroad in the 'nineties, the others being Mrs. G. M. Crawford, in Paris, and Mme. Wolffsohn, at Naples.

Women Choristers Resign.

Trouble is brewing at Ashby, Leicestershire, Parish Church. It appears that at a performance of Handel's "Messiah," given in the church recently, women of the local Choral Society were compelled to wear veils. As the result of this order a number of women choristers resigned and took their seats in other parts of the church. It is stated the Vicar, the Rev. B. C. F. Andrews, insisted on the women choristers being veiled.

Woman Officer to Sheriff.

For some years past a woman has been appointed as one of the Nottingham Sheriff's officers. Her special duties are to attend on the women jurors, when a mixed jury has to sit through a protracted case at sessions or assizes which may involve an overnight adjournment.

Woman Company President.

Miss Dillon is the first woman president of one of America's big corporations. Starting as an ordinary clerk 23 years ago, she has risen to be successively branch manager, general manager, and vice-president of the Brooklyn Borough Gas Company, of which she has just been made the official head. She is to be assisted by two other women as secretary and treasurer of the company, which has a capital of £1,000,000, and serves 40,000 customers.

Ministers' Daughters as Secretaries.

Two of the new Ministers in the Briand Cabinet have appointed their daughters as their private secretaries. M. Malvy, Minister of the Interior, has installed his eldest daughter Paula as his "right-hand man." She is said to be very gifted, and is shortly to graduate as a Doctor of Philosophy. The other daughter-secretary is Mlle. Odette Peret, daughter of the Minister of Finance.

In Memoriam.

MR. BAILLIE-WEAVER.—On March 18th, at his residence "Eastward Ho," Wimbledon Common, Harold Baillie-Weaver, Barrister-at-Law.

It is with very great regret that we record the death of our old and true friend and fellow suffragist. Mr. Baillie-Weaver never recovered from his very serious illness of last year. He was an LL.B. of London University and called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 1889. His high character, strong personality, and administrative ability, combined with a passion for justice and unselfish devotion to the cause of the suffering and the oppressed, made him a great force in the movements which were dear to him—humanitarianism, justice to animals and to children, equal rights for women, peace, theosophy. As a member of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage his wisdom and enthusiasm were invaluable, and he was always eager to help the suffrage societies by speaking and working.

In 1901 he married our old member "G. Colmore," the authoress, and they co-operated most sympathetically in the fight for liberty. To Mrs. Baillie-Weaver we tender our deepest sympathy.

WHY RESERVED RAILWAY CARRIAGES FOR WOMEN ARE WANTED.

A soldier, John Butler, aged 24, of the Royal Artillery, stationed at Preston Barracks, Brighton, was at Haywards Heath police court, on March 22nd, sentenced to six months' hard labour for assaulting and beating an Eastbourne girl on the 9.5 p.m. train from Victoria to Eastbourne on Saturday, March 13th.

The girl said she entered an empty carriage, but the prisoner got in as the train was moving out; ten minutes later he hit her in the face with his fist, and seized her by the throat so that she could not speak. When released she pulled both communication cords and shouted for help; the train slowed down, and the guard and two other men came. Prisoner said he had no recollection of what happened.

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IN PARLIAMENT

Equal Franchise.

MR. THURTELL (Lab., Shoreditch) asked the Prime Minister if he is now in a position to give a pledge that legislation for the purpose of establishing sex equality in regard to the franchise will be introduced in the course of the present Parliament? THE PRIME MINISTER: I am not in a position to make any announcement on this subject at present.

MR. TAYLOR (Lab., Lincoln) asked the Prime Minister when the Conference on the extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as men is likely to take place? THE PRIME MINISTER: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave yesterday in reply to a question on this subject by the hon. Member for Shoreditch.

House of Lords.

SIR HENRY COWAN (U., Islington, N.) gave notice on March 24th that, on that day three weeks, he would call attention to the Powers and Constitution of the House of Lords, and move a Resolution.

