

THE VOTE,
FEBRUARY 21, 1919.
ONE PENNY.

March 6th, Vote for WOMEN.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XVIII, No. 487. (Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage, but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.) FRIDAY, FEB. 21, 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.

WOMEN WANTED

ON THE

London County Council and on the County Councils throughout the Kingdom.

"Exactly when and in proportion as women's capacities for Government have been tried, in that proportion have they been adequate."— J. S. MILL.

The London County Council election is on March 6th. Much will depend upon the work of the next fortnight. Readers of the "VOTE" are urged to give every assistance in their power to the Women Candidates.

The Majority of the County Councils will be elected at the beginning of March. In some places they will not take place until November.

WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Battersea | Mrs. C. S. Ganley | (Women's Co-operative Guild) |
| Camberwell, N. W. | Mrs. Dunn Gardner | (Municipal Reform Party). |
| Deptford | Miss Margaret Macmillan | (Labour). |
| Hackney, Central | Miss Adler | (Progressive). |
| Hackney, North | Lady Tristram Eve | (Municipal Reform Party) |
| Lambeth, North | Mrs. Lamartine Yates | (Independent). |
| Poplar | Miss Susan Lawrence | (Labour). |
| Fulham, East | Mrs. Hudson Lyall | (Municipal Reform Party). |

WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR ENGLISH COUNTY COUNCILS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Cambridgeshire (Heston, Madingley and Girton Division) | Mrs. Marcus Dimsdale. |
| Cambridgeshire | Mrs. Russell Jarman. Miss Constance Cochran. |
| Hertfordshire (Watford Division) | Miss Eveline Bradford. |
| Middlesex (Hendon Division) | Mrs. How Martyn. |
| Kent | Mrs. Heron Maxwell. |
| Sheffield | Mrs. Barton (Labour). |
| Surrey (Barnes and Mortlake Division) | Miss Attwell, P.L.G. |
| Surrey | Mrs. Le Peronne. |
| Warwickshire | Mrs. Dykes. |

While the good wishes of the Women's Freedom League go out to all Women Candidates, it is concentrating its efforts on forwarding the Candidature of Mrs. How Martyn for the Middlesex County Council, and of Mrs. Lamartine Yates for the North Lambeth Division of the London County Council. Particulars of these campaigns will be found on page 90.

Women's Freedom League.

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

Telegrams—"DESPARD, MUSEUM 1429, LONDON."
Telephone—MUSEUM 1429.

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Hon. Head of "Vote" Street Sales Department—Miss ALIX M. CLARK.

Hon. Head of Literature Department—Miss MARGARET HODGE.
Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Saturday, February 22.—London Branches Council Public Meeting to forward the candidature of women for the L.C.C., Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Lamartine Yates, Miss E. Bright Ashford, B.A., Miss Marian Berry, Mrs. Ayres Purdie, and Miss Anna Munro. Chair: Mrs. Mustard. Admission free. Discussion. Tea can be obtained in the Café at 6d. each.

Wednesday, February 26.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge. Subject: "The Child in English Literature." Admission free. Discussion. Mid-London Branch Meeting, 144, High Holborn, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 5.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margery Fry. Admission free. Discussion.

Wednesday, March 12.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Miss G. Dyce Sharp. Subject: "Strikes and the Alternative."

Saturday, March 15.—National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, 10.30 a.m.

Saturday, March 22.—London Branches Council Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m.

Saturday, April 5th.—Women's Freedom League Annual Conference. Caxton Hall, 10 a.m.

PROVINCES.

Saturday, February 22.—Southsea. Jumble Sale, Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, 3 p.m. Helpers, 2 p.m.

Wednesday, March 5th.—Southsea. Public Meeting, 2, Kent-road, 3.15 p.m. Speaker: Miss Friend (Ryde). Subject: "The Need for Preferential Tariffs." Chair: Mrs. Whetton.

