

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 12, 1919.

OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish 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 AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Nursery Schools.

The Labour Party, which has taken the greatest interest in the progress of the new Education Act, is unanimous in its recommendation of nursery schools as an educational adjunct of the future. These, it is contended, should be compulsory in every school area, but should be much smaller and more numerous than the elementary schools, and as close as possible to the homes of the very small people for whom they are intended. It is suggested that, whenever possible, nursery schools should be held in the open-air, and each one provided with a garden. In order to provide suitable teachers for the scheme the Board of Education is being urged to institute or recognise special training courses, and to allow grants to colleges and other training centres organising courses, and to individual students attending such courses. The training courses are to be open to persons of 17 years of age, and will vary from one to two years in length, but no teachers will be appointed to nursery schools who have not made a definite study of infant welfare during their training.

Women Scientists.

Women are taking a remarkably active part in the forthcoming meeting of the British Association at Bournemouth this week. Never before in the annals of the Association have so many papers been read by women, whilst a large proportion of the lecturers comprise some of the foremost scientific women of the day. Great strides in science have been made by women within the last few years. Until 1860 there were no practical science courses open to women, but to-day science degrees may be obtained in London and at all provincial universities, whilst numbers of women occupy important posts as lecturers and professors.

Mrs. Besant at Wigan.

Mrs. Besant has recently been speaking at Wigan, where she assured her audience that there was no desire on the part of India to separate herself from Great Britain. She wanted to be a free nation, but within the British Commonwealth, to welcome Englishmen as equals, not as superiors; and to work together with them as comrades in the common weal. The spirit of the Indian people had changed. They were willing to accept the Montagu-Chelmsford Bill, although it made no provision for Home Rule, and to take self-government by stages, but there was one thing the people were asking to be added to the Bill, and that was woman's suffrage.

Women's Suffrage in Italy.

The Italian Chamber has passed a law extending the franchise and eligibility for political administrative work to women, who are of age, on the same basis as for men, only excluding prostitutes. The law will come into force at the general administrative elections at the end of July, 1920. The Bill enfranchises 11 million women, so that there will be a preponderance of female over male electors.

Street Teas Going.

Street tea parties, as most people know, grew out of the idea of Victory celebrations. One of the earliest was one in Poplar, at which Mr. and Mrs. Will Crooks presided. As the practice grew in popularity, after-noon tea games and house decorations became elaborately organised. A large proportion of street tea parties have taken place in narrow spaces and cul-de-sacs where traffic did not venture, so that their recent prohibition seems particularly churlish on the part of the Commissioner of Police, as well as being, for the most part, unnecessary.

Our Handsome Surplus.

If we have an overwhelming deficit in the Treasury, at least we have a handsome surplus of children—so many that we are puzzled what to do with them. There is a glut of adult labour in the market as everyone knows, and the new Education Act compels children to remain at school until the term is finished in which they complete their fourteenth birthday. In London this is said to mean throwing 35,000 children on the labour market in March, and again in October. Many young persons will be displaced by men returning from the war and women thrown out of war jobs. Is it a counsel of perfection that we should face the need to keep children out of the labour market until they are 16? Already this is the age at which certain Swiss cantons only permit children to become wage-earners. We are more wealthy than Switzerland, and it will be well if those who advise the workers to have as many children as possible give us wise advice on what is to be done with them at this juncture. Can we do better than educate up to sixteen?

Woman Farmer's Success.

At the farm managed by women at Great Bidlake, Devonshire, the price recently offered per acre for corn was the highest for any food production department farm in Devon.

WOMEN IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Preparation for the Future.

Ninety-seven women's organisations were represented in Caxton Hall last Thursday, at a conference which met to consider the best methods of securing the representation of women in the working of the League of Nations.

Mrs. Rackham presided. The purpose of the meeting, she said, was to transform into effective action the provision in the Covenant of the League which affirmed that "all positions under, or in connection with, the League, including the secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women." The League was only a framework at present, but the scaffolding had, fortunately, been erected on a firm foundation, viz., that of mutual co-operation between men and women. Just as the vagueness of these proposals was a challenge to the democracy of the world, so the clause she had just quoted was a challenge to women, and not only to the women of England but to the women of other, and possibly more backward, nations.

They were also met together on purpose to secure the right women.

Not merely the popular woman, but the capable woman, and those chosen with very deliberate care. No women had ever before in the history of the world been given such a task. The League of Nations was, in the main, an organisation for the prevention of war, but it also stood for the prevention of the slave trade, the piling up of armaments, the liquor trade, white slave traffic; for raising the standard of social life, directing the weaker nations, and bringing the whole world into closer co-operation.