[Will he call attention to the right of Peersesses in their own right to a voice, a vote, and a seat in the Upper House?]

Unemployed Women, London.

MR. T. WILLIAMS (Lab., Don Valley) asked the Minister of Labour how many women were out of work and receiving unemployment pay in the London area in the week ending 27th February, 1926? SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND: At 1st March the number of women on the registers of Employment Exchanges in the area of Greater London was 22,293. Of this number, 19,238 had claims to benefit current, but I cannot say how many were actually in receipt of benefit at that date.

Domestic Service.

MR. T. WILLIAMS asked the Minister of Labour whether it is on the instructions of his Department that Employment Exchanges send unemployed women from South Yorkshire to districts below London to take up domestic service, and, should any woman refuse to travel such a distance, refuse unemployment pay? SIR A. STEEL-MAITLAND: In administering the Unemployment Insurance scheme the Department are bound to offer any available situations in domestic service to claimants for benefit for whom this work is suitable. The Department do not, however, make any special point of sending unemployed women from South Yorkshire to below London, and I cannot find that any such transfer has been made by the Exchanges recently, or that benefit has been disallowed on refusal to agree to it. MR. WILLIAMS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the case that I brought to his notice, where a South Yorkshire woman was informed that unless she went to a domestic position below London her unemployment pay would be stopped, and does he think that, if there are 22,000 women out of work in London, there is either any common sense or justification in sending women there? SIR A. STEEL-MAITLAND: I am glad to make inquiries into the particular case mentioned by the hon. Gentleman, but the fact of that number of women being out of work in London does not necessarily prove it or disprove it. Always in these cases I am careful to give instructions that the officials should see whether women who are unemployed are suitable for domestic service, and I gather that is what hon. Members opposite would wish. It may quite well be that there are women out of employment who are not suitable for domestic service and, therefore, should not be offered it.

Borough Employment Exchange.

COL. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark) asked the Minister of Labour the number of young persons over the age of 14 years registered at the Walworth Road (Borough) Employment Exchanges seeking employment, on the last convenient date, together with the number similarly registered at the same time last year?

SIR A. STEEL-MAITLAND: On 1st March, 1926, there were on the registers of the Borough Employment Exchange 151 boys and 339 girls, aged 14 to 17, as compared with 184 boys and 323 girls at 2nd March, 1925.

Solicitation.

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN (U., Exeter) asked the Home Secretary if he is now able to state whether the Government has decided to appoint a Committee to inquire into the law dealing with street solicitation for the purpose of prostitution; and, if so, what form the Committee is to take? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: I am considering the terms of reference and the personnel, but my Department is at present very over-worked, so I hope my hon. Friend will not press me too urgently.

Why Not Women Inspectors?

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., W. Leicester) asked the Minister of Health under what circumstances men inspectors are required to ask questions of widows making claims under the Pensions Act relating to their moral character; and whether he will give instructions that such inquiries shall be undertaken in future by women inspectors? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: It is not necessary for investigating officers to satisfy themselves that a claimant is not leading an immoral life. Section 21 of the Act does, however, provide that a widow is disqualified from obtaining a pension, if and so long as she and any other person are cohabiting together as man and wife, and an officer must obviously make inquiry in any case where it comes to his knowledge that cohabitation may be taking place. The hon. Member will appreciate that such information may reach an officer only at a late stage of the investigation, and, in the circumstances, it would be impracticable to give any undertaking that inquiries in such cases should be made only by the women investigating officers. MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE: Where there is no such evidence, and it is simply an inquiry because the woman has not been living with her husband at the time of his death, does not the right hon. Gentleman think it undesirable that men officers should put questions to women? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; I cannot give any such general opinion.

REFUSE REMOVAL.