Monday, March 10.—Westcliff Branch Meeting, at the Labour Hall, 6, Broadway Market, Southend, 7.30. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro on "Housing."

Wednesday, April 2.—Middlesbrough. Café Chantant and Sale, Suffrage Club, 231a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Monday, February 24.—Women Writers' Suffrage League Annual Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m.

Uxbridge Woman Suffrage Society. Meeting at Phillips' Restaurant, 69, High Street, Uxbridge (at the tram terminus), 7 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Mustard. Subject: "Housing."

Sunday, March 16.—Kingston Church of Humanity, Fife Hall, Fife-road, 7 p.m. Speaker: Miss K. Raleigh. Subject: "Savage Survivals in Modern Life."

National Union of Teachers' Conference, Cheltenham, Easter 1919.

Hon. Organiser, 1919: ALIX M. CLARK.

The Women's Freedom League are running a campaign in Cheltenham during the conference. "Equal Pay for Equal Work!" will be the battle cry. A teachers' number of THE VOTE will be issued dealing with special educational subjects. An appeal is made to all members, friends, and teachers who have so generously supported this campaign in the past to renew their support and sympathy this year. Please send your cheques, Treasury Notes, postal orders, and offers of service to Alix M. Clark, The Hut, Newtown, Montgomery Boroughs.

London Branches Council.

It will be remembered that the London Branches Council organised several very interesting Saturday afternoon meetings before Christmas. These were heartily appreciated, and we are sure that members and their friends will turn up in force next Saturday afternoon, February 22nd, at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, at 3 p.m. The subject for discussion is the government of London, in connection with the forthcoming L.C.C. election, and the object of the meeting is to forward the candidature of the women who are standing for election. We are citizens of no mean city, and the election of the L.C.C.—the Parliament for London—is a matter of great importance to every woman. It cannot be held that two elected women among the 118 elected councillors are sufficient to represent the interests of women. But there are only two, in addition to women aldermen, in the present council.

The speakers on Saturday are eminently qualified to speak on the subject of London government. Miss E. Bright Ashford, B.A., represents the London Reform Union—a body which did pioneer work in London government. Miss Marian Berry has made a special study of local government institutions. Mrs. Lamartine Yates, a well-known suffragist, is a candidate for the L.C.C., and is standing for the North Lambeth Division, and Miss Anna Munro is her election agent. Mrs. Ayres Purdie is Fellow of the London Association of Accountants, and a redoubtable protagonist of the financial interests of women. The chair will be taken by Mrs. Mustard.

Members of the Women's Freedom League are urged to make this meeting known among their friends and to do their utmost to secure a good audience. The meeting has been arranged to suit those who are engaged during the week and are not able to meet their fellow members at the Wednesday afternoon meetings.

Middlesex County Council.

Candidature of Mrs. How Martyn.

The Women's Freedom League is arranging a public meeting at Child's Hill on or about March 4th, full particulars of which will be given in next week's VOTE. Offers of assistance for canvassing, etc., should be sent at once to the office of the Women's Freedom League.

London County Council.

Mrs. Lamartine Yates for North Lambeth.

Offices: 10, Hercules Road (opposite North Lambeth Bakerloo Tube Station).

Miss Anna Muuro (clerk-in-charge) will be glad of offers of assistance at the above address. The allowance for election expenses of 2d. per head is so low that election addresses and poll cards must be delivered by hand. There is every variety of work to be done from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mrs. Lamartine Yates wants to meet all the electors either personally or through her meetings, a series of which, both indoors and outdoors, has been arranged.

Minerva Publishing Co., Ltd.

The shareholders' meeting of the above company was held on February 14th, at 144, High Holborn, when the balance-sheet and reports were presented and adopted. The directors for the coming year are:—Dr. E. Knight, Mrs. S. Whetton, Mrs. M. Fisher, Miss F. A. Underwood, Mrs. Schofield Coates, and Miss Alix Clark.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

"You take my life,

When you do take the means whereby I live."

