

THE VOTE,
FEB. 8, 1924.
ONE PENNY.

CALL FOR EQUAL FRANCHISE!

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

VOL. XXV. No. 746.

(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. 8, 1924

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

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

WOMEN'S CAREERS.—III, WOMEN ACCOUNTANTS.	PRISON COMMISSIONERS.
MEN AND WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES.	DEARER SUGAR?
WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.	NEWS FROM INDIA.
EQUAL GUARDIANSHIP OF CHILDREN.	WIDOWS' PENSIONS. D. M. N.

WOMEN'S CAREERS.—III. WOMEN ACCOUNTANTS.

The number of fully qualified women accountants is not large at present, partly because the preparation for this career involves five years' training, except in the case of University graduates when two years are remitted, and partly because it is only comparatively lately that the leading societies representing this profession have agreed to admit women on the same terms as men.

The premier Societies in this country are the Institute of Chartered Accountants, which opened its doors to women in 1920, and the Society of Incorporated Accountants and Auditors, which admitted women in 1918, before the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act was put on the Statute Book. They rank as the leading bodies of accountants in this country, and are recognised as such in various Acts of Parliament, and Government regulations. Public Auditors are appointed by the Treasury only from their ranks, and Inland Revenue officials are empowered to accept as correct accounts signed by a chartered or incorporated accountant.

Other Societies are the London Association of Accountants, which opened its doors to women as long ago as 1905, and the Central Association. The late Mrs. Ayres Purdie, so well known to members of the Women's Freedom League, was a member of the

London Association, and one of the earliest pioneer women accountants.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants has at present two women members. One of these, Miss M. Harris Smith, admitted a "Fellow" of the Institute in May, 1920, was the first woman accountant in public practice before the examination system was started, and has been engaged on highly skilled work for over 30 years. The other, Miss Ethel Watts, B.A., passed her final examination early this year, and is the first woman to write "A.C.A." after her name. She served her articles with a Manchester firm, but took an Honours degree at London University. During the war, she became an administrative assistant in the Ministry of Food, and was at one time private secretary to the Director of Oils and Fats in the Ministry. She had intended to study law, but her work at the Ministry gave her an interest in business, so she turned to accountancy. In addition to these members, there are 30 women training under articles.



MISS M. HARRIS SMITH.

The Society of Incorporated Accountants and Auditors has at present 8 women members, including Miss M. Harris Smith, who was admitted as an "honorary member" in 1919. These are Miss M. M. Homersham, M.A., who now audits the accounts of the

Women's Freedom League, Miss M. Claridge, Miss M. E. Moore (Practising Accountants), Miss Springett, Miss Ayres, Miss Ridgeway, and Miss Ricketts (not in Practice), and four more who have almost completed their training. In addition to these members there are upwards of 50 women in training.

The Examinations are three in number: the Preliminary, the subjects for which include English, one foreign language, and mathematics; the Intermediate, comprising book-keeping, accounts, and general commercial knowledge; and the Final, which deals with advanced accountancy, costing accounts, auditing, and the general duties of professional accountants, statistical methods, laws relating to Joint Stock Companies, bankruptcy, mercantile law, partnerships, executorship, etc., general knowledge in regard to commerce and finance, and elementary economics.

MEN & WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES

A large number of temporary women clerks are now being dismissed from the Acton office of the Ministry of Pensions. Last year the staff was reduced by over a thousand. Many of these women have been in the Government service for nine years, and have been trained to a high degree of efficiency. Meanwhile, notices of dismissal have been issued to a large number of ex-Service temporary men clerks employed in the Ministry of Pensions, the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Paymaster-General's Department. All these notices are being served by the permanent officials responsible for carrying out the policy of the late Government. The Association of Ex-Service Servants is protesting against the dismissals of the men. Its Secretary states that over 2,000 non-Service men are still retained in a temporary capacity, and over 16,000 women. He further points out that many of the non-Service men are ex-permanent Civil Servants with pensions, and that they are employed at the War Office and the Paymaster-General's Department. A deputation from the Association is to wait upon Mr. C. J. Ammon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, this week, and it is hoped that the Prime Minister will also receive a deputation from this Association later. While we express every sympathy with the men threatened with dismissal, we have equal sympathy with the women clerks who are also being dismissed. These women have attained a high degree of efficiency through many years of loyal service, and it is at least as difficult for trained women to secure fresh clerical work as it is for their ex-Service colleagues. With regard to the temporary women clerks still in Government offices, dismissals are always occurring amongst them. Time after time their circumstances have been reviewed by Government officials with inquisitorial insistence, and we think it is safe to say that no woman occupies a position as a temporary clerk in a Government office unless, in addition to being efficient, it is proved most conclusively that she has not other means of subsistence. Many of these women have also to contribute to the support of some relative. Our own view is that efficiency alone should be the test of employment in a Government office; but, since the war, many influential men Members of Parliament, backed by a large portion of the general public, have urged, in season and out of season, that any ex-Service man, no matter how inefficient and untrained, should be given the job of any woman, no matter how great her experience and competence, if she happened to be holding a temporary post in the Civil Service. Unfortunately, the Governments allowed themselves to be browbeaten by this noisy section, with the results as we see them at present. We venture to believe that the present Prime Minister and the members of his Government will take a saner view of the situation, and will secure that every man and woman working in a Government Office, paid by the taxpayers' money, shall retain his or her post on grounds of efficiency, irrespective of the sex or the need of the worker.

YOUNG OFFENDERS.