We are glad that Members of Parliament are taking up this matter in the House of Commons. Compared with those in other capitals of Europe the arrangements for the removal of dust and rubbish in London are nothing short of scandalous, and in the country they are often not much better. MR. CAMPBELL wanted to know from the Minister of Health, recently, how many local authorities employ open dust-carts at the present time; and if he would consider making the use of automatic-closing dust-carts obligatory on local authorities? The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health stated that on the first part of the question he had no information. On the second part he had no authority to make the use of such dust-carts obligatory, but local authorities were increasingly making use of improved vehicles. Another Member asked if this was not a matter of great importance to the health of the community, and if the Minister would take steps to compel the local authorities to pass by-laws that their carts were to have airtight covers? The Parliamentary Secretary replied that the Minister had no such power. Besides, there was the question of cost; but local authorities had power to deal with the matter. Yet another Member was concerned about Berkeley Square, and asked if the Minister would make such arrangements as would compel the local authority for that neighbourhood to remove the dust before nine o'clock in the morning. No reply was given to that question, nor to the subsequent one asking if the Minister would seek the necessary powers.

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EDITORIAL.

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

WOMEN IN POLICE CELLS AND WOMEN POLICE.

A deputation organised by the National Council of Women (on which the Women's Freedom League was represented by Mrs. Jason Kerr, J.P.) was received by the Home Secretary last week on the subjects of the supervision of women in police cells and on the necessity for more women police. The deputation, which was introduced by the Hon. Mrs. Franklin, urged that when women were detained in cells at police stations they should be dealt with by women only, and that the pay and conditions of employment should be adequate to ensure that the work of police matrons should attract a good class of women. The Home Secretary said that invariably when a woman was taken into custody there should be a woman to take charge of her and have entire control over her. In the best practice the key of a cell in which a woman was incarcerated was handed over to a matron, and no male officer had access to the cell. That was what he should like to see done everywhere. Our view is that there should be women at police stations with the same rank and status as the men; that women should be searched by properly trained, uniformed women police officers; and that women inspectors only should have the keys of women's cells, and that they alone should have the right to approach the corridors where these women's cells are. With regard to the employment of policewomen, the Home Secretary agreed that 53,700 policemen as against 137 policewomen in the country was entirely out of proportion; and he thought it desirable that the number of women police should be increased. It was, however, very difficult for the central authority to force local authorities, and women who were interested in the question of women police and were voters should use their influence with local authorities and watch committees to get women police appointed locally. He was prepared to send round another circular to local authorities pointing out that, in his opinion, more women police should be employed, and the Secretary for Scotland, who was present when the deputation was received, promised to act on lines similar to those indicated by Sir William Joynson-Hicks. We do not think that this urgent matter of women police should be left to the discretion, or the prejudices, of members of local governing bodies. By law they are compelled to see that an adequate number of fit men are appointed as constables, and we consider that they should have the legal responsibility of appointing a sufficient number of women constables with the same status, the same powers and the same pay as the men. More than one Circular as to the advisability of employing women police has been sent from the Home Office to local authorities; and the views of the present Home Secretary on this subject are quite well known to them; but unless they are compelled by law to deal with the matter of women police we do not think that their number will be increased for a long time to come; and in face of the two Reports recently issued in regard to Sexual Offences against Young Persons, we consider that the matter is altogether too urgent to be left until there is a change of heart among our local authorities.

FACTORIES BILL.

Miss Wilkinson deservedly secured congratulations from Members of all Parties for the way in which she moved the Second Reading of the Labour Party's Factories Bill in the House of Commons last Friday. It was, however, defeated by 184 votes to 109 in favour of the following Amendment moved by Capt. Macmillan (U., Stockton-on-Tees):—"That this House, while recognising the necessity for the introduction during the Session of a Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to factories for the purposes of circulation and discussion in consultation with the interests affected, is of opinion that a Measure of such far-reaching importance should not be introduced as a private Member's Bill."