This was the burden of the speeches made at the Albert Hall last Saturday night. The women assembled there represented nearly half a million women who are now out of work in the country, drawn, as Miss Macarthur said, "from every class of work, skilled and unskilled, in which the women of the country are engaged." The majority of the audience were certainly not qualified by age to be voters under the Representation of the People Act, 1918, though they had served an initiate in the strenuous times of war, when (as the legend on one of their banners told), their machines had "fed the guns." One speaker wondered if the general public understood what working in Woolwich Arsenal had meant to women and how many had been ruined in health and had died. Now they were faced with the terrors of unemployment. A great deal had been made of the "doles" they were receiving, but the speakers made it clear that it was not temporary State charity which would satisfy them. They not only demanded "leave to work," but they asserted their right to earn a wage sufficient to maintain health and to place the possibilities of happiness and enjoyment within their reach.

We are Going to Make a New World.

Mr. Lloyd George said one of the speakers "had told us that we should make a new world." Instantly came the retort in clear and almost defiant tones, "We are going to." All through the long struggle for the vote it was the vision of that new world, in which women would take their true place as the equals of men, which was before the eyes of suffragists, who must rejoice to know that a new generation of women has grown up, who are conscious of their powers and of their rights, and who know that, if they are to make a new world, these rights and these powers must be recognised. The time has clearly gone by when one class or one sex can dominate another, and we hope men trade unionists will take to heart Mr. Fred Bramley's speech, in which he, as a member of a man's trade union, regretted that the men of the country had not taken up the question of women's unemployment. But Mr. Fred Bramley must know that the vision of the new world which is before the eyes of men trade unionists is a world in which all the best-paid jobs are kept for men.

The League of Nations.

The women of the world must rejoice to know that a foundation has been laid for the future peace of the world. Before President Wilson returned to America he was able to secure the adoption of the draft constitution of the League of Nations, prepared by the Joint Committee.

A resolution, passed by the Inter-Allied Women's Conference sitting in Paris last week, demanding that the women of the different nations should be officially recognised by the Peace Conference, has been forwarded to President Wilson. In reply he said that he considered it desirable that the committee should study international women's questions and work in collaboration with delegates appointed by the Allied Women's Suffrage Congress.

Women in Parliament.

Out of sixty-eight members already elected to the German-Austrian National Assembly, six are women. In some areas the women voters are said to outnumber the men, and in Vienna itself they are said to be in a majority of 125,000. The election is being conducted by proportional representation.

International Amenities.

The Consultative Committee of Women's Societies working for Equal Citizenship have telegraphed to the German National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies a resolution expressing "warm congratulations to the women of Germany on their complete enfranchisement." It will be remembered that a somewhat similar message was sent to British women by German suffragists at the time of the passing of the Representation of the People Bill in 1918. Unfortunately they were not able to congratulate British women on their "complete" enfranchisement.

Into the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings.

A million indiarubber teats have been sent to Germany in answer to the moving appeal which was made by Mr. Nevinson from Cologne. He said that thousands of babies were dying of starvation because they were too weak to draw milk through the bone teats, which were the only ones available. The Women's International League made themselves responsible for the £6,000 necessary, and were indefatigable in their efforts to despatch the teats as speedily as possible, and they gratefully acknowledge the assistance they received from the Press and the Red Cross, through whose agency the teats were forwarded. Few women will be found to object to this tangible expression of international goodwill towards the babies of a nation with which we were so recently at war. News has been received that the teats have arrived, and there is no doubt that the flow of the milk of human kindness has been heartily appreciated. But we wish there was more cows' milk for the children of all nations.

Women and the Law.

There has lately been an exchange of views among the Benchers of the Inns of Court on the question of the admission of women to the Bar. Two courses were proposed—(1) Reference to a joint committee representing the four Inns; (2) leaving the matter to Parliament as being of national, and not merely of professional, importance. The latter course has been adopted. An interesting paper in favour of the admission of women has been contributed by Mr. Justice Riddell, of Ontario, to the current number of *The Journal of Comparative Legislation*.