Last week, a man charged with warehouse-breaking in the City appeared before Judge Atherley-Jones at the Central Criminal Court. It was stated that he had been previously convicted, his first sentence being in 1916, when he was only thirteen years old, and when he was sent to prison for three months for loitering. Judge Atherley-Jones said it was amazing to him that so recently as 1916 any magistrate should have committed the act, to his mind a grave one, of sending a child of 13 years to prison. As some compensation for the wrong done him when he was 13 years old, the prisoner would now be sentenced to only 15 months' imprisonment, with hard labour. We feel curious to know what the man, who can now only be 21 years of age, will think of Judge Atherley-Jones' idea of "compensation." In our view, an irreparable wrong was done to the child of 13 when he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. Would it have been impossible for this Judge to have arranged a period of probation for the man of 21? We are more convinced than ever that one of the essential qualifications for any magistrate or judge should be practical personal experience of prison life, and its effect on the person subjected to it. This also applies with even more force to the Prison Commissioners. Possibly the Doncaster West Riding magistrates, if they had had this practical experience of prison life, would not have characterised the recent action of Mr. Tom Williams, M.P., as ill-advised and unfair, in sending a letter to the Home Secretary alleging that a sentence passed by them upon a boy thief was very extreme, and even vicious. These magistrates say that they acted in a spirit of real kindness to the boy. A little personal knowledge of what effect the carrying out of their sentence would have upon the boy might have altered their views about "real kindness."

Last week, a nurse, aged 20, was charged at Colchester Police Court with stealing four £1 notes from a fellow-nurse at a mental hospital. She was asked by Mrs. Alderton, the Mayor, if she would go to a home. The girl said she would rather go to prison, and, when asked to reconsider the matter, acknowledged that it was very kind of the Mayor, but she had such an awful experience before, that she never wanted to go again. Mrs. Alderton said that girls were treated splendidly there, but, as the girl still refused to consent, she was sentenced to two months' imprisonment in the Second Division.

We think that the public should know more about these homes to which girls are sent so frequently by the Court. We are prepared to believe that some of them may be good, but it is very rarely that any girl who has had experience of these homes will return to one. She almost invariably prefers to go to prison. We hope that women magistrates will insist upon having more intimate knowledge of the conditions of the inmates and the workings of these homes than men magistrates have had hitherto.

FEMINISM IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

Mme. Avril de Sainte Croix, who has recently been visiting various women's organisations in Central Europe, reports that in Czecho-Slovakia the Woman's Movement has an energetic supporter in Madame Plaminkova, M.P. A great deal of work is being undertaken by Czecho-Slovakian women with regard to education, hygiene, industrial and moral questions. They have been instrumental in obtaining a repeal of State Regulation of Vice, and in the passing of a law dealing equally with either sex as regards public order as well as hygiene. The women of Poland, in spite of the fact that this country suffered the horrors of war longer than any other country in Central Europe, are also making great headway. Crèches, infant nurseries, schools, relief works, industrial women's organisations, have all been instituted by prominent Polish women.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Welsh Women's Memorial.

A deputation of Welshwomen, including Mrs. Peter Hughes Griffiths, Miss Elined Prys, and Miss Mary Ellis, left England last Saturday for America with a memorial from Wales, in furtherance of World Peace, signed by 400,000 women in Wales and in Monmouthshire. The delegation will be received at New York by representative women in the United States, and the presentation will take place at a Congress at Washington in April.

Labour Women in Conference.

A Conference of Labour women, under the auspices of the Labour Party, will be held at the Guild House, Eccleston Square, S.W., on May 13th and 14th, with the co-operation of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations. The three Labour women M.P.s will be present, and nearly 700 delegates. June 7th, 8th, 14th, and 15th have been fixed for "Women's Day" celebrations throughout the country, organised by the local branches of the Labour Party.

Schools and the League.

Last week's agenda of the L.C.C. Education Committee contained the following notice of a motion by Mrs. La Chard: "That definite teaching of League of Nations principles and activities be introduced into all types of L.C.C. schools, and that the formation of junior branches of the League of Nations Union be encouraged in the said schools." This motion is the outcome of a suggestion made by Dame Edith Lyttelton at the last Assembly at Geneva, that the children of the 54 nations affiliated to the League should be taught the text of the Covenant.

British Students for America.

Miss Frances E. Riggs, of Detroit, U.S.A., has recently founded, through the English-Speaking Union, two fellowships for post-graduate students of British Universities at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, U.S.A. The purpose of the foundation is to help to promote better understanding and good will between the peoples of Great Britain and the United States. Each fellowship is tenable for 12 months, and is open to both men and women. The first Fellow, Mr. Reginald Ivan Lovell, of the University of London, is already in residence at Michigan. The second Fellow, Miss Marjorie Lindsey, of Manchester University, sailed for the United States last week.

Women's Vote in Spain.

The new Municipal Bill which has been recently drafted in Spain, and will shortly receive the Royal Assent, is very comprehensive, and introduces several drastic reforms. Proportional representation is to be introduced in municipal elections, and women will receive the vote for municipal elections and also be eligible as candidates. This is a great advance, and is the first step in Spanish legislation towards the political emancipation of women.

Woman Diplomat's Speech.

Miss Nadejda Stancioff, daughter of the Bulgarian Minister to the Court of St. James's, and herself a trained diplomat, gave a masterly address on foreign politics, last week, at the General Meeting of the Near East and Middle East Association. Its command of English, clarity, composure, judgment, and quiet control of profound feeling made a deep impression on all who heard it.

"Lady Cabby" Dead.

Well known throughout East Kent as "the Lady Cabby," Miss Polly Coulter has just died at Wye. For over a quarter of a century she drove one of her brother's cabs, and was a regular attendant at the station. She was very popular with professors and students at Wye College.

Progress in Jersey.