We know the urgency of further factory legislation and especially the need of more factory inspectors—both men and women, but our quarrel with this Bill is that women and young persons are linked together for the purpose of imposing restrictions upon their work. We agree wholeheartedly that there should be protective legislation for young workers of both sexes; but our contention is that adult men and women workers should both work under the best conditions, and that they should both be free to take equal chances and equal risks in their work. We do not want to see either women or men carrying excessive weights. It is not necessary that they should do so. In the best factories a runaway or a trolley is provided, and this should be made compulsory for all mills and factories. Then again, with regard to persons working in any process involving the use of lead, the safeguards mentioned in the case of the employment of women should be compulsory also in the case of men; and, further, we see no reason why the hours for men and women workers in factories should be different. If the law insists upon only forty-eight hours per week for women it should stipulate the same number of hours for men workers. It is more than possible that men will secure this time limit for themselves at an early date through their trade unions; so why should the State interfere with women's opportunities of competing on equal terms with men in industry by imposing these irritating restrictions upon women workers? We sincerely hope that the Home Secretary, when framing his promised Bill, will omit these particular Regulations in regard to women's work, and that he will cease to place women in the same category as young persons when dealing with them as workers.

WHOSE BUSINESS IS IT?

In a Borough not far from London, the Matron of a Poor Law Institution recently got married. A man living quite outside the district informed the Poor Law Guardians of this offence, and wrote saying the Matron had been away from her work for excessive periods. This and other charges were investigated by a Committee. The Committee's report to the Guardians showed that the Matron was not absent from the Institution to the full extent allowed her, not so much as other subordinate officers; and that during the past two years the rations issued to her were approximately 7s. 6d. per week less than the amount allowed. After full consideration the Board passed a resolution regretting the Matron did not take the Guardians into her confidence on the occasion of her marriage, but affirming their entire confidence in her integrity, honesty, and loyalty, and stating that they saw no reason to reconsider the question of her appointment. We should think not. Why in the name of common sense should these Guardians have expected that the Matron would take them into her confidence about such a personal matter as her marriage? Would they have expected a man to do so? We devoutly hope that they wrote to the man who took upon himself the task of meddling with the Matron's business.

THE EDUCATION OF THE DEAF.

By MARY HARE.

Though the education of all children is of importance, that of the born deaf is vitally so, as without it they must grow up a burden and sometimes a menace to the State; for, deprived of hearing, they are in consequence (until taught) deprived of speech, of language and all we gain from it, and thus of adequate means of communication with their fellows—a hard and unhappy lot—whereas the well-educated deaf can lead happy and useful lives and take their place as good citizens.

Their education is naturally a difficult work, and perhaps, for that reason, more enthralling, or so the teachers of the deaf find it. They must be enthusiasts, and they need very special training in the mechanism of speech and the development of language (if they are to become successful teachers of speech), in addition to the already strenuous training which teachers of the hearing now receive.

It is difficult for those unacquainted with the born deaf to realize what their condition and needs are. They are often spoken of as deaf and *dumb*, and are certainly *speechless* when they first come to school, but by no means *voiceless*, and if they enter young enough—2½ to 3 or 4—they still retain the baby sounds, which apparently all babies, deaf or hearing, make spontaneously before attempting speech. The voice is there, but as babies' speech is learnt by imitating that of the people around, the deaf baby never reaches this stage of development, beyond perhaps saying "mum mum" from watching the lips of mother or nurse.

The first work of the teacher, therefore, is to develop speech in the young deaf child. This is done by training the little pupil to watch and imitate movements of the mouth, to feel the breath on the hand, which is emitted in all non-vocal sounds, and the vibration of the vocal chords at the throat or chest for vocal sounds—a highly technical task, and a slow one to begin with, but quite attainable. Supposing, however, that at the end of 18 months the children can pronounce all the various sounds that make up speech and can say a number of easy words, the world would still call them deaf and *dumb* children, because of the

lack of language, and to teach this is the long task now before the teacher, one that will take years to accomplish satisfactorily; but the knowledge of this brings no feeling of despair with it, rather fresh enthusiasm from the thought of the difficulties to be conquered and the certainty of conquest.