Mrs. Ogilvie-Gordon read a letter from Lady Aberdeen (president, International Council of Women), regretting being unable to attend the conference, and pointing out that a very important task now devolved upon women to inspire their sisters to take office in the League. Norway and Italy had already appointed women delegates, and it remained for our own country and others to follow suit.

Resolutions proposed by the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations, the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, and by the Women's Local Government

Society, urging upon the Government the just demand for the representation of women in the Assembly of Delegates, in the International Court of Justice, and in all Commissions and other bodies set up in connection with the League, were then considered and passed.

Miss Mary MacArthur (Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations) contended that no woman should be appointed to serve merely because she was a woman, any more than she should be excluded for the same reason. A good man representative was better than an indifferent woman, and vice-versa—a good woman was better than an indifferent man. Yet Government seemed of the opinion that any sort of man was better than a woman. In the forthcoming American Labour Congress at Washington, a congress which would deal with the employment of women during maternity, dangerous trades, night work, employment of children, hours of labour, and the prevention of unemployment—all of which were

matters of interest to women

—it was the acknowledged intention of the Government to send four male advisers, and only one woman, although the bulk of the agenda was concerned with women's affairs. The mother's point of view was as necessary as the father's, the woman's as the man's, in all questions of national interest. Women were not only available for these tasks, but many had specialised upon these subjects much more than men.

Mrs. Ogilvie-Gordon (National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland) said the women's clause in the League of Nations must no longer be viewed as a pious opinion, but converted into an established fact. The woman's point of view was imperative in all matters of public interest. It rested with the women of progressive countries to give a lead to the women of less advanced nationalities. Only when women were admitted into the very hearts of the nations' councils would it be discovered how great was the influence they possessed. Women were intellectually fitted to take their places with men, even if on some topics their experience was more limited. Women ought to be elected not only on the General Assembly, but also on the various Commissions to be formed. Women, by their idealism, would neutralise the rather narrow and party political and diplomatic views of men. The League was surely in all essential particulars a

creation of the spirit.

The best methods of securing the representation of women in the League were next considered. Various schemes for the nomination and recommendation of women representatives were discussed, and a resolution, proposed by Miss Mary MacArthur, was ultimately carried, to the effect that measures be taken by a provisional committee to receive and consider and, if necessary, to recommend from, nominations of women made by the participating societies of the conference, to be submitted to the British Government and to the League Secretariat, as suitable for appointment on the various bodies or in the capacities for which the Government or the Secretariat are respectively responsible. These recommendations to be finally submitted to a further meeting of the conference.

It was also decided to invite the co-operation of women in other countries, and a resolution was carried urging the setting up of machinery in connection with the League of Nations for holding an annual International Women's Conference, and for the establishment of an

International Women's Office,

similar to that of the International Labour Conference and the International Labour Office already set up.

Resolutions proposed by the Women's Freedom League to the effect that women should be eligible as Principal Secretaries in the League; that subordinate positions should be shared equally by women and men; and that every European country in the League should include women among its National Representatives, were unfortunately not carried.

D. M. N.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

Ministry of Health on the right lines so far.

Since January this year an Inter-Departmental Committee has been sitting to consider the question of concerted action to lessen the spread of diseases among the civilian population during demobilisation and the increased movements of the people from one part of the country to another during the reconstruction period. The Committee was appointed by Dr. Addison, with the Hon. Waldorf Astor, M.P. (now Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health) as chairman, and comprised representative medical officers from the Local Government Board and National Health Insurance Joint Committee (which are now, of course, a portion of the Health Department), the Navy, Army, and Air Forces, and other specially suitable representatives for particular meetings on particular subjects.

The Committee started off in a very thorough way by meeting regularly every week, and arranged for

concerted action

against venereal diseases, as well as tuberculosis, malaria, &c., and agreed to issue pamphlets; and on August 26 the Health Ministry published as a White Paper the Committee's report upon the "Prophylaxis" of Venereal Disease.

Much evidence was given by the medical officers responsible for the health of the British, Canadian, Australian, and American soldiers and sailors and airmen, and in some cases a marked decline in venereal disease percentages seemed to have coincided with great energy in the carrying out of the "packet system"; but tables of statistics leave out many important figures, and other factors were present at the same time, so that the Committee did not feel justified in placing absolute reliance upon these alleged successes, and point out that in the case of the civilian population, with its difficulties of control, equal success could not be anticipated.

On the other hand, they point to the great disadvantage of the so-called packet system—the

false promise of security

which it holds out to the weak, increasing the amount of immorality with the lessening of individual responsibility, and delay in obtaining treatment when infected.

It was pointed out, as has been so often said before, that for many years before the war there had been an almost continuous fall in the venereal rate in the Army and Navy before any system of prophylaxis was organised; but whilst continuous improvement was taking place in social and other conditions, that those forces which during the war employed the system most energetically could not show a proportionate reduction in the infection rate.

The rate in the Services during the war is made artificially high by the conditions of the life, absence from friends at home, boredom, loneliness, irresponsibility, unnatural surroundings and unsuitable companions; these factors do not enter into the life of the general civilian population to the same extent and we must not therefore by any means infer that the

artificially high rate

will be maintained. The Committee do not think the enthusiastic advocates of prophylaxis have sufficiently appreciated the fundamental differences between Service men and Civilians and between the conditions of peace and war, or been aware of the comparative failure of the system even in a disciplined force.

The condition of the Aldershot Camp is dwelt upon, where a rate 32 per cent. in 1885, was reduced in twelve years to 13, and in the next twelve to 5, to reach in 1913 the low percentage of 3.

In the London barracks at the same time the rate in 1885 was 34 per cent. and fell much less rapidly to 17 and 16 to reach 10 in 1913.

In the general population during the same period the rate started at 27 per cent., lower than the military rate either at Aldershot or in London, and dropped to 14 and 7, to stand in 1913 at 5 per cent.

So we see that in the last thirty years there has been a great improvement both in the general and the Military population, but in Aldershot something better has been done, and for the last twenty years the soldiers of the Aldershot Command have been more healthy than the general population, whilst in London, military life continues less healthy than civilian.

The special means taken at Aldershot were to provide and organise recreation, till the attractions in the camp were greater than those outside.

A particular note is made as to the great drop in disease which followed the repeal of the C. D. Acts, and it is suggested that the present fashionable prophylaxis system may be no more valuable than the

"Regulation" panacea,

which was no less vaunted in its own time.

The resulting conclusion is that:—"energy should not be dissipated on measures of doubtful value, but concentrated rather on wise propaganda and the provision of early, prompt, and skilled treatment."

All the representatives of all the departments who took part in the investigation unanimously wished to record their unanimous view that "the true safeguard against these diseases is individual continence and a high standard of moral life. This implies a sound public opinion, and a healthy national tone."

There is always a tendency to hunt for some new method of severing venereal disease from immorality; but one after another we see these new methods fail, even if they do not increase the evil, and it is very significant that this Committee of experienced administrators and trained scientific men should feel obliged to record their unanimous opinion of the IRREPLACEABLE EFFECT OF THE MORAL FACTOR which has been too frequently neglected or forgotten.

E. KNIGHT.

WEALTH FROM WASTE.

Within the last few days numerous articles have appeared in the Press showing what the various municipalities of the country are doing towards solving the problem of the scientific utilisation of waste. These activities have brought to light a fact which is probably already well known, viz., that there are "backward" boroughs in dealing with waste, just as there are "backward" municipalities in matters of housing, education, electric light, transport, and sanitation. Towns of progressive instincts are, happily, however, in the majority. Bath, Brighton, Swansea, Southampton, Nottingham and Dover did particularly well out of their waste-paper collections during the war, some of them making as much as £1,000 in a year. Unfortunately, some of these places have since dropped out, and many householders, too, have in the same way dropped the habit of saving their paper and putting it aside to sell. It is a great pity such a practice has been discontinued, for it had a distinct moral influence in the kitchens where most of the waste is made.

Amongst the most enterprising municipalities, Birmingham appears to be leading the way. This great Midland city has put up plants for de-tinning cans and scrap of all kinds, for treating fats for the production of soap and candles, for screening household refuse and making fertilisers, and for cleaning rags ready to be torn up for shoddy. At Edinburgh the collection of waste paper is described as being the most important branch of the salvage work undertaken. Leith has shipped several tons of stone ink bottles to London. Manchester made £7,000 last year out of old iron, old tins, bottles and clinkers. Nottingham has a municipal sorting depôt covering many acres. Portsmouth and Southend have municipal piggeries, and supply iron buckets to householders for the deposit of kitchen waste.

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EDITORIAL

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATE,

At Home and Abroad ... post free, 6/6 per annum.

WANTED 100 WOMEN CANDIDATES for PARLIAMENT!

The present Parliamentary session has shown very clearly the great need for women members of Parliament. In spite of the fair promises of support for measures to secure women's full equality with men in all branches of our national life, given with great solemnity by candidates of every party at the last General Election, women since that time have gained absolutely nothing in the direction of equality; and by the passing of the Pre-War Practices (Restoration) Bill are distinctly worse off than before in this respect. Measures have been brought forward in both Houses dealing with women's interests, but they died of inaction, and among our legislators there were none so poor as to do them reverence! Had there been a number of women members in the House of Commons the history of women's emancipation during the last few months would have been different. We confidently affirm that women by this time would have been justices of the peace and members of juries; they would have been Parliamentary voters on the same terms as men, and eligible for both branches of the legal profession, as well as the higher posts of the Civil Service. There would also have been registration of the nurses' profession, further consideration of the separate assessment of the incomes of husbands and wives, whilst votes for Indian women would have been a question of practical politics. As it is, women have lost heavily on all these counts, and we think they will continue to do so until women themselves speak and vote for women's interests inside the House of Commons. It would make all the difference in the world if women were there to voice their own views, and to reply to men's objections. We urge, therefore, that women should do everything in their power to help forward the candidature of women at the next election. Women who belong to parties should do their utmost to secure that these parties run suitable women candidates with the full strength of their party support in strongholds of their party; and women's organisations cannot do better than run some of their trusted members as independent candidates in favourable constituencies. There is a possibility of a General Election within the next few months, and there should be at the present moment at least a hundred women candidates diligently nursing their constituencies. We believe that the British electorate is ripe for the candidature of women. To send women to Parliament is the shortest way to secure the full equality of men and women in all branches of our national life; and the only way to win for women success at the polls is to concentrate all energies on their candidature from now until the General Election.

DR. MONTESSORI IN ENGLAND.

Dr. Montessori has been giving her views on education to the English Press. Her chief object for visiting England at this moment is to found an International Montessori Institute as a war memorial in London, and thus make London the centre of her system throughout the world. Already some thousands of pounds have been subscribed.

For the benefit of the 1,750 teachers who have been unable to gain admission to her classes at St. Bride Institute, Dr. Montessori intends outlining her system in a series of lectures covering three weeks, with, if possible, one public lecture illustrated by films. Instructors for the International Institute will be trained by Dr. Montessori herself. The course has now been developed to provide for children up to eleven years of age instead of six, and at Barcelona, where the research work is done, the system has been perfected for students up to the age of 18.

Dr. Montessori has given up a large and lucrative medical practice in Italy so as to devote herself more closely to working out her educational ideals. Her first interest in the subject began with a clinic which she started for feeble-minded children in Rome, where, with enormous patience, she taught them how to read and write, and the astonishing results of her system caused her later to adapt it to children in ordinary schools. Every country which has adopted her methods is unanimously enthusiastic. The Montessori text books have been translated into English, French, Russian, German, Rumanian, Japanese, Dutch, Polish, Chinese, and Danish, and a Swedish version is in course of preparation.

Briefly, Dr. Montessori's system is as follows: in the child's self-activity she finds the scope for initiative and the creative impulse. The old idea of the school, as modelled upon the factory system, with huge classes of children under a foreman, called the teacher, is to be transmuted into a colony of mutual self-help. Hitherto, the old type of educationalist went on the principle that life develops "from without"; and that the teacher was in the school "to develop the children's minds." Dr. Montessori's view, as it was that of Rousseau and Tolstoi and Herbert Spencer, is that the individual life of the child develops "from within." A proof of the enthusiasm now stirring amongst English teachers is afforded by the fact that the majority of students who have offered themselves for tuition are mostly teachers in posts, and that the fees (35 guineas) represent about a fifth to a quarter of many of the teachers' salaries.

ANOTHER DISQUALIFICATION

It appears that fully qualified women are having trouble in securing their Parliamentary vote because of a blunder in the drafting of the Representation of the People Bill, the effect of which is to deprive women of the same rights as men in regard to successive occupation from a contiguous borough either to the parliamentary or municipal vote. We learn that the registration officer at the Wallasey Revision Court has struck off the names of 45 women on this account. It is curious that the highly paid lawyers in the Government employ cannot be trusted to draft a Government Bill correctly. It was the clear intention of the Representation of the People Act to grant both men and women this successive occupation vote, and we cannot see why this particular registration officer should dispute it. We hope that an appeal will be made against his decision. In the meantime, we would strongly urge in the best interests of the community that women should have immediate entry to the legal profession on the same terms as men, with equal access to all the legal offices under the Crown, so that there may be less likelihood of mistakes in the drafting of legal documents; and that before the next General Election the franchise laws be made equal for men and women, and thus remove the irritating sense of injustice which women feel in their position of political inferiority to men.

WOMEN AND ENGINEERING.

By LADY PARSONS.

The employment of women in the engineering trades reached the culminating point during the last year of the war, when 90 per cent. of the workers in munitions and projectiles and in filling factories were women.

To meet the urgent demand for an immensely increased supply of munitions women in thousands had been drawn into engineering and munition works. They were employed in projectile factories, filling factories and in general engineering works; and the number of women had increased steadily since the first rush in 1915.

Although it had always been the custom in the metal trades to employ some women on automatic machines, it never was anticipated that women would so quickly adapt themselves to learn the more highly skilled work required in general engineering. But the mechanical sense is somewhat of a natural gift, and the necessities of war favoured its development among women.

Hundreds of Women

soon applied themselves to the plain machining required on shells and projectiles, and after a short period of training passed to more skilled work on precision lathes. They could mill all the parts of the breech mechanism of howitzers, screwing the internal screw, and milling the steel rings, the firing pins and the mechanical parts of the gun sights, work measured to micrometer and vernier gauge and true to .0005 .00010 .00015 of an inch. They were working on all the parts of gun carriages and hand lapping the bores of guns. In electrical work they were employed on armature winding, testing of dynamos, on electric switch gear, and also on board H.M. ships. They were working on all sorts of small arms, in tool-room work, and in assembling and fitting. In all sorts of precision work on lathes, on drilling and slotting machines, in gear cutting, in tool setting, in gauge and tool making, in the cutting and polishing of optical glass, on reflectors for searchlights, in acetylene welding, many hundreds of women became useful workers.

In order to develop the newly acquired mechanical skill of women, and to make their work productive,

training schools

were very speedily established by the Ministry of Munitions and by some private firms. Women received short intensive courses of training in practical work under skilled instructors, and also in elementary mechanics and in theory. Some clever girls made excellent use of their opportunities and developed mechanical talents that quite astonished their instructors. Some were able to design repairs to guns and mechanism, some could set up their work from drawings, some became expert tool setters, and others could mark off. The women recruits were drawn from all classes and their success, as so often experienced in the world of mechanics, was by no means confined to the most highly educated girls.

During the year 1917 and 1918 the Ministry of Munitions held exhibitions of work done by women in engineering. The exhibits included aeroplane engines and woodwork, internal combustion engines, magnetos, parts of guns and gun carriages, small arms, face visors, and light body armour made of fine steel links, besides every variety of bomb shells, hand-grenade, and all implements of trench warfare. The exhibitions were supplemented by a beautiful series of photographs showing women at work on every known process in

war-time engineering,

from the most skilled precision work, such as is needed for scientific instruments, to the riveting of boilers and work in the foundry. Great transformations were made within the works to accommodate the women, canteens and rest rooms sprang up, hospital and recreation rooms, and hostels for thousands of women were established in the neighbourhood. A whole new organisation of welfare workers owes its

origin to the war. These improved conditions due to the entry of women into the engineering trades have become a component part of engineering works, and though the women for whom they were originated have gone, men and boys are reaping the full benefits of employment in these works.

But the Trade Unions had continuously protested against the employment of women in skilled work; they viewed with alarm the invasion of the metal trades by partially trained workers. Negotiations between the Trade Unions and the Treasury during 1915 and 1916 had resulted in pledges to restore in full all Trade Union rules (pledges that have been more than fully redeemed by the passing of the Pre-War Practices Bill, in August, 1919). The signing of the Armistice was the awaited signal for at once dismissing the women and extinguishing their hopes of work in engineering. Training schools were closed to women, Whitehall was filled with processions of demobilised women, and throughout the country no time was lost in ejecting the women who had served their country so well in the time of danger.

The prospects for women

have received a staggering set-back, yet a number of keen women are still endeavouring to acquire what instruction and practice they can in the hope that when trade conditions are more firm, and work plentiful, their services may again be needed. Most of the universities admit women to their engineering schools; but at the present time they are more than full owing to the return of the young men whose course of study was interrupted.

The statutory exclusion of women from certain industries where they had proved their value was certainly highly pleasing to the men who claimed their work; but workers have always held very decided opinions on the amount of output it is desirable to produce. Now we have our leaders, both political and industrial, for once united in urging on the workers increased production and a better output. These leaders are likely to find their powers of persuasion considerably strained. In view of the fact that one and a half million of women, many of them expensively trained in schools that had cost the country about 30 millions, are prevented by law from working, it will be a hard matter to convince the average worker that there is any necessity for over-exertion, or that there is any urgent need for producing an abundance of manufactured articles.

PENALISATION OF MARRIED WOMEN.

It is high time that sensible women took the places of the ordinary men elected to public bodies, if only to do away with their deep-rooted prejudice against the employment of married women. We have in the past recorded the attempts made by the L.C.C. to exclude from its service all women—charwomen, teachers or doctors—if they were married. The Maternity and Child Welfare Committee of Portsmouth has recently had the penalisation of a married woman under its consideration. Dr. Mabel Ross, a married woman doctor, was appointed to the Municipal Maternity Hospital; but the Committee was asked to reconsider the matter on the ground of objection to the appointment of a married lady. To meet this objection the appointment is made for twelve months and is to be reconsidered at the end of that period. As Dr. Ross has already for over a year carried out satisfactorily the duties of medical officer to the child welfare centres, and as it is generally considered that for a maternity hospital the most suitable medical officer is a married woman, the ground of the objection seems to us unreasonable. It is none the less irritating, however, to a woman who takes a pride in her profession. If a man or a woman cannot carry out the duties he or she has undertaken it is quite an easy matter for that person to resign or be dismissed; but we maintain that it is no business of the employer—whether that employer be an individual or a council—to inquire if that person is married or single. It is little short of impertinence to do so.

MRS. AYRES PURDIE AND THE INCOME TAX COMMISSIONERS.

In giving evidence on behalf of the Women's Freedom League, before the Royal Commission on Income Tax, Mrs. Ayres Purdie gave some curious facts in regard to the position of married women. It appears that an "incapacitated person," so far as the Income Tax Act, 1918, is concerned, means any infant, *married woman*, lunatic, idiot, or insane person. A married woman who runs a business is considered incapable of making a return of her own employees, the form on which the return has to be made being always sent to the husband for him to fill up. The papers addressed to the husband from the Inland Revenue Office describe him as his wife's trustee, agent, receiver, guardian, tutor, curator, and committee! Although Mrs. Purdie has been in business for twelve years quite independently of her husband, she has been unable to make any return of her income because the forms were always addressed to her husband; and she informed the members of the Commission that she had no intention of making any payments until application for them was duly made to herself. Mr. Purdie could not pay the tax because he had not the necessary information to enable him to fill up the forms accurately. The Commissioners thought of a short cut to attain this required knowledge, and ingeniously asked Mrs. Purdie if she would tell them the amount of her income; but she immediately pointed out that such a course would be quite irregular, and suggested that they were treating a really serious matter in a spirit of levity. We wish that more married women would assert their independence by insisting on being treated as responsible persons in the State, and that more husbands could be found who were willing to put up with some inconvenience to themselves in supporting their wives in these matters.

LADY GILL AND ASTRONOMY.

The *Times* has furnished some interesting details of the valuable services to astronomy rendered by the late Lady Gill. When Lord Crawford offered Sir David, shortly after their marriage, the directorship of the Dnu Echt Observatory, it was his wife who urged him to sacrifice his large commercial income for a moderate salary, and to devote his life to astronomy. And later, when difficulties arose in obtaining supplies for astronomical requisites, it was she who asked to be allowed to dispense with her carriage and other home comforts at the Cape to provide the necessary funds. At the desolate Isle of Ascension, when clouds continuously threatened the expedition with failure, it was she who insisted in marching at night for miles over the clinker to note the weather, away from a cloud-compelling mountain. Thereby she proved the clouds to be local. The site of the observatory was changed, and threatened failure was converted into magnificent success. At a meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1877, when the news of Gill's successful observations were announced, Sir George Airy, the Astronomer Royal, attributed a great part of Gill's success to his wife, "that courageous and enthusiastic lady."

Lady Gill was the author of a delightful book on the Mars Expedition—"Six Months in Ascension, by Mrs. Gill" (John Murray, 1878). She also supplied the bulk of the material for her husband's life, "David Gill, Man and Astronomer" (John Murray, 1916).

CHRIST and the WOMAN'S MOVEMENT.

By the REV. C. BROUGHTON-THOMSON. 2s. net. The *Athenaeum* says:—"Mr. Broughton-Thomson's book should be of interest to all who are convinced that women's influence is destined to play an extremely important part in the future development of the race."

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BOOK REVIEWS.

Rescue Work, an Inquiry and Criticism. By various contributors. 1s. 19, Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. (Can be obtained at this office.)

This is a useful pamphlet, issued by the Committee of Social Investigation and Reform, with introduction by the President, Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck, M.P. In it he wisely reminds us that moral failure, misery and disease are very largely the failure of our own Society. All philosophers and sociologists are at one on this point, including Mill, Ruskin and Robert Owen, who expressly declared it. Lord Henry holds that we allow evil influences far too much play on the lives of the young, and one contributor to the pamphlet points out the value of prevention and how much may be done by well-managed clubs for girls. Societies that help the fallen to their feet are less usefully employed than preventive agencies, just as hospitals and nursing homes are less valuable than a wise Ministry of Health.

The chief causes of prostitution set forth are bad or broken homes; bad company and unwholesome recreation (including low literature and suggestive cinemas); mental deficiency; the moral degeneration which partly results from over-fatigue; low payment for long monotonous hours of work—"the four shillings a week of a girl of fourteen was soon given up for a life of sin." In one rescue home 19 out of 31 inmates had been violated in childhood, and it is true of most of these that their relatives are to blame. In this connection it is well to notice that some fathers hold horrifying views of paternal right. As a rule, the material swept into institutions and rescue homes is damaged before birth by syphilitic, alcoholic or feeble-minded parents. The different writers, including F. J. Wakefield, Hilda M. Morris, B. Wedmore, Mrs. F. Hay Newton, Mr. W. A. Coote, and Mrs. A. C. Gotto, have a fund of experience and wise advice to offer on this painful subject. Mr. Coote deals with the laws relating to criminal vice, and their very various administration. Most observant persons are well aware that the wolf, even in high places, sits in judgment on the prey; injured parents trying to avenge deep wrong to a child are dumbfounded that their case is dismissed. Mr. Coote points out that prostitutes are male and female, and that the former are protected.

C. S. BREMNER.

TEA SHOP TYRANNIES.

The National Federation of Women Workers has been publishing details of the sweated conditions under which some restaurant girls still earn their living. In many tea shops these girls, it appears, work 12 hours a day for 14s. and 15s. a week, whilst manageresses only receive 25s. The girls have no chance of getting out of the heated atmosphere during the day, and often their meals are "snatched" a few minutes at a time in seasons of pressure. A deduction of 1s. 6d. per week from the girl's wages is made for these meals, which, in addition to lunch, consist merely of tea, bread and margarine. The food served to the employees is not the same as that served to customers, and is cooked separately. The work is always wearying, especially when trays have to be carried up and down stairs in addition to ordinary waiting, but rest-rooms are as yet a dream in most restaurants, let alone accommodation for outdoor clothes, washing, tidying, etc.

Teashop waitresses have been largely reinforced of late by the old-time munition girl, and these have been comparing the wages and conditions of their present occupation with their previous factory life. The result is that London waitresses are now learning to organise, and with the help of the Federation they hope to prevail upon the Ministry of Labour to set up a Trade Board under the Wages Temporary Regulation Act. A minimum of £2 a week is to be demanded, with a maximum working week of 44 hours, and the abolition of the "tip" system, which the girls consider to be uncertain and humiliating.

Women's Freedom League.

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

Saturday, September 13.—National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, 10.30 a.m.

Wednesday, September 17.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 18.—Open-air Meeting, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

Friday, September 19 (weather permitting—if wet, September 24).—"Picnic-Concert," Petersham Park (entrance Richmond Park or Petersham Road), in aid of the Children's Guest-House. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Tea, 4.30 p.m. Concert, 5.30—7 p.m. Tickets, 2s., may

be obtained from Miss Wells, 4, Friars Stile Road, Richmond Hill, S.W.

Wednesday, September 24.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 25.—Open-air Meeting, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, October 1.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe. Speaker: Miss Abadam. Subject: "Flouting Women—the Divided Faggot."

Wednesday, October 8.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Clara Andrew. Subject: "Adoption in Relation to the Unwanted Child" (the work of the National Children Adoption Association).

Wednesday, October 15.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Lind-af-Hageby. Subject: "The Re-valuation of Women."

Wednesday, October 22.—Public Meeting, Minerva Cafe, 3 p.m. Speaker: Mr. William Aird. Subject: "The Food of the Future."

Provinces.

Wednesday, September 17.—**Ashford:** Public Meeting, Co-operative Hall, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. Kither.

September 18.—**Hastings:** Meeting for Working Women, 4 p.m., at Wellington Square Lecture Hall. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. Strickland.

Monday, September 29.—**Westcliff:** Social, Crowstone Congregational Hall, King's Road, 7.15 p.m. Music and sketches by Mrs. Newberry and friends. Refreshments provided; 1s. each.

Branch Notes.

South Eastern Branches: Organiser, Miss White. Ashford.

The Organiser will be glad to receive names of those willing to help with the public meeting at the Co-operative Hall on Wednesday, September 17th, at 7.30 p.m. Mrs. Despard will speak on "The New International." Posters are going up soon, and she will want helpers for the handbills.

British Dominions Women Citizens' Union.