It has been decided by the Jersey States to revise the whole system of juvenile criminal prosecutions and the punishments now meted out, these being considered out of date. There is no machinery in Jersey which enables the Court to send a lad to Borstal, the result being that often boys have to be sent to gaol who could otherwise be reclaimed. The House has also decided to establish a system of contributory pensions for State employees. A petition signed by 771 women, who request the States to grant them equal political rights with men, has been presented, and will come up for consideration in the course of a few days, when a Bill to that effect comes up for second reading.

Women Barristers' Successes.

Miss Mary Robina Stevens, who was recently called to the Bar at Gray's Inn, appeared in Mr. Justice Eve's Court last week, on a motion for the appointment of a receiver and manager. Miss Stevens and Mrs. Normanton are the only women barristers, so far, to have appeared in the Chancery Division. Mrs. Normanton was also the first woman barrister to practise at the Old Bailey last Monday. One of three men charged with fraud asked for a dock brief, and on being requested to select counsel, chose Mrs. Normanton. The case was expected to last some days.

Woman Commissioner Appointed.

Mrs. Bridget Hennessy, a widow, of Kildare, has been appointed by the Lord Chief Justice of the Irish Free State a Commissioner for taking affidavits for the town and district of Kildare. This is the first legal appointment of the kind filled by a woman.

Greek Women's Vote.

The Greek Women's Association is to bring before the National Assembly a memorandum demanding women's political emancipation. M. Venizelos had promised this right for municipal elections only.

Woman M.P.'s Appointment.

The President of the Board of Education has appointed Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P., and Dr. Somerville Hastings, M.P., as his Parliamentary private secretaries (unpaid).

EQUAL GUARDIANSHIP OF CHILDREN.

At a meeting of the Six Point Group, last week, presided over by Lady Rhondda, *The Times* reports that Sir James Greig, speaking as a lawyer, explained the position of English law with regard to guardianship, and remarked that the time had arrived for the question of equal guardianship to be investigated by a Parliamentary Committee. Bound up with the problem of guardianship was that of the custody, maintenance, and education of children. The English law recognised six different kinds of guardianship. At present the father had control over the person, education, and conduct of his children until they were 21 years of age. He was also entitled to direct the religion in which his children were to be brought up. There were an enormous number of technical difficulties, prejudices, and principles embedded in our law, and therefore the Bill giving equal rights of guardianship to both parents, which the Group intended to promote in Parliament this Session, would not be easy to pass. What they wanted in the Bill was a plain, statutory enactment that the parents were liable and ought to contribute jointly to the maintenance of the children. The present Bill, which was first introduced into the House of Commons in 1921, was last year referred to a Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons for investigation. The evidence heard from other countries strengthened the case for a change in the law. The principle of dual guardianship had been adopted in the United States, without any of the terrible consequences which opponents of the change apprehended.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors: THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
Offices: 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, 1924.

PRISON COMMISSIONERS.

The Women's Freedom League is appealing to the new Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, to consider the appointment of women as Prison Commissioners. Under the Prison Act of 1877, the Government, which already had control of convict prisons for long-sentence offenders, assumed both the control and administration of all local prisons, the management of which had previously been vested in the county Justices of the Peace "in Sessions assembled," and in members of certain municipal corporations. The Government now appointed a Board of Commissioners to administer them, under the authority of the Home Secretary. These Commissioners were to be, and still are, appointed on the recommendation of the Home Secretary, who also appoints the Chairman. It was decided that their number should not exceed five. Under the Commissioners, the administration of prisons was almost completely centralised, alike in large matters of policy and in the smallest details of routine. In 1898, another Prison Act provided that Prison Commissioners should also become Directors of Convict Prisons; and at the present time the local and convict prisons, the State Inebriate Reformatories, the Preventive Detention Prison, and Borstal Institutions established under the Prevention of Crime Act, 1908, are all under the direct administration of the Prison Commissioners, subject only to the authority of the Home Secretary, and to co-operation of certain Committees, to whom is delegated work connected with the supervision, discharge, or after-care of the inmates. It is understood that the Home Secretary is the responsible head of our prison system, and many of the proceedings of the Commissioners must have his express sanction. As, however, Messrs. Hobhouse and Brockway point out in *English Prisons of To-day*, most of the day-to-day administration in our prisons is initiated by the Prison Commissioners. They appoint the subordinate officers in prisons, although the Home Secretary is responsible for the appointments of governors of prisons, chaplains, visiting ministers, medical officers, matrons, and inspectors. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that in the majority of cases the Commissioners nominate the higher prison staff, and recommend promotion and dismissal. In convict prisons, the Commissioners have wide powers for punishing prisoners, the Home Secretary, however, having to sanction flogging. In local prisons they are responsible for the general award of punishments. During 43 years there were only two Chairmen of the Prison Commission, Sir Edmund du Cane, followed by Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise. Quite recently, Mr. M. Lyndham-Waller was appointed Chairman, on the retirement of Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise. The Commissioners are usually selected from the higher administrative staff of the Home Office, from prison governors and prison medical officers. In addition to the Chairman, there are now three Prison Commissioners, Mr. Alexander Paterson, Mr. J. R. Farewell, and Mr. G. B. Griffiths. Sir H. Bryan Donkin, Director of Convict Prisons, is an unpaid member of the Commission. The Commissioners govern all prisons through the prison Governor, and reports of governors and inspectors of prisons are issued through the Commissioners. It is appalling to think that for nearly fifty years the fate of all men and women prisoners in this country has been in the hands of this little band of men, with almost autocratic powers over their lives, from which there is practically no appeal. We think it is time that the membership of this Commission was increased, and that women, as well as men, should be appointed Prison Commissioners.