Women and Engineering.

The Women's Engineering Society was inaugurated at a meeting held in Caxton Hall, London, last Saturday afternoon, to watch over the interests of women who wish to continue in engineering work. Several branches of the A.S.E. have sent in suggestions for the forthcoming delegate meeting, that a clause be inserted in the rules admitting women to membership of the union; and that women should at least be admitted into Class F, which is the unskilled section of the union. The men who work in the shops are realising more and more that it is to their common interest to pull together with the women, and it is up to them to bring their executives and officials into line.

A Great and Good Gift.

Sir Ernest Cassel has placed a sum of £500,000 in the hands of trustees for educational purposes. Miss Philippa Fawcett is one of the trustees. We are glad to find that the money is to be spent on girls and women as well as on boys and men, and that a large sum has been allotted to the funds of women's colleges.

Women on the Land.

It is reported that 8,699 members of the Women's Land Army have been asked whether they wish to remain in agriculture. Of these 5,421 have replied in the affirmative and 3,278 in the negative.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.

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FRIDAY, February 21st, 1919.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—

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To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.

To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vorn orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

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.

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THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament of All the Talents, for which men of all ages over nineteen and a large proportion of the women over thirty in this country are responsible, has met at Westminster, and the King has addressed My Lords and Gentlemen without having to include "Ladies" in his Speech to either House. The debate on the Address was moved by Colonel Sir Rhys Williams, K.C. (in military uniform), and seconded by Commander Dean (in naval uniform), which added some picturesqueness to the prevailing gloom. The Speech itself, for which the King's Ministers are responsible, has been variously referred to in the Press and in the House of Commons as "remarkable for its length and the comprehensive character of the legislative programme which it contained"; "as breathing a larger hope and brighter promise than has hitherto emanated from any of the King's Speeches"; and "as a document of stilted English, clumsy construction and grammatical crudity."

It is essentially a masculine document, and the existence of women as electors, counsellors, or even subjects can scarcely be said to find recognition. The King declared that the struggle between German tyranny and European freedom was now practically over and that a new era had dawned, and that these results had "been achieved by the vigilance and disciplined efficiency of the British and Allied Fleets, and by the courage, the endurance and the determination of my Armies and the Armies of the many nations fighting with them." In this there does not appear to be any recollection of the wonderful work of the women of this country who, not so long ago, were being told effusively by highly-placed Ministers that the war could not have been won without their efforts!

The next item of importance was that "to reap the full fruits of victory and to safeguard the peace of the world an adequate Army must be maintained in the field," and proposals were promised to deal with this matter. During the week several members in the House have tried to elicit from the Prime Minister whether this Army is to be secured on a conscription or on a voluntary basis, it being strongly maintained in some quarters that if a committee could be set up at once to revise and scrap many of the King's Regulations, and if the men were treated better and paid better for their services the voluntary basis would provide all the requisite number for this Army of occupation. But the Prime Minister satisfied no one's curiosity on this subject.

The King expressed the hope that before the session is far advanced the preliminaries of peace will be signed, and particularly rejoiced that the Powers assembled in the Conference have agreed to accept the principle of a League of Nations, "for it is by progress along that road that I see the only hope of saving mankind from a recurrence of the scourge of war."

The Speech contained greetings to the Presidents of the French Republic and of the United States of America, and a recognition of the great services rendered by our self-governing Dominions and our Indian Empire during the war and by their representatives in the Peace Conference deliberations now being held in Paris.

A Bill was promised in the course of the session to deal with Indian Constitutional Reform, and we again express the hope that the Government will secure to Indian women an equal share with Indian men in any measure of self-government which is accorded to their country. The case of Ireland was dismissed in a single sentence, in which the King declared that its position was causing anxiety, but expressed the earnest hope that some solution would be found for this difficult problem.