Here is the great difference between the deaf and the hearing on entering school: the latter go to their teachers with the foundations of speech and language well laid, the former come to us to have these foundations laid. It is an exhilarating work, needing patience, great faith and keen enthusiasm, as well as the indispensable technical knowledge.

The development of language in a deaf child is sometimes likened to the learning of a foreign language by a hearing person, but there is this great difference: the hearing child has always his native tongue on which to base his new knowledge, the deaf child has nothing behind him but an inherited instinct for speech. He does not know the name of any object or action, or the meaning of any word until it is specially taught to him, and yet the result can be well-educated, competent young men or women, able to hold their own and earn their own livings.

I have in mind just now a little girl of 3½, speechless, totally deaf, absolutely ignorant, who at the age of 17 was able to enter a gardening college for hearing girls, is now a successful gardener, absolutely self-reliant and independent, able to travel alone, and mix with hearing companions as if one of them. This is merely an example of what can be done under good conditions.

I have not space to enter into details as to the methods employed, but would emphasize this point: the necessity for all deaf children, as for all hearing children, to have the whole of their nature developed—the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual—so often we find one trained at the expense of another. The love of beauty, of nature, of beautiful movements, and of great characters, the power to express themselves by means of speech, writing, drawing, dancing, acting, making things—all these are, to my mind, a necessity in the school life of deaf children, and all help to give them that which is the right of every child—happiness.

THE WASTAGE OF CHILD LIFE.

By J. M. TOOKE.

Asked to write an article on the Protection of Children, memory brings three special cases before me. The first that of a furtive-looking, unhealthy girl of not quite fourteen, accused of theft, remanded for a week for medical examination at the request of a woman magistrate, to whose mind the matter did not seem to be quite what it appeared, and found to be pregnant; in looking up the history of the child it was found that she had been originally assaulted by a man lodger, at the age of five, and was now said by mother and father to be out of control; this was an experience from a children's court.

Next I remember finding a little fair-haired girl, just thirteen, in a workhouse lock ward, a child of a most respectable widow, yet all attempts to trace the author of the mischief were unavailing, for the child had been terrified into silence by her own mother, who herself knew far too much about the occurrence, or rather occurrences, to be at ease. Seen afterwards in a temporary shelter the child seemed an innocent little schoolgirl, happy with a doll—but what does the future hold for such as she?

Lastly, a scene where the child had solved the problem of life for herself, at thirteen, by ending her life in the river, having been out night after night with young boys, and fearing the thrashing her father might give her when she returned home once again after midnight. The parents seemed terribly grieved and hurt by the Coroner's remarks as to their want of care, the father stating that he couldn't do anything besides thrashing, and that he had done freely.

By the side of these three typical cases, there is also a statement made by a well-known policewoman, at a gathering of women magistrates, that when women patrols were placed in London Parks to protect the playing children, they found their first duty was to protect the children from *themselves*. That a widespread immorality exists among school children, both in speech and deed, and is not by any means confined to London or the big towns, is known to most social workers.

We have special homes provided to take such children from all ages up to fourteen, and these homes are generally full, and yet more are needed, homes where they can be kept for two, three, or even five years.

This is the state of things, and protection is therefore needed by the children, not only from the degraded and often mentally deficient men who prowl about the lonely places, or station themselves at school exits and near playing-fields—this were an easy matter—but against members of their own homes, fellow scholars, and themselves, for we read, even in Government Committee or Rescue Association reports, of young children who "offer" themselves for the price of a few sweets or a ticket to the pictures. These are facts, not fancies, and how long are we going to suffer them in our midst?