A CALL FOR EQUAL FRANCHISE.

Now is the time to press for the equal enfranchisement of men and women! In 1918, women over 30 years of age were granted the Parliamentary vote if their husband already had this vote, or, if unmarried, they could prove that they were occupiers or tenants of a separate dwelling-place. Men can claim a Parliamentary vote on a six-months' residential qualification, but women, even when they are of the specified age, cannot do so; with the result that countless numbers of them, who live at home with parents or friends, professional and business women who live in furnished rooms, women lecturers in training colleges, and matrons, nurses, and other women living in institutions, cannot qualify for a Parliamentary vote. Time after time, registration officers have attempted, often with success, to take women's names off the Register, or to refuse to allow them to be put on even when the women were over 30 and living in unfurnished rooms, if they did not take their meals in these rooms, the argument of these officials being that, if meals were taken outside those rooms, the people who rented them could not prove that they occupied a separate dwelling-place! The figures given to Mr. Foot by Mr. Bridgeman last November showed that, while only about 300,000 men over 21 years of age would not be able to vote at the coming election, there were approximately 4½ millions of women over 21 who would not be able to exercise a vote! That was exceedingly unfair on the women of the country in the recent December election, for the issues before the electorate—Protection, Tariffs, Free Trade, and their effects on prices and unemployment, were at least of as much importance to women as to men, whether they were married and lived at home, or whether they were working in the professions or in industry. Three General Elections and many by-elections have taken place since some women over 30 were guaranteed the Parliamentary vote on these unequal terms with men. Now that a Labour Government has taken office, and is expected to retain it with the support of the Liberal Party, that both these Parties are pledged to secure political equality for women, and that we have many staunch friends among the Conservative Party pledged to this reform, we confidently call upon the Labour Party to introduce without delay, and pass through all its stages into law, a Bill to enfranchise women at the same age as men, and on the same short residential qualification.

ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

A private Member's Bill for the Abolition of Capital Punishment obtained a place in the recent ballot, and Mr. Climie (Kilmarnock), who has the Bill in hand, has it down for a Second Reading on Friday, April 4th. This Bill is promoted by the Howard League for Penal Reform, and has very widespread support. At its last Annual Conference, the Women's Freedom League passed a resolution in favour of abolishing capital punishment, and petitions for its abolition can be signed at our office. Capital punishment is one of the worst relics of barbarism in our present penal system, and the psychological effect of this penalty on the mind of the public after any murder trial is appalling, but not so ghastly as the effect on the officials whose lot it is to carry out this penalty. It is impossible also to gauge the suffering and anguish which it imposes upon the near relatives, sometimes even the children, of the condemned man or woman. It cannot be maintained that capital punishment is a deterrent of murder, for Holland, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, and twelve of the United States have abolished or discontinued it, and murder is certainly not on the increase in any of those countries.

DEARER SUGAR?

It is expected that sugar will this week be a half-penny a pound dearer in the shops. There is apparently a shortage in the supply, and wholesalers are fixing an increased figure for what they have in hand. It will be well remembered by readers of THE VOTE that Mrs. Juson Kerr has for a long time past urged housewives in this country to take this matter into their own hands by reducing their purchases of sugar to the minimum, and in that way compel wholesalers and retailers to reduce their prices to the public. It is, therefore, interesting to note that *The Times*, in commenting on the increase in sugar prices, says: "Experience in the past, not only in Europe but also in America, has shown that a stage can be reached when the public in self-defence resorts to something in the nature of a sugar boycott." The same day the *Daily Herald* reports Mr. Duncan Carmichael (Secretary of the London Trades Council) as saying: "If you have a short market, those who can buy and hold stocks will undoubtedly make money on the deal. And this country can do nothing in the matter at present except to make up its mind to go back to the war rations of ½ lb. per head per week. Present consumption is about 1 lb. per head. If that consumption were reduced by one-half, those who are holding the supplies would be forced to sell, and the prices would not be so high."

We cordially agree with Mrs. Juson Kerr that housewives, if they are determined to bring the price of sugar down, can do so at once by reducing their purchases. An increase in the price of sugar means an increase in the prices of jam, marmalade, and cakes. In some shops, marmalade and jam are already dearer, in anticipation of a rise in sugar. If housewives, who are the greatest buyers of sugar, will resolutely limit their demands, the higher price cannot possibly be maintained. In other countries, housewives have brought down the cost of living by boycotting high-priced commodities.

NEWS FROM INDIA.

To *Stri Dharma*, the official organ of the Women's Indian Association, we are indebted for the following items:—

Wage-Earning Mothers.

There are millions of women in India who work in factories, mines, and on tea and coffee estates. The problem of what to do with their babies and very young children during their work hours is almost unsolvable by most of them. It is a sign of the times that crèches are springing up near large factories. Child Welfare Associations are organising these "cradle homes," where a qualified sick nurse and a couple of kindly, capable ayahs are paid to look after these working-women's babies during the factory hours. The under-fed are given extra nourishment, the unhealthy are cured, all are kept happy in a large, clean place. Such are to be found in Bombay, Bangalore, Sholapur, and some other cities, but there need to be hundreds of such nurseries for between 50 and 70 little ones each.

Bombay Children's Bill.

The Bombay Government has decided to pass a Bombay Children's Bill. This Bill follows the model of the similar Act which was passed in Madras in 1920, and is to some extent influenced also by the English Children's Act of 1908. It is designed for the protection of children and for the custody of youthful offenders. Under its provisions, children who are homeless or under the care of criminals, prostitutes, etc., are to be removed to industrial schools, or committed to the charge of fit persons, preferably relatives; cruelty to children, causing or allowing them to beg; causing a girl under 16 in one's charge to be seduced or to resort to prostitution, are among the offences which are made punishable. Neglectful parents may be made to pay a fine for an offence committed by their children, and Juvenile Courts are to be established.