The members of the House of Commons were reminded that they would be asked to make further provision for meeting the permanent charges resulting from the war, and the new expenditure required for purposes of reconstruction. Although women were not mentioned in connection with this matter we feel sure that this part of the community and their resources will not be overlooked when the Government deals with new taxation.

The Speech then proceeded to outline the need for social reform, and stated that "we must stop at no sacrifice of interest or prejudice to stamp out unmerited poverty, to diminish unemployment and mitigate its sufferings, to provide decent homes, to improve the nation's health, and to raise the standard of well-being throughout the community." This programme, of course, must be carried out by new legislation, and to accelerate it the King promised that certain proposals would be put before members of Parliament for the simplification of the procedure of the House which would enable delays to be avoided and give members an increasing opportunity of taking an effective part in the work of legislation. Members were also to be asked to approve a Bill for "the creation of a new Ministry to deal with public health, with a view to the establishment throughout the land of a scientific and enlightened health organisation to combat disease and to conserve the vigour of the race; also a Bill to establish a Ministry of Ways and Communications with a view to increasing and developing the industrial and agricultural resources of the country by improved means of transport."

Further, the King promised measures for effecting a speedy increase on a large scale in the housing accommodation of the country, for the fulfilment of the pledges given to Trade Unions, for the prevention of unfair competition by the sale of imported goods below their selling price in their country of origin, for increasing industrial and agricultural output, and for encouraging settlement on land, particularly for members of our fighting forces. The Speech ended with a reference to industrial unrest and an appeal for an earnest consideration on the part of the Gentlemen of the House of Commons of the causes of prevailing unrest.

This Address has been debated at length during the past week in the House of Commons. We ourselves cannot but regret that the Address made no mention of the continued high prices of the foods and necessaries of the people, although it was stated in the debate on this Address that the Government were holding up food supplies which could be fur-

nished to the people at much less cost than is the case to-day, because the Government has bought in stocks for supply, and will allow no further imports until it has sold these stocks at a figure which will guarantee the departments against loss! Mr. Bottomley said that tea could be sold in the shops at 2s. or 2s. 2d. a pound, but the Government insisted on the selling price being 2s. 6d. or 2s. 8d. It was also stated that the Government was a great profiteer, and suggested that perhaps that was the reason that no drastic measures were proposed to deal with profiteering. It was pointed out that very big fortunes have been made in the last two and a-half years out of the sale of food, beer, coal, and thread, and the fact stated that a reel of Coats' cotton, which before the war cost 2d., now costs 7½d., so that it is not surprising to find that the profits of Coats' last year, after providing for Excess Profits Duty, were £3,500,000! Further, that the Maypole Dairy Company last year declared a dividend of 225 per cent.—that is, £2 5s. on every £1.

We all agree that there should be better housing and many, many more houses. Surely it should be compulsory on all local governing bodies to supply sufficient accommodation for the people in and near their district. They could only do that by securing land in the neighbourhood at a reasonable price. Does the Government propose to help them in this matter?

With regard to a Ministry of Health, we have pressed for the establishment of such a Ministry for a very long time. We think it could do much to combat disease and conserve the vigour of the race, but we insist most urgently that suitable women should have an equal control in this Ministry with suitable men, and we reiterate our demand for a Woman Minister of Health.

We note a further promise to Trade Unions of the fulfilment of the Government's pledges. Does this mean that the Government acquiesces in the exclusion of women from trades and sections of trades in which they have become skilled during the war and have earned good money? Mr. J. H. Thomas reminded the House of Commons that at this very moment there are a million men and women out of work, the number of unemployed women being 430,000. He declared that he could give the House "scores of cases where young women have been offered half the amount in wages that they are receiving in unemployed pay, and then because they refuse to work under these sweated conditions their unemployment pay is stopped."

Altogether the King's Speech is an urgent reminder that women's organisations for the safeguarding of women's interests in the State are more necessary now than ever, and that the great need of to-day is to strengthen these organisations effectively to combat men's monopoly in the political and economic machinery of our country.