With regard to the cases—the few of them able to be proved in court, with only a child's faltering evidence to convict—we need most certainly a more drastic scale of punishments, so that no more shall a man be given a small fine, or even two months' hard labour,

for ruining a life; for these child victims so often become mentally and morally warped, as well as physically injured, while the theft of a few articles gets a six months' sentence without hesitation. I would also strongly urge medical examination of these perverts who appear in the dock on this charge, and, where possible, they should be placed under restraint and not allowed to appear again and again with similar offences. It goes without saying, that women doctors, women police, and women magistrates only should deal with the necessary examinations of children, and they should not be held in a police court.

The Scottish Committee on Sexual Offences against Children consider that parents who neglect their children should be held responsible, but that can already be done by actions taken by the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children; but no punishment and no regulations and no rules can really touch the heart of the matter with regard to homes where little children are allowed to run moral risks. A case where a blind father was left alone day by day with his girl children, while the mother went out to work, and corrupted both of them, comes to my mind. He went unpunished because neither neighbours nor wife would give evidence against him because of his infirmity. What is wanted in this class of case is, first and foremost, less crowded dwellings—the old familiar cry, better housing accommodation and sleeping arrangements—the children see and hear and reproduce in their games, and are familiar with sexual facts before they can in any way understand the morals or "immorals" of life. Secondly, more supervision is needed of children's reading, of the films they visit, and of their play grounds, better lighting of dark corners, of picture halls, and more control and interest shown by parents as to the places where their children go out of school hours. So many of them care little or nothing, as long as they are "out of my way," and statements as to late meetings of Band of Hope or Sunday School are accepted as genuine, while all the time the child has been elsewhere.

We need more control and affectionate interest exercised by the parents, and more teaching given to them, as well as to the children, of the dangers of the streets. Mothers' Unions, and other Guild addresses of this kind, are very necessary, and parents should consider the great necessity of giving their children instruction in sexual matters. What is learnt, as it will be only too early, in a wrong fashion, is difficult to put right.

Lastly, teachers should be much more awake to the existing state of things, to the careful separation of lavatories, so that it is quite impossible for girls and boys to meet. They, too, should give instruction to their children where it seems necessary, and themselves study the best measures for tackling the evils which are corrupting the child minds. "As we train the children, so shall the future be, which will reign when we are low."

Lastly, the hands of those workers who are struggling to help those who have already fallen by the wayside, I should rather say been knocked down, should be strengthened. It should be made easier to segregate those who, if not exactly feeble-minded, are still on the borderline, the "unadjusted" as an American writer terms them. Some provision should be made for the support of children in homes, for in these long-time cases the financial outlay is very heavy, and more classification should be possible. An innocent child, whose home is at fault, should not be placed with thoroughly hardened offenders, and often if a kind family, and not an institution, could be found, it would be far better. If such children are left with their parents, some kind of supervision by a woman officer, medical or probation, of the court should be arranged.

These are but a few suggestions, perhaps others will think of more effectual preventions or cures of what is a national disgrace, and one which seems to be becoming heavier rather than lighter. Speaking as magistrate, Poor Law guardian, relief worker, I can only assure you that these things be, and to every

NOTES FROM THE FOREIGN PRESS.

The National Council of Women in France held their Annual Meeting on March 11th. In the absence, through illness, of Mme. Avril de Sainte-Croix, the Marquise de Loys-Chandieu presided.

The Council received and considered reports from the various sections, and on the recommendation of those for Women's Work and Emigration, it was resolved to urge the Minister for Home Affairs to establish an Emigration Office such as now exists in the United States. It was felt that action should be taken to prevent consuls, particularly in Poland, from giving visas to strangers for young girls travelling alone, unless the latter were rejoining their families. Warm appreciation was expressed of the efforts of Mme. de Sainte-Croix to secure the abolition of the regulation of vice and the suppression of licensed brothels.

Reports from the various Branches were also considered by the meeting. These dealt with a variety of questions, and showed diversity of opinion in regard to the raising of the age of consent and the appointment of women police. The Marseilles and Rouen Branches considered that 16 should be the age limit, while the Strassburg Branch desired that the age should be raised to 18. The latter Branch made an earnest plea for the appointment of women police, but the Rouen members were not in favour of the proposal.