We are interested to learn that a series of conferences, private and informal, on various Imperial problems, will be held at the office of the Union, 19, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C., during the autumn, on the third Wednesday and fourth Friday of each month, from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. The first meeting is on Wednesday, September 17th, when the subject will be "The League of Nations and the Representation of Women from the Dominions Overseas." Speaker, Miss Vida Goldstein (president, Women's Political Association of Victoria, Australia).

The Late Bishop of Lincoln.

Remembering what a staunch friend the late Bishop of Lincoln was to the woman's cause, readers of THE VOTE may be glad to know that a special memorial service is to be held at St. George's Church, Hart Street, Bloomsbury, on Saturday, September 20th, at 11 a.m. All suffragists are invited to attend as an opportunity of showing their gratitude and reverence for the late bishop's splendid work in the cause of righteousness.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

(To the Editor of THE VOTE.)

Dear Madam,—These quotations from letters and treatises of St. Jerome are from an old life of the saint which is referred to in the column of *Literary Notes* in the *Tablet* of August 30th. St. Jerome, it appears, had to defend himself from the attacks of some anti-feminists of his day, and these are some of his remarks: "Apollo, an apostolic man and most learned in the law, one mighty in the Scriptures, is taught by Aquila and Priscilla, and they expound to him the ways of the Lord. Hence, if it be not an ancient thing nor undue in an apostle to allow himself to be taught by women, why should it not be permissible in me, after having taught many men, to teach women also?" And, again, "I speak not of Anna, Elizabeth, and other holy women, who are cast into the shade by the greater resplendency of Mary, as the stars pale before the light of the sun. Let us approach the Gentile women, in order that in the age of philosophers they should learn that difference of body is not what is sought for, but of soul. Plato, in his dialogues, introduces Aspasia; Sappho is found to have collaborated with Pindar; and in Alcæus we see Themista, who philosophises with the most grave men of Greece, and Cornelia of the family of the Gracchi and your own, whom the whole of Rome praises and celebrates. Carneades, a learned philosopher and rhetorician of great elegance, who moved all Greece to applause, did not disdain to dispute on a special case with only one matron. Why speak of Portia, daughter of Cato, wife of Brutus, whose courage is a good reason that we should not be astonished at that of her father and husband? Greek and Roman history is full of all this, and even whole books. It suffices me to say at the end of this prologue that at the resurrection of our Lord He first appeared to the women, thus making them apostles of His apostles, in order that men should be humbled and ashamed at not seeking for what the women had already found."

The writer of the *Literary Notes* gives us a more correct and also a more forcible translation of the two sentences relating to Sappho and Themista. He says that as to Sappho there is no question of "collaboration," but that the meaning of the Latin is that Sappho is ranked with Pindar and with Alcæus, and as to Themista that she "philosophises with the wisest men of Greece."—Truly yours,

ISABEL WILLIS,

Hon. Press Sec.,

Catholic Women's Suffrage Society.

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The Friends of Armenia, the Independent W.S.P.U., the Women's Freedom League, Nine Elms Settlement, League of the Church Militant, and Women's International League will also have stalls at this Fair.

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The Settlement is now in full swing again, but alas! its linen cupboards are almost bare. Cot blankets are badly needed, bath towels are almost things of the past, children's little vests fit them so tightly that soon they will have to be cut from the little bodies, and every kind of house and body linen is needed for the Guest House. They need not be new, or even whole, so long as there is wear in them, as kind helpers are ready to do odd mending for us. Now that holidays are over there must be many discarded garments in homes where children exist, and these will be most welcome to us—clothing for all ages. Old torn blankets will cut up for under ones, and these are very necessary and important where children of the poor are concerned. Mrs. Despard has kindly given us a pile of discarded clothing, but we want *much* more; we want gramophone records for play club concerts, and, above all at the present moment, we want

fruit—fruit for preserving and fruit for present use for our children. Sound fruit or windfalls are equally acceptable.

We gratefully acknowledge plums from Miss T. E. Holmes (who also presented a little guest child with much-needed boots); pears from Miss M. Cole; apples from Miss Isobel Harvey (who also has the proud distinction of having sent our first bazaar parcel); and needlework done by Miss Glennie Sprentall and Miss Greenville. Our Tasmanian friend, Mr. Walpole sent us £4, and Miss Fennings £1 is., whilst the jumble sale kindly arranged by Mrs. Tippet at Wetherden brought in no less a sum than £10 14s. 6d.

We brought our guest children back from Benfleet looking bonny and well; the plan of building them a "pavilion" of their own, and keeping them out of the house all day long having had its results in firmer flesh and rosy cheeks, and generally improved appearance.

Will all our kind helpers please note that we have a bazaar stall again this year? And will everybody please note that we are still in need of a third helper, resident or non-resident, and also lunch-hour helpers?

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