F. A. U.

CONFERENCE ON THE ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD.

The W.F.L. Conference on the Endowment of Motherhood, held at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, on Thursday, February 13th, was a great success. The speeches were not of the merely academic order, but live and practical. The discussion was animated and full of suggestions, which brought out many different points of view. The room was filled to overflowing, and a good collection was taken.

Mrs. Schofield Coates, being unable to preside, her place was ably filled by Mrs. Mustard (W.F.L.), who declared that the meeting had been called to discuss an important subject. The family was the basis of the State, and the needs and the welfare of

the mother, not only of the unmarried mother or the widow, but every mother of a family, were important points to be considered in the general plans of reconstruction.

The principal speakers were Mr. Emil Burns (N.E.F.A.), Dr. Alice Vickery (W.F.L.), and Miss Dyce Sharp (Independent W.S.P.U.).

Mr. EMIL BURNS outlined the scheme of his committee, which he declared to be "a practical proposal for the endowment of motherhood on the system of separation allowances, which should be extended to all citizens who have to support children. He suggested 12s. 6d. for the mother, 5s. for the first child, and 3s. 6d. for each other child. He would wish this endowment to be continued up to the age of fifteen years, but, as this would entail a large expenditure, he contented himself with an immediate demand up to the age of five, which would mean some 150 millions. One-sixth to one-tenth of the children in elementary schools were, he said unable to take advantage of the training offered. He held that endowment would improve the position of mothers as well as of children, and the result would be that equal pay for equal work would be easier to achieve.

DR. ALICE VICKERY was against endowment except as a temporary measure. She deprecated "hurried and ill-conceived legislation," which would not tend to check the recklessness of the poorer mothers. She wanted an AI and not a C3 population for her country, and advocated birth control, which would place motherhood on a higher plane. The girl should be as free as the boy to choose not only her occupation, but her husband. Primogeniture should be swept away, so as to allow of a more equal distribution of wealth; also the "criminal deprivation of knowledge" which kept women ignorant, and encouraged unsuitable parentage.

MISS DYCE SHARP said there would not be the same freedom in endowment as in separation allowances, because an army of inspectors would be necessary to see that the father was not living upon the allowances. She would like to know whether endowment would have any relation to physical fitness, or if consumptives and other unsuitable parents would be encouraged by it to multiply the unfit. Instead of wasting energy on such palliatives she would advocate a crusade against the maladministration of wealth. "The poor suffer from poverty," and she urged that if they were given a fair share of the wealth they created it might be left to them to take care of their own children. The question of land monopoly was at the root of all our troubles.

MRS. DESPARD appealed for a wider and deeper view. She agreed that the monopoly of land was a great evil, and that an end must be put to it. Meantime, must the babies and mothers die? In moving words she pictured the lives of many mothers—her neighbours in Nine Elms—whose self-sacrifice and courage in face of almost insuperable difficulties was heroic. She felt that mothers should have a legal right to part of their husbands' earnings. On any occasion when the children suffer the mother should have a right to maintenance without having to go and beg of the Poor Law Guardians, who, in one case she knew of, allowed at the rate of 6½d. a week for each child.

After an appeal for funds from Miss Dorothy Evans, to whose initiative the holding of the conference was due, the meeting was thrown open to discussion, in which the following took part:—Captain St. John (Penal Reform League), Miss Courtney (N.E.F.A.), Miss Helen Ward (W.I.L.), Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Tanner (W.F.L.), Mrs. Borwick (Baptist Women's League), Mr. Sulton (Neasden N.U.R.), Mrs. Soane (Hackney Women's Co-operative Guild), and Mrs. Keevil-Rickford.