The honoured President, Frau Hainisch, of the Austrian Union of Women's Organisations, has recently celebrated her 87th birthday. For 55 years Frau Hainisch has been the moving spirit of the Woman's Movement in Austria, and her first public speech was made in 1871 at a meeting of the Professional Women's Organisation. In early life Frau Hainisch had realised the many difficulties and hardships that beset the woman worker in her efforts to secure a livelihood, and she devoted her time and energy to secure better conditions for all sections of women engaged in work. Her enthusiastic support was given to the movement to secure increased educational facilities for women, and largely through her efforts the first gymnasium for girls was founded. In 1899, Frau Hainisch attended the meeting of the International Council of Women in London, and three years later the Austrian Women's Organisations were federated.

During the war, Frau Hainisch devoted her energies to relief work, and on its termination she resumed her political activities with the fervour of youth.

The Labour Department of the State of New York has made an interesting survey in regard to the hours and wages of 39,839 women who are trade union members. A scale of wages is in force in 11 towns for dressmaking, millinery, fur, leather and textiles, printing and publishing, upholstery, hotel, boarding-house, and theatre workers. In most occupations the 48-hour week is usual, but in the newspaper printing trade a 45-hour week is the rule. In the women's clothing industry a 40-hour week prevails, and this is the shortest time worked; the longest hours, i.e. 54 hours, obtain in the hotel trade.

Women are paid the highest rate of wages in New York City, where 60 dollars is often earned in the week in the book-printing trade, and 55 dollars in the clothing industry for handwork and embroidery. The weekly wages vary between 13 and 60 dollars in the book-printing trade, and in the textile industry between 16.50 and 39 dollars. The average wage for women workers is 12 dollars a week.

MARIAN BERRY.

woman among us, whatever her politics or religion, whether she be married or single, I would say "yours is the responsibility"—see to it that they cease to be, for, if I may alter the poet's words to fit the case—

"The wind that swept them into sin
Has ruffled all our vesture;"
and "The child's sob in the silence surges deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath."

Women's Freedom League.

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

Telephone:—MUSEUM 1429.
Telegrams:—"DESARD, MUSEUM 1429, LONDON."
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Hon. Treasurer—Dr. E. KNIGHT.
Hon. Organising Secretary—Mrs. WHEATON.
General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

uesday, April 13th, at 3 p.m.
Hampstead Branch. Member's Meeting at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3 (by the kindness of Dr. Knight).
uesday, April 13th, at 6 p.m.
Mid-London Branch. Members' Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C. To vote on Conference Resolutions and appoint Delegates to the Conference.
aturday, April 24th, at 10 a.m.
Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Caxton Hall, Westminster.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Sunday, April 25th, at 3.30—5.30 p.m.
Reception at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. to Conference Delegates, Members and Friends of the Women's Freedom League.
aturday, June 19th.
Peacemakers' Pilgrimage, Great Demonstration in Hyde Park.
uesday, June 30th, at 7 p.m.
Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party, Caxton Hall.
aturday, July 3rd.
Great Combined Equal Political Rights Procession and Hyde Park Demonstration.

PROVINCES.

Monday, April 12th, at 7.30 p.m.
Middlesbrough Branch. Member's Meeting at Agcroft, Linthorpe Road.
uesday, April 14th, at 3.30-5.30 p.m.
Portsmouth Branch. "At Home," at 142, Laburnum Grove, Hostess: Mrs. Cory. Music. Tea 6d.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Thursday, April 15th, at 5 p.m.
Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W. Speaker: Mr. Alfred Noyes, who will give a Reading of his Poems.
Thursday, April 29th, at 8 p.m.
St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. Public Meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, to Demand Equal Franchise. Speakers: the Rt. Rev. William F. Brown, Bishop of Peila, Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., L.L.O., Sir Robert Newman, Bart, M.P., Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., Miss Barclay Carter, Lic.ès-L. Chair: Councillor Mrs. V. M. Crawford.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Overcrowding in Southwark.

