THE VOTE. OCT. 9, 1925.

WOMEN PENSION OFFICERS.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

NON-PARTY.

Vol. XXVI. No. 833.

(Registered at the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1925

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 wellbeing of the community.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

INDIA'S ONLY WOMAN RULER.
WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD,
GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD FAIR.
TO WORK AGAIN!

PENSIONS AT LAST! By M. I. Neal.

WOMEN OLD AGE PENSION OFFICERS IN THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE. By One of Them.

NEWS FROM INDIA.

INDIA'S ONLY WOMAN RULER.

The Begum of Bhopal, who is revisiting London after a period of 14 years, is the only woman ruler of a native Indian State. The country of Bhopal, Central India, indeed, has had women rulers for nearly 80 years. Her visit to this country is chiefly for the purpose of urging upon the British Government the claims of her third and only surviving son to the succession of the Bhopal

throne.

The Begum, or to give her her full title, Her Highness Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., C.I., was born in 1858, and came to the throne in 1901. Her quarter of a century of ruling Bhopal has enforced an era of reform and progress. Educational advancement has been the outstanding feature of the Begum's rule, and has been promoted by the introduction of free and compulsory education. The girls' schools at Bhopal, in which the Begum is especially interested, are models of their kind in India. The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, now the Moslem University and the largest centre of Mohammedan education in in the world, has also enlisted her sympathy and support.

The Begum has decided

opinions upon women's Photo by sphere, and does not approve of open competition in public life between the sexes. She does, however, consider that women should make themselves thoroughly efficient in their special domain of household management. With her on her present visit to London are her three young granddaughters, and these will pursue a solid education on English lines

during their stay in this country. A distinguished Englishwoman musician has recently been engaged to complete the musical side of their studies.

The present journey to London is the third long voyage "the veiled lady of Bhopal" has undertaken. In 1903 she went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, facing all the hardships of the long Arabian desert journey. In 1911

desert journey. In 1911 she visited Europe, travelling through almost all the countries except Russia and the Iberian Peninsula. Her present trip will not be limited to the British Isles, but will include other countries after the London visit is concluded.

The Indian State of Bhopal is almost as big as Wales, and the present Begum is not only a ruler in her own right, but the third of an unbroken line of women rulers. Although she takes an exceedingly intelligent interest in everything that goes on all over the world, she nevertheless lives strictly in accordance with the rules of purdah, and is practically always veiled, although in the accompanying portrait she has made an exception in favour of the photographer.

Although not accountable to a Parliament or any other authority for what she does with her revenue, the Begum spends it



THE BEGUM OF BHOPAL. [Central News

almost entirely for her people's welfare. She has built hospitals and dispensaries for women, and has included an Englishwoman doctor among her entourage. The Begum has been twice mentioned in New Year's Honours lists, and was the first woman to be decorated with the Order of the Grand Commander of the Star of India.

In February, 1923, the Begum decreed the total abolition of the liquor traffic in Bhopal, and stringent measures were at once taken to make the prohibition effective. Bhopal had previously derived a considerable revenue from the sale of drink, but it may now be stated, on the authority of the Begum herself, that the sacrifice has been rewarded by a marked improvement in the material condition of her people.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

American Woman Civil Service Commissioner.

Miss Jessie Dell, of Georgia, U.S.A., has been appointed to fill the post on the Civil Service Commision, rendered vacant last July by the death of Mrs. Helen Gardener. Miss Dell has been employed for the past 25 years in various capacities in the American War Department, and has risen from a clerical position to that of head of the contract division. She is widely known in feminist circles, being an active member of the National Women's Party. She has also been prominent in civic activities in Washington as a founder of the Women's City Club.

Woman Worker in Japanese Prisons.

Miss Caroline Macdonald, of Tokyo, who attended the recent International Prison Congress in London left Canada 20 years ago to work with the World Y.W.C.A. in Japan. A chance visit to a young man in prison led to the development of her present work in Japanese prisons. She keeps in touch by letter and personal visits with countless numbers of prisoners, and has recently established in Tokyo a place of meeting for after-care work. She is greatly respected by the legal and prison authorities in Japan.

A Woman Factory Manager.

The canning factory of Columbus, U.S.A., which failed four years ago, and had to be shut down, has been entirely put upon its feet again by the enterprise of one woman, Miss Blanche Farmer, who has had experience with canning factories since she was a girl. The Colombus factory is now said to be on a good financial basis.

American Woman Lawyer's Enterprise.

Five women lawyers of Montgomery, U.S.A., have banded themselves together to give legal aid to women who are in need of assistance, but are too poor to pay for it. The five women, four of whom are married, take turns twice a week to meet their clients in a little office. The Montgomery Bar was first consulted, and gave entire approval, and the office was obtained rent free in the same building with the Juvenile Court. Even the office boy of the office next door caught the spirit of the enterprise, and offered to sweep and dust the little legal room free of charge.

Indian Women's Free Library.

A municipal free reading room and library for women, the first of its kind in Bombay, was recently opened under the auspices of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. The idea, however, was first mooted by a prominent Indian lady, Mrs. Krishnabai Gurjar. A woman librarian and woman clerk have been appointed,

Canadian Woman Mill Manager.

There are several cotton mills managed by women in Canada, and a few where the president's office is held by women. Quite a few others are actually supervised by women. One woman in New England is superintendent of two mills. Another woman is superintendent of a large braiding mill. Still another large knitting mill is supervised by a woman. All the mills which have been and are now superintended by women have made good. A weaving mill making narrow fabrics is also managed by a woman. In several other mills there are women who are overseers of departments, particularly of cloth rooms.

Women Actuaries.

Since the Institute of Actuaries threw open its membership to women five years ago, there are now four women who have become fellows, after having passed the four exceedingly stiff examinations held by the Institute. The distinction was first won by two women in 1923, and, in each succeeding year, another woman has obtained the distinction. The Institute also has three women associates and several women probationers, of whom one comes from Sydney, Australia.

Women's Long Service.

The A.B.C. has an interesting record for long service of women employees. Mrs. Larrett, chief of the staff engagement department, has been with the company for forty-four years. At least twenty manageresses have served 25 years, while 150 other manageresses and their assistants have each 20 years' service to their credit-notwithstanding the fact that most women engaged in the catering trade marry early.

Woman Medical Officer for Flintshire.

The Manchester Guardian reports that the Flintshire County Council agreed last week, by a considerable majority, to appoint an assistant medical officer for the county, such officer to receive a salary of £500 a year, and to be a woman, preferably Welsh-speaking.

Woman's Success in Architecture.

Miss Frances Thelma Silcock, B.-Architecture, has been awarded the medal annually presented by the Royal Institute of British Architects for the best work done by a student of any recognised school of architecture in Great Britain or the Colonies during the last two years of the five years' course for qualifications.

Woman Moderator in America.

President Mary E. Woolley, LL.D., of Mount Holyoke College, Mass., is being nominated for the office of Moderator of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of America. This Council, like the Congregational Union of England and Wales and the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, says The Christian World, has never had a woman as president.

Woman Manages Coal Mine.

Equal Rights (Washington) reports that Mrs. Nettie L. Macomber has succeeded her husband in the general management of one of the largest lignite coal mines in America, valued at a million dollars. Mrs. Macomber and her husband have been business partners for twenty-five years.

Woman Burgomaster of Waillet.

Although the Belgian Parliament has refused to enfranchise the women of that country, the Woman's Cause is progressing there. Mme. de Brown de Tiege is now Burgomaster of Waillet, a parish in the neighbourhood of Dinant. She is the first Belgian woman to hold such a position.

Another Woman in Mississippi Legislature.

Mrs. Ellen Sullivan Woodward has been elected to succeed her husband, the late Judge Albert Y. Woodward, as representative for Winston County, Mississippi, in the State Legislature. Mrs. Woodward is the third woman to be elected to this Legislature. She defeated her only opponent by 954 votes to 451.

SPEECH TRAINING AND VERSE SPEAKING.

CLASSES BY

MISS MARJORIE GULLAN

will be held at the

NEW EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP,

11, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, W.C.,

BEGINNING OCTOBER 21st.

GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD

The Annual Green, White and Gold Fair will be in the Basement Hall, at the Central Hall, Westminster, and will be opened each day at 3 p.m.-on Friday, November 20th, by Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., J.P.; and on Saturday, November 21st, by Miss Lind-af-Hageby.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1925.

The Chair will be taken on Friday by Miss Anna Munro (President, Women's Freedom League), and on Saturday by Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P.

STALLS AND STALLHOLDERS.

The Stalls at present arranged for the League are :-Hampstead Branch.—Handkerchiefs, Antiques, and White Elephants. Miss Goodliffe, Miss Lyndon, and Miss Vibert.

Montgomery Boroughs Branch.—Welsh Produce and General Stalls, Miss Alix Clark and Friends, Portsmouth Branch.-Household Goods. Mrs. Whetton and Members.

South-Eastern Branches,-General Stall, Miss White, Overalls and Aprons,-Miss Underwood and Miss F. A. Underwood

General Stall.-Mrs. Lloyd. Hygiene Stall .- Dr. Lewin and Friends. Literature Stall .-

Pound Stall .- Mrs. and the Misses Potter. Shilling Stall .-

Sweet Stall .- Miss Mary, Knight and Friends. Toy Stall .- Mrs. Knight and Friends.

Vote" Stall .- Mrs. Flowers, Mrs. Northcroft, Mrs. Evans, Miss Barton, and Mrs. Newsome. White Stall .- Mrs. Holmes.

PLEASE HELP.

Many gifts are needed for all these Stalls-will members and friends do their utmost in helping to provide the various stalls with pretty and useful Christmas gifts, and so make the 1925 Fair an unprecedented success?

All the stalls are in need of assistance, but those especially requiring help are the White Stall, the Overall and Apron Stall, Pound Stall, Shilling Stall, and Tov Stall.

The Shilling Stall proved very attractive to purchasers at our last Fair, most of the dainty little articles on it being sold on the first day; therefore many small gifts are urgently required for this Stall. Mrs. Knight has again undertaken the Toy Stall, and would be very glad of any gifts, such as dolls, bricks, balls, boxes of soldiers, puzzles, doll's house furniture, toy animals, etc. The White Stall has always been one of the great features of our Fair; and Mrs. Holmes has again undertaken this Stall, she will be most grateful for gifts, both in money and in kind, to help to supply the Stall with all the articles that visitors to the Fair always expect to find on this Stall.

The Misses Underwood have again undertaken the Children's Clothing, Overalls and Apron Stall; they will be very grateful for any contributions-money to buy materials, materials to be made up, or articles ready to put on the Stall. Please remember that useful articles, such as overalls and aprons, sell well, and are always wanted, so it is necessary to have a large supply if the Stall is to be provided for the two days of the Fair. Contributions for this Stall should be sent to this Office, addressed to Miss Underwood.

COMPETITIONS AND GAMES.

The competitions will, as usual, be one of the chief attractions of the Fair, and will include a "Hidden Treasure Hunt," and various other novelties.

ENTERTAINMENTS.

An excellent programme of entertainments is being arranged, and will include a Dancing Display on Saturday, November 21st, by Miss Grace Woollacott's dainty little pupils. Solo Dancing on Friday, November 20th, by little Miss Margery Dunhill (semifinalist All-England Classical Dancing Competition, 1924).

A Thé Chantant will be held each day from 4 to held on Friday and Saturday, November 20th and 21st, in the Basement Hall, at the Central Hall, West-assist:—Mrs. Cunningham, Mrs. Harvey James, Miss Lettice Newman, Mr. Eric Richmond, Miss Potter, Mrs. Morris-Wood, Mrs. Van Raalte, and Mrs. Sparrow. There will be Character Readings by Mrs. Spon and Mr. Richard Mowatt, also Phrenology and Numerology.

TEAS AND REFRESHMENTS.

Mrs. Fisher has most kindly undertaken the teas and refreshments, and will be assisted by Miss Reeves, and the staff and members of the Minerva Club.

Teas will be served from 4 to 6 p.m., and refreshments will be served at moderate prices after 7 p.m.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

SOCIETIES TAKING STALLS.

British Commonwealth League. Catholic Stage Guild. Council for International Service. The Food Education Society. The League of the Church Militant. Nine Elms Settlement. The Montessori Society. The Rally Rendo. The Bryn Rhodyan Pottery. Miss Burwood (Beads). Miss Nettleton (Association Deaf and Dumb). Mrs. Rogers (South Indian Village Industries). Miss A. M. Sworder (Needlework and Mending Bureau). Miss Waldram (Art Pottery).

Tickets-(including Tax, 1/10 the first day until 5 p.m., after 5 p.m. and on second day 1/2)-will shortly be on sale at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1, or can be obtained at the doors.

All communications and gifts, also applications for Stalls, should be sent to Miss Elizabeth Berry, Hon. Fair Sec., at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.



THE VOTE.

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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9th, 1925.

NOTICE.-Letters should be addressed as follows:-To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.

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

EDITORIAL.

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

TO WORK AGAIN!

This week, members of our National Executive

Committee and members of the League will meet to consider plans for our autumn and winter work. The work of our League since our Annual Conference last April will be under review. We have at once to confess that this work is far less spectacular than our work in pre-suffrage days. Yet the problems with which we have to deal are more varied and no less difficult now that women are partially enfranchised than the problems we had to face before the war, and the work of women's organisations is more necessary than ever. The Women's Freedom League is first and foremost a suffrage society, and its primary object is to secure the Parliamentary vote for women at the same age and on the same terms that men have their Women in America, Russia, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Finland, Iceland, Czechoslovakia, in the Free State and in the Dominions (with the exception of South Africa) all have the Parliamentary vote on the same terms as their countrymen, while in this country any man over the age of twenty-one may qualify for a vote, yet no woman under thirty, and not every woman over thirty years may do so, there being at the present time millions of women in Great Britain over twentyone who are voteless. Next year, the Government proposes to set up a Conference on this subject, a Conference at which will be discussed not only the equal enfranchisement of men and women, but also the question of redistribution, while our friends of the Proportional Representation Society consider that this Conference will bring an important opportunity of reconsidering the foundations of our Parliamentary system! By this proposal of a Conference, the present Government successfully torpedoed Mr. Whiteley's Bill, the sole object of which was to secure the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as men. If the Conference is going to take as its province the whole region of electoral reform, since this Conference would not have been proposed if it had not been for the question of the extension of women's enfranchisement, we naturally want to know what women are likely to get out of the Conference. Are they to vote on equal or on unequal terms with men at the next General Election? The answer to these questions is of vital importance to women, and every ounce of their political power should be used to secure from this Government the answer that we want. Not even this Government can be blind to the justice of our cause, although we may have to convince it that it is expedient to act justly towards women. We want this question settled once for all, and settled speedily; and we rely upon our members to support us in every effort we make to bring about its settlement.

While the equal enfranchisement of women and men must remain our chief object and has the first claim on our effort until this reform is on the Statute Book, there are other matters which also claim our attention. We congratulate the Food Council, and especially its women members, on their success in bringing down the price of bread, the publicity they have obtained in

the price of milk. The cost of living continues to be much too high, and we cordially support every effort that is made to bring it down. The women on this Food Council have set an example to the men in thoroughness of investigation and tenacity of purpose, and their hard-won success leads us to clamour for an equal number of women with men on all commissions and committees appointed in future by the Government, or by Departmental Heads of the Government.

At the beginning of next month the Town and Borough Council elections will take place. We are glad to learn from the Press cuttings that women of all shades of opinion are entering these contests. The municipal elections afford public-spirited women an excellent opportunity of impressing their point of view upon the electors as well as the candidates, and we hope that every woman elector who belongs to the Women's Freedom League will make it known locally that no candidate will get her vote if that candidate is not prepared to do all that is possible to get equal treatment for the men and women employed by the council, and to prevent the dismissal of women employees, whether they are doctors, teachers, or charwomen, solely on the grounds of their marriage. We hope, too, that in those districts where unemployment is acute, the question of the employment of workless women as well as that of workless men will be pressed. At the present time there are 1,068,900 men, 195,800 women, 40,400 boys, and 31,000 girls registered as unemployed at the Employment Exchanges of Great Britain. •If training schemes and special kinds of work are devised for unemployed men workless women should also be given similar opportunities. Some Members of Parliament may still fail to grasp the fact that every one of these unemployed women and girls cannot be immediately absorbed into domestic service; but it will not be difficult to convince one's fellow-citizens locally that domestic service is not the sole solution to this problem and that the needs of unemployed women should have equal consideration with those of unemployed men.

NEW LAWS AFFECTING WOMEN.

On October 1st, the Guardianship of Infants Act and the Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act came into force. Under the former, if there is a dispute between the father and the mother as to the custody of their children, both parents have an equal right to take that dispute into Court, where it will be decided by the Judge from the point of view of the welfare of the child. This Act also gives the mother the right to appoint a guardian to act for her in the interests of her children after her death; and it further requires a minor to obtain the consent of the mother as well as the father before that minor can be married. The child has a right of appeal if the parents cannot agree, but this, of course, means With regard to the children of unmarried mothers, if they are minors they must now obtain the consent of their mother before they can marry. A new form of declaration has been issued to marriage registrars throughout the country. This declaration reads as follows:-"I . . . being the person whose consent to (his) or (her) marriage is by law required, do hereby give my consent to the above marriage, and attention is drawn on the form to the Forgery Act, in order to discourage false declarations.

Under the new Summary Jurisdiction Act magistrates are empowered to grant a woman a separation order with maintenance despite the fact that her husband's cruelty has not been such as to make her leave him. Persistent cruelty to the children becomes a ground on which an order may be granted, and the meaning of the term "habitual drunkard" is extended to include anyone who is addicted to opium or other dangerous drugs. Further, magistrates under this Act are allowed discretion to decline to discharge an order in the case of a wife whose misconduct has been regard to short weight, and their investigations into due to her husband failing to keep up his payments.

PENSIONS AT LAST!

By M. I. NEAL.

It should have been noted in the last article that the Widows' and Children's Act is now actually on the Statute Book. The women whose husbands were insured, but have died during this year leaving a child or children under the age of 14 should immediately make application for the pension. The person having charge of orphans under 14, whose father or mother (being insured) has died since April 29th this year, should also make immediate application for their allowance. The forms can be obtained at any Post-Office and must be signed by a Justice of the Peace, or other responsible person-a list being given on the form itself. It is important that these claims should be made at once to prevent delay in payment on and after January 5th, 1926.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1925.

The forms are quite clear, but in any case of difficulty, the person witnessing and signing it would help in completing it, or the nearest National Health Insurance Inspector (whose address can be obtained at the Post Office) may be asked for assistance.

The fact that a new Old Age Pension scheme is included in the 1925 Act has given rise to some misunderstanding, but there are certain important differences between the new and the former Acts. Under the 1908 and 1924 Acts, the person of 70 only obtained the full pension if-

(A) his or her income did not exceed £26 5s. (an allowance of £39 was made if the income was

(B) he had resided in the United Kingdom for not less than 12 years after the age of 50;

(C) was a British subject, or, if wife or widow of an alien, had been a British subject up to the time of

The whole cost of this earlier scheme is borne by the Treasury, and paid by the taxpayer. Under the new Act, the worker, the employer, and the Treasury all contribute to the cost, and the basis of the Act is very much wider. The tests will be abolished, and the man of 70 will get 10s. a week for life, and his wife, whether an insured person herself or not, will also get 10s. a week on reaching the age of 70. It should be noted that where the wife has not been an insured will be dealt with in the next article.

person, no contribution has been made to the cost of her pension, and the Treasury therefore bears the whole cost of this part of the scheme. The only qualifications from July 2nd will be-the man (or woman) must-

(1) have been insured since April 29th, 1925;

(2) have resided 27 years in Great Britain immediately before he becomes entitled to the pension;

(3) Show that his last employment was in Great

The whole qualification is by virtue of the Health Insurance Act; contributions under the Unemployment Act do not affect it.

This part of the Act comes into operation on July 2nd, 1926.

On January 2nd, 1928, the further extension of the Act comes into force, and it will apply to men and women of 65, instead of 70, with the following additional conditions:

(1) The person claiming must have been insured continuously for 5 years;

(2) must have paid an average of 39 contributions in the last three years, before reaching the age of 65, if that occurs after January 2nd, 1928;

(3) Must have resided in Great Britain for 2 years before his 65th birthday.

Insured women, it will be noted, qualify in exactly the same way and at the same age as men, but the wife of an insured man, not herself insured, is not entitled to the Old Age Pension until her husband becomes so. In cases where a marriage takes place after a man reaches the age of 60, the woman, whatever her age, cannot obtain the Old Age Pension until she has been married three years, unless at the time of the marriage she was already in receipt of a widow's pension. The latter, of course, ceases on remarriage, but in such a case her Old Age Pension would not be postponed if her husband and she reached the age of 65 in less than three years.

This provision, of course, is designed to prevent persons nearly 65 marrying solely in order to obtain the double pension.

Exceptions to the Act and Voluntary Contributors

WOMEN OLD AGE PENSION OFFICERS IN THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE.

By ONE OF THEM.

It was in 1915 that a small number of women were appointed in the Customs and Excise, on a temporary pasis, to investigate and report on Separation Allowance Claims of dependents of men serving in the Army, Navy, and Air Force. This work was being done by male officers of Customs and Excise, together with their many other and varied duties, but the drain on man power for the Forces was even then beginning to be felt, so women were called into this, as well as to other fields of activity. The qualifications demanded were high-a good education (applicants were asked to state what degrees they possessed), a maximum of 'tact'' (the theme about which the Press has lately been so facetious), experience of social work, and an age between 30 and 40 years, thereby implying wide experience of life. The salary offered, however, was particularly poor, £2 a week for the first eight weeks, and thereafter £2 10s., after passing the probationary period. But women were anxious to "do their bit," so from hundreds of applicants about fifty were appointed by the Civil Service Commissioners to work in London. To summarise: this first small band made good, their numbers were augmented, and further appointments made in the provinces and in Scotland.

Towards the end of 1917 the comb was again used in the Civil Service, and the investigation of claims to

to women in the large towns of England, Scotland, and Ireland, mainly owing, it is thought, to the success attending the employment of women on Separation Allowance work, which women formed the nucleus of the staff of women Old Age Pension officers. The pay offered was still meagre, viz., £3 per week, inclusive of 4s. 6d. war bonus, and the work was still of a temporary nature.

Early in 1918 the women pension officers formed an association, which was officially recognised. Meantime, and in succeeding years, the cost of living mounted by leaps and bounds, but not the pay of the women officers. Every tiny advance was the outcome of a strenuous fight. Once they took their case to the Arbitration Board, and a small measure of redress was obtained, but it was hard work to make ends meet with prices 160 per cent. above pre-war level. The highest point their salary and bonus ever reached in those expensive days was £4 5s. a week. Then a long controversy ensued to have their appointments put on an established basis, to which