FRIDAY,
FEB. 21,
1919.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

Speaking at the Minerva Café last Wednesday afternoon, Mrs. Nevinson reminded her audience that all old Freedom Leaguers had had considerable election experience in the past, and that it was rather a shock at the last General Election for some of our members to be treated by men as novices in this particular work. The ordinary male candidate certainly had no idea of working as strenuously as suffragists worked in pre-suffrage days at elections. Women then spoke at seven and even nine meetings a day, but the man candidate last November grew scared at the thought of three daily meetings, and shirked, whenever possible, open-air meetings. Suffragists in days gone by were not at all careful about the quantity or regularity of their meals, but men could not be accused of such neglect.

Now that women have the vote, they should of course use it; but Mrs. Nevinson admitted that this was a difficulty in some cases, and perhaps, in a few, quite impossible at the last General Election. Women were not encrusted with party prejudices, and could not support a man or a woman simply because of their party label. She thought, however, that many women would eventually lapse into parties; but, speaking for herself, Mrs. Nevinson said that she would always vote for the one she considered to be the best candidate, irrespective of that candidate's sex.

Mrs. Nevinson complained that so great a number of women were apparently indifferently educated so far as politics are concerned. Many women did not even know that they had the vote. A canon's wife had said to her: "Indeed, no, I have not the vote: it would create dissension in the home." Mrs. Nevinson suggested that the lady might consult her husband, and perhaps vote in accordance with his political views; but the indignant reply was: "I should not put myself forward!" The chair was taken by Miss F. A. Underwood.

From *The Observer* we learn that it has been decided to revert to pre-war conditions of employing boy telegraph messengers in post offices. The change, which will extend over four years, will affect about seven thousand girl messengers.

BRANCH NOTES.

Golder's Green.

The dance arranged by the Golder's Green branch at the Garden Suburb Institute on February 7th was an immense success, both financially and socially. The branch is greatly indebted to the many friends who kindly contributed tea, coffee, lemons, margarine, etc., and so enabled us to make a remarkable profit by the sale of refreshments. Its thanks are also due to those who, by their efforts beforehand and during the evening, helped to make the dance a complete success. It is hoped to obtain their co-operation in preparations for the next. In response to many inquiries the dates of two other dances will be announced shortly.

Hackney.

A drawing-room meeting was held at 97, Upper Clapton-road, by kind invitation of Mrs. Holmes, on Sunday last, at 4 p.m. Mrs. Mustard addressed the meeting on subjects of interest to women. Resolutions were passed for conference.

Manchester.

Alix M. Clark will visit Manchester from Wednesday, February 26-March 4, 1919. Will members and friends write to Miss Clark, The Hut, Severn-street, Newtown, Montgomery Boroughs, with view of making appointments, etc.

Westcliff-on-Sea.

A meeting was held at the Labour Hall, 6 Broadway Market on February 10 at 7.30 p.m. Mr. Elvin, N.U.C., occupied the chair, and Mr. Johnston, M.A., gave a most able and instructive address on "The League of Nations." The audience showed their keen interest by the questions, so many of them put, and by the brisk discussion which followed. A hearty vote of thanks was proposed to the speaker, and carried unanimously.

S.E. District. Organiser: Miss White.

Ashford.

The Women's Freedom League Club was opened with great success last Saturday. Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck, who was warmly welcomed, said how very glad she was to see so many women present, which showed that they felt keen interest in the new club. She hoped that the women of Ashford, as elsewhere, were waking up to want to find out for themselves the things of interest to women and children.

Mrs. A. Bankes, president of the South Ashford Adult School, thanked the speaker for her splendid speech, and mentioned how grateful they all were for the new club. The need of such a place where women could meet and discuss parliamentary affairs was very great, and she wished it every success.

The following officers and committee were then elected:—President, Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck; vice-presidents, Miss M. L. While and Mrs. Bankes; secretary, Mrs. W. S. Corlett; treasurer, Mrs. Goldsmith; committee: Mrs. Barnes, Mrs. Jolley, Mrs. Gower, Mrs. Beeching, Mrs. Ware, and Mrs. Cowdell. It was decided to hold the first committee meeting next Saturday, at Wesley Manse, Albert-road, at 3 p.m.

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