HOMES FOR WOMEN WORKERS.

Lady Astor, speaking at a dinner of the Women's Pioneer Housing Society last week, in replying to the toast of "Our Guests," said that Governments had tried and failed to solve the housing problem, and Governments must go on trying. The housing question was essentially a national question, but there were certain people who were not taking the interest in it that they should. There were the people who had houses, and such people were not confined to Mayfair—there were a good many in Poplar; and there were those who ought to have houses and had not got them, who still take no interest in the question. In proof of the latter fact, they had only to look at the municipal elections, and the evidence there was that money the people should be giving to buy houses was being spent on betting and drink and amusements. That might be due to lack of education or to environment, but it was necessary to rouse these people to the fact that housing was a national need. They had to wake up people who ought to be interested in housing, if not for themselves, then at least for the children's sake. Women could do much to help to solve the problem. She had an unquenchable faith in her sex, and she knew that if women made up their minds to do a thing, they would do it. If the women's interest could be aroused, they would solve the question. The Government were not so much interested in providing housing for single women, as it was not a matter of urgent importance, but the need was very great, and there was much room for unselfish effort.

Mrs. C. S. Peel said the Women's Pioneer Housing Society was worthy of support because by using large houses they lessened the fierce competition for smaller properties, and also employed labour. Further, they offered an investment which involved the promotion of the public good. They aimed at providing women workers with houses where there would be scope for individual tastes, and where they could live surrounded by their own household gods.

In Bengal, a similar Children's Bill, passed by the Reformed Legislative Council, has remained inoperative for alleged want of funds, but even more because of lack of voluntary workers who will carry out its provisions.

Allahabad University and Women in Politics.

During Christmas week, a debate took place in Allahabad University, on whether or not it would be detrimental to the home life of Indian women for them to take an interest in politics. The speeches for and against were very spirited, but the speech of Mrs. B. Rama Rao, M.A., carried the house. She maintained that for the very betterment of the home life it was essential that women should take an interest in the laws that were being made which would affect their lives and their children's. Examples of other countries which had long had woman suffrage were quoted in support of her contention, and it is gratifying to record that the voting was by a very large majority in favour of women taking their share of political responsibility.

Women's Conference at Cocanada.

A Women's Conference was held in Cocanada at the same time as the National Indian Congress, and presided over by Mrs. Gandhi. She pressed upon women to urge their men representatives to carry woman suffrage resolutions in Bengal, the Central Provinces, and the Punjab. She further urged that in every Province the Legislative Council should pass a resolution in favour of women being allowed to become members of the Councils, by both election and nomination, on similar terms with men. The sex disqualification in this particular of the Reform Bill was out-of-date. At the Federation of the Liberal Party, held at Poona, a resolution was moved and seconded by women members, asking for the removal of the sex disqualification in regard to the membership of, and franchise for, every Provincial Council and the Central Legislatures.

"LADIES ONLY."

The provision of carriages for women travelling alone is a matter which needs immediate attention, especially in regard to suburban railways, where the usual "compartment" system is in general use. On long-distance trains, where the corridor coach or the saloon car is used, the matter is of less importance. It is to be noted that the many assaults committed in the last two years in railway trains have all been in the type referred to. Such provision is, of course, especially necessary on evening and night trains. On one line known to the writer, the 8.55, 9.30, and 10.20 trains all carry a number of quite young girls and women who have been attending evening classes, and for whom such provision ought certainly to be made.

It should be said that in nearly all cases the officials recognise the need, and are quite ready to label a carriage when asked; but this necessitates being on the platform very early, finding an empty compartment, and seeking an official, by which time very likely the compartment is no longer empty! It is given as a reason for not supplying such compartments that girls and women do not look for them. This, to some extent, is true, but is explained by the fact that, as there is rarely more than one on a train, the habit of looking for it has not been cultivated. Another reason may be that the one provided is almost invariably the last compartment in a coach, over the wheels, and subject to more shaking and vibration—points well worth considering by a tired, and perhaps nightly, traveller!

Since women travellers pay equal fares, it is surely not unreasonable to ask that some consideration should be shown them, and that, as in the case of "smokers," one compartment of each class should be reserved for them on every train. Further, it should be reserved under the same condition as the "smoker," i.e., under legal compulsion, and not merely by the courtesy of the officials. It is much to be hoped that the matter will be pressed by women's organisations. M. I. NEAL.

BOY'S SUICIDE IN CANADA.

It is very disturbing to read that an English boy, 16 years of age, who was sent to Canada by the Marchmont Home, committed suicide by hanging himself on a farm in Huron County after receiving a thrashing from the farmer who employed him. This farmer was subsequently charged with assault and with beating the boy, and sentenced to two months' imprisonment in Goderich gaol. Bail was granted pending appeal. The defence admitted frequent whippings, but claimed the right of punishment on the ground that the boy was an apprentice. The magistrate maintained that the boy had been hired by the farmer, and not apprenticed, and that consequently the farmer had no right to lay hands on him. We hope that this matter will immediately be raised in the House of Commons, so that the public may know exactly how much protection is being afforded to the numbers of boys and girls who are being sent to our Colonies by various organisations in this country. Something is surely very radically wrong somewhere, when an English boy sent from this country to Canada is driven to commit suicide, following on thrashings received from his employer. Two months' imprisonment for that employer compares very curiously with some sentences passed on young people in this country for theft or similar offences, or for "loitering" only.

SPRING SALE.

Preparations are in full swing for Friday, February 29th, 3—7.30 p.m., when Dr. Lewin is very kindly having our Spring Sale at her house, 25, Wimpole Street. There will be stalls for Welsh produce, cakes, spring-cleaning necessities, underclothing, fancy articles, woollens, and toys. At 6.15, Dr. Lewin has promised a talk on Nasal Hygiene, and will also have an interesting hygiene exhibit in one room. Dainty teas from 3 p.m. Please send contributions of articles for the stalls, or donations, to 144, High Holborn.

BOOK REVIEW.

Widows' Pensions. By Miss E. Rathbone, C.C., J.P. (National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship.) Price 1d. (Can be obtained at this Office.)

This little pamphlet is very timely, as great interest is now being taken in the subject of Widows' Pensions, especially since the Labour Party has announced its intention of dealing with this reform. After pointing out that sickness, old age, and unemployment in the community are all relieved outside the Poor Law—sickness by the Insurance Act, Part I., and the growing powers of the local health authorities, old age by Old Age Pensions, and sickness by the Insurance Acts—Miss Rathbone draws attention to the fact that the Poor Law is apparently still thought good enough in the case of a widow with dependent children, although of these four classes her claim to be emancipated from the Poor Law is incontestably the strongest. The results of the system of relieving widows through the Poor Law may best be studied in the Poor Law Commission of 1909, and a later inquiry made by the Ministry of Health in 1919 into the condition of widows on out-relief throughout the country. This second Report indicates a distinct advance, on the whole, over the conditions of 1909; but, in spite of this, the survey is profoundly depressing. From 1921 Census it is estimated that there are roughly 358,000 widows with dependent children in Great Britain, of whom roughly 124,000 are war widows, and 234,000 civilian widows. Of these, only about 66,000, or 28 per cent., receive poor relief. To provide the 234,000 civilian widows and their 398,000 children with a pension based on 1923 values would cost, roughly, 19 millions per annum, or, deducting the three millions now spent in out-relief, say 16 millions per annum. Another scheme drawn up by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship is based on the approximate statutory minimum rate for War Pensions. This allows every widow with dependent children under 14 a pension of 16/- a week, to each of her children under 14, one of 6/6 a week, and to every orphan under 14, one of 11/6 a week. When three millions is again deducted for Poor Law Relief, the estimated total cost is 15½ millions. D. M. N.

HOUSING ITEMS.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Thomas Shaw) and the Minister of Health (Mr. John Wheatley) are co-operating in an ambitious scheme to speed up building operations. Mr. Shaw is holding a conference of employers and employees this week to consider ways and means of inducing builders to build, the object of the Government being to secure the good will and co-operation of both masters and men. Mr. Wheatley is understood to be aiming at an annual output of about 200,000 houses.

Last week, Southwark Borough Council decided to ask the Government to introduce legislation empowering them to levy rates on empty houses whose owners refuse to let them, although the houses are offered for sale.

In Birmingham it has been found impossible to satisfy the enormous demand for houses, and the application list of 18,000 is now closed. Only 4,000 of this number have been allotted houses.

A Southampton lady, who desires to remain anonymous, recently deposited five thousand pounds in War Bonds in a local bank to help to provide houses for homeless workers. She expressed the hope that others who made money out of the war may be induced to follow her example.

Nottingham Corporation has just received the consent of the Ministry of Health to carry out a big scheme of slum clearances in the heart of the city, where there is a colony of cheap lodging-houses and poor property. It is a condition of the consent that housing accommodation shall be provided for 1,500 people who will be dispossessed of their dwellings.

Women's Freedom League.

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.
LONDON AND SUBURBSDARE TO
BE FREE.

Monday, February 11th, at 3 p.m. Hampstead Branch Meeting (members only), at 53, Willow Road, N.W.3 (by kind permission of Miss Lyndon).
Wednesday, February 27th, at 8 p.m. Hampstead Branch Meeting (open to non-members), at the Isis Club, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, N.W.3 (by kind permission of Mrs. Harverson). Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations." Chairman: Mrs. Sudd Brown.
Friday, February 29th, 3—7.30 p.m. Spring Sale (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin) at 25, Wimpole Street, W.
Friday, February 29th, at 5 p.m. Organisation Sub-Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
Saturday March 1st, at 10 a.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
Friday, April 4th, at 2.30 p.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
Saturday, April 5th, Caxton Hall, Westminster. Women's Freedom League Seventeenth Annual Conference.

PROVINCES.

Monday, February 11th, at 7.30 p.m. Bexhill. A Model Election at the Victory Hall will be conducted by Miss Elsie Morton, M.B.E.
Tuesday, February 12th, at 7 p.m. Portsmouth. Public Meeting, 2 Kent Road. Speaker: Mr. J. Lacey. Subject: "The Capital Levy." Chair: Mrs. Whetton.
Thursday, February 14th, 4.30—6 p.m. Brighton. "At Home" at 56, Pembroke Crescent, Hove (by kind permission of Mrs. Aaron). Tea.
Saturday, February 16th, at 2.30 p.m. Montgomery Boroughs. Monster Rummage Sale, for Head Quarters, Congregational School Room, Newtown.
Wednesday, February 20th, at 8 p.m. Brighton. Public Meeting at Hove Town Hall. Speaker: Miss Elsie E. Morton, M.B.E. Subject: "The Need for Women Members of Parliament." Chair: Miss Margaret Hardy, J.P.
Thursday, February 21st, at 3 p.m. Hastings. Meeting at 44, Warrior Square (by kind permission of Mrs. Mellis and Mrs. O'Connell). Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations."
Thursday, February 21st at 3 p.m. Wallasey. Public Meeting at Town Hall. Speaker: Miss M. I. Neal. Subject: "Inequalities of the Law as between Men and Women." Chair: Mrs. Dr. Dobbin Crawford.
Thursday, February 21st, at 8 p.m. Bexhill. Meeting at Glyne Hall, Sea Road. Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations."
Monday, March 3rd. Middlesbrough. Meeting at Suffrage Café. Speaker: Miss W. Jones.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday, February 13th, at 8 p.m. Women's League of Union, Oak Room, Kingsway Hall. Speaker: Mrs. Knight Anstey. Subject: "Women of East and West."
Sunday, February 17th, at 3.30 p.m. West London Mission, Kingsway Hall, W.C.2. Speaker: Miss Dorothy Jewson, M.P. Subject: "Women Calling."
Sunday, March 2nd, at 6.30 p.m. Kingston Church of Humanity, 39, Orchard Road, Kingston-on-Thames. Speaker: Mr. William Platt. Subject: "Gluck, the Humanist" (with Pianoforte Illustrations). Chair: Miss F. A. Underwood.
Sunday, March 9th, at 6.30 p.m. Kingston Church of Humanity. Speaker: Miss Elsie E. Morton, M.B.E. Subject: "Should Married Women have a Career?"
Sunday, March 30th, 6.30 p.m. Kingston Church of Humanity. Speaker: Mrs. Tanner. Subject: "Galsworthy—Novelist and Feminist."

BRANCH NOTE.

HAMPSTEAD.

There was a large attendance of members and friends at the Isis Club, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, on Wednesday, January 30th, when the Hampstead Branch held a social gathering, by kind invitation of Mrs. Harverson. Miss Elsie Morton, M.B.E., gave a most lucid and interesting speech on Proportional Representation. Many questions were asked, and much interest was taken in the subject. Mrs. Nevinson, J.P., presided. The musical part of the programme was given by Mrs. Legge, Mrs. Harvey James, Mrs. Van Raalte, and Mrs. Rush, and our sincerest thanks are due to all of them for their kind help. Dr. Knight spoke on behalf of the League, and a cordial vote of thanks to our hostess, Miss Morton, Mrs. Nevinson, and to the entertainers, was adopted, on the motion of Miss Lyndon. Five new members joined the branch. Members and friends are reminded that they should make a point of being present at the Isis Club on Wednesday, February 27th, at 8 p.m., to hear Mrs. Northcroft speak on "Women at Work in the League of Nations."
(Hon. Sec.) Miss E. BERRY, 16, Denning Road, N.W.3.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Get on the Register!

The last day for giving notice to be included in the Spring Register is February 10th. Every reader of THE VOTE who is also an elector should at once find out if her name is on the Register, and, if not, see the local Town Clerk as to the reason for its omission, and agitate until it is put on the Register.

Teachers' Salaries.

The Times reports that, at a joint meeting of the three Burnham Committees, held at the Board of Education last week, an offer was made by the representatives of the teachers of a 5 per cent. abatement (from the gross salary of each individual teacher who is being paid by a L.E.A. in accordance with the allocated standard scale, or in accordance with the terms of the Committees' reports on scales for teachers in secondary, technical, etc., schools) for the year 1924-5. This offer was accepted with thanks by the representatives of the Local Education Authorities. It was further agreed to submit to the new President of the Board of Education inquiries as to the policy of the Board as now constituted with regard to the future work of the Burnham Committees, and to invite the President to meet the three Committees and address them on the questions thus raised. The Committees would then consider further the date on which the construction of salary scales for the period 1925-6 and onwards should be proceeded with.

Hollow-ware Women's Wages.

Employers of women in the hollow-ware trade in the Midlands have asked the Wages Board in that district for permission to reduce the wages of their women workers 6s. a week. This has been refused. A similar request was made six months ago, and refused.

But where is Equal Franchise?

Mr. Rhys J. Davies, M.P., Under-Secretary for Home Affairs, in a speech at Leeds last Sunday, gave the following list of reforms which could be brought about by the Labour Party:—(1) Probation for first offenders, instead of imprisonment; (2) abolition of capital punishment; (3) the granting of pensions to the families of miners killed at work, and to all widows with children; (4) extension of the housing programme and of educational facilities; (5) removal of restrictions on Old Age Pensions. We cordially agree that all the above reforms are worthy of the new Government's attention, but we confess that we are a little disturbed to note that neither Mr. Rhys Davies nor any other Members of the Government who have made speeches during the last week have mentioned what we consider is the most pressing reform, so far as women's interests are concerned—the political enfranchisement of women at the same age and on the same terms as men.

Law Society Meeting.

At a special general meeting of members of the Law Society, held in their Hall in Chancery Lane recently, Mr. Edward A. Bell asked whether the Council's arrangements for the entertainment of the American Bar Association during its visit to this country would include a reception to which ladies accompanying the members of the Association would be invited? The Chairman, Mr. R. W. Dibdin, said that the whole matter would not fail to receive their full consideration.

Woman Unitarian Minister as Policewoman.

The Rev. Margaret Sharpe, who for ten years has worked in the slums of London and Liverpool, and who has studied for the Unitarian Ministry, was recently sworn in as a member of the Oxford City Constabulary, and congratulated by the Mayor and other magistrates.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL & POLITICAL ALLIANCE

On January 20th, by kind permission of Miss Forbes Robertson, a meeting was held at Bayswater to form an "Under 30" section of the Alliance. A Committee was formed, and officers elected, and the following resolution was carried unanimously and sent to the Prime Minister: "This meeting of unenfranchised women under 30, members of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, calls upon the Government to grant, without delay, the Parliamentary franchise to women, on the same terms as it is, or may be, given to men."

SIX POINT GROUP.

The Committee of the Six Point Group resumed their fortnightly "At Homes" at 92, Victoria Street, S.W.1, on Monday, February 4th, at 5 p.m. There will be discussions on current topics connected with the protection of children, and the legal position and status of women, and all interested in these subjects are cordially invited. The list of speakers for this series is an interesting one.

FRIDAY,
FEB. 8,
1924.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

EDUCATIONAL.

YOUR Character and Capabilities delineated, with colours, jewels, etc., from handwriting, and date of birth. P.O. for 2/- and stamped addressed envelope to Miss Adams, Box 2, 92, Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

ELOCUTION, Public Speaking, Singing, Dancing. "Florence Etlinger Theatre School," 60, Paddington Street, Marylebone. Kate Korke, Ben Webster, May Whitty, Henriqueta Crichton, Janet Duff. Special Ballroom classes, Marie Larle, Fridays, 8 p.m.

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY. A correspondence course in Biology, Psychology, and Religion has been arranged under the title "The Ladder of Life." It is hoped that the course will help students to co-ordinate the ideas which are contributing to form the new age. Particulars will be forwarded to those sending a stamped and addressed foolscap envelope to—THE PRINCIPAL, Walsham Hall, Walsham-le-Willows, Suffolk.

LEARN to write for the CINEMA. Instruction Course, with specimen play, 2/6 post free from "Editor," 75, Princes Street, Edinburgh.

NOTICES.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, February 10th, 3.30. Music, Poetry, Lecture. Dr. Dearmer. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden. "Our Christian Faith: God is Love."

MISCELLANEOUS.

BARGAIN—list free. Plants, Garden Utensils. Beautiful dwarf roses, named varieties, 6/- dozen, carriage paid. —MCELROY, 33, Saville St., South Shields.

64-PAGE BOOK ABOUT HERBS AND HOW TO USE THEM, 2d. Send for one.—TRIMNELL, The Herbalist, 144, Richmond Road, Cardiff. Established 1879.

DRESSMAKING. —CALISTA, Dress Artist, would like to engage a very clever Bodice hand, who would be ambitious to learn cutting and fitting.—97 Wigmore Street, W. 1.

DANECROFT, Poultry Farm. Bagshot. Direct supply—table poultry, 1/10 lb., hatching eggs, 6/6 doz, post free. Anconas, W. Leghorns, W. Wyandottes.—E. N. PARRIS, M.S.P.B.A.

TO LET. Charming Furnished Bed-sitting Room, electric light, gas fire (1/- slot), in advertiser's own house, open position overlooking gardens. Furniture by Liberty, freshly papered, cretonnes, mauve and blue to tone. No attendance, some cleaning could be arranged, very quiet, restful house. Room shown by appointment, Enquire at VOTE Office. Terms 15/- weekly without attendance, payable in advance.

TO LET.—Hampstead Heath. Beautiful view. Furnished rooms, newly decorated, accommodation for cooking, etc.—80, South Hill Park, Hampstead.

WANTED.—Second-hand Clothing, best prices given; parcels sent, valued, and money sent by return. Stamped addressed envelope for reply.—RUSSELL, 100 Raby Street, Byker, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

REST AND HOLIDAYS.

BUSY Women requiring Rest will find comfortable Board Residence at Miss TURNER'S, "Sea View," Victoria Rd., Brighton. Early Dinner. Tel. Brighton 1702

MAIDA VALE. Accommodation for one or two ladies in service flat. Central heating. Restaurant. Constant hot water. Telephone. Box 110, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

FOOD REFORM GUEST HOUSE, 13, Marine Parade, Dover. Excellent cooking. Gas-fires in bed-rooms. Specially recommended Eustace Miles. Unequaled excursion centre.

THE PIONEER CLUB has reopened at 12, Cavendish Place. Entrance fee in abeyance *pro tem*. Town Members £5 5s. : Country and Professional £4 4s.

ISIS CLUB, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue (2 minutes Hampstead Tube Station). Magnificent Reception Rooms. Central heating. Sunny bedrooms: Sandy soil. Lectures, dancing, listening-in. Telephone: Hampstead 2869.

FURNISHED Bungalow, until Easter. 4 rooms, scullery and electric light, 20/- weekly. —MACRAE, Walberswick, Southwold, Suffolk.

SOcial Worker, invalid, ordered to live out of London, wants to rent country cottage, about six rooms, garden, conveniences, under an hour from town. Excellent references—"B.A.," 3, Upper Woburn Place, W.C. 1.

PROFESSIONAL Woman desires post as travelling companion, would escort invalid or children anywhere for expenses and commission.

Prepaid Classified Advertisements.

Number of Words.	Once.		Three Times.		Six Times.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
20	1	6	4	0	7	6
30	2	3	6	3	12	0
40	3	0	8	6	16	0

Displayed Advertisements,
8/- per Inch.

SMART CUT, AND ::
PERFECT TAILORING
AT MODERATE ::
PRICES.

H. Melissen,

Ladies' Tailor,

PERSONAL ATTENTION.

62, GREAT PORTLAND STREET, LONDON, W. 1.

DO NOT BE WITHOUT A FOUNTAIN PEN.

This is our Lever Action, Self-filling model.

14-ct gold nib. Will not leak.



PRICE **8/6**

Equal in value to any pen costing double.

Other varieties in stock. Please call and inspect.

THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd., 144 High Holborn.

Membership Application Form.

To be returned to The Secretary, 144, High Holborn.

Please enrol me as a Member of the Women's Freedom League.

Name.....

Address.....

I enclose £ : s. d. as my first Annual Subscription.
Minimum Annual Subscription, 1s.