The Housing problem is still very far from being settled. In reply to a question asked by Col. Day last week, Mr. Neville Chamberlain stated that, according to the census of 1921, the enumerated population of the Metropolitan Borough of Southwark was 184,000. 8,769 families, comprising a population of 15,743, were returned as each occupying one room; and 13,393 families, comprising a population of 44,257, were returned as each occupying two rooms. The estimated population at the middle of 1925 was 189,000.

EQUAL FRANCHISE.

Members of the Women's Freedom League and readers of THE VOTE, who live in London, are urgently asked to support the Public Meeting on Equal Franchise, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Thursday, April 29th, at 8 p.m., convened by St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. A splendid list of speakers is assured, as may be seen by the announcement above in "Forthcoming Events."

EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The Offices of the Women's Freedom League and the Minerva Publishing Company will be closed from Thursday, April 1st, at 5.30 p.m., until Tuesday morning, April 6th, at 9.30 p.m.

OUR ADVERTISERS

like to know the results of their Advertisements. When writing them, mention THE VOTE.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

Prostitution in Bombay.

Readers of THE VOTE will remember that last February we recorded Mr. Johnston's questions on the above subject in the House of Commons and Earl Winterton's reply; and later that the Women's Indian Association had held a fine meeting in Bombay to demand that the brothels in that town should be suppressed. We wrote to our old friend Mrs. Cousins about this matter, and we are very pleased to publish the following reply:—

DEAR MISS UNDERWOOD,

Mrs. Cousins has handed me your letter. I am glad that you noted the questions that were asked in Parliament about the conditions in Bombay. You will have seen that Lord Winterton denied that the streets where the prostitutes were living behind bars existed, but, unfortunately, it is an absolute fact. You will see in last month's *Stri Dharma* that our Women's Indian Association, and this matter of segregated districts was allowed to creep in; but I am quite sure that, now it is receiving public attention and the women are taking up the matter, conditions will very shortly improve.

There is, in Bombay, a Vigilance Association that is doing really quite excellent work, but the Bill dealing with brothels and traffic in women was passed in the very early days of the Vigilance Association, and this matter of segregated districts was allowed to creep in; but I am quite sure that, now it is receiving public attention and the women are taking up the matter, conditions will very shortly improve.

In Madras, the Vigilance Association, of which I am one of the Executive, has been actively employed in framing a Bill to deal with the same subject. We have had various difficulties with regard to this matter of segregation, but have finally got the Bill so that no segregation or regulation of any sort is tolerated. The Government have now accepted the Bill, and we hope that it will become law within the next six months. Nearer the time of the passing of the Bill the Women's Indian Association will hold a public meeting in Madras in support of it.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
DOROTHY JINARAJADASA.

Abolition of Harems in Turkey.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR MADAM,—My attention has been drawn to an article by Halide Edib Hanoum in your issue of February 9th, in which she states:—"In 1916 the Turkish family laws were considerably amended and brought up to date. The harem was abolished and polygamy was forbidden." But this remarkable statement appears to require some explanation. If the harem was abolished and polygamy was forbidden, will your contributor explain how it was that a multitude of Christian women and children have since 1916 been carried into captivity, a fact which is vouched for by numerous League of Nations Reports? For your perusal I enclose herewith copies of questions in Parliament and answers given with reference to Christian women and girls in Moslem harems.

Yours very truly, A. LANCASTER SMITH,
Editor of *The Slave Market News*.

OUR WRITERS' WHO'S WHO.

Miss Hare is Vice-Chairman of the National College of Teachers of the Deaf, which carries with it the position of Chairman for the ensuing year—one which Miss Hare will be the first woman to fill. She is also a member of the Urban District Council of Burgess Hill in company with Miss P. Goode, a Principal of the P.N.E.U. school in this district.

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- "Women and Politics," by Charles Kingsley ... 6d.
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1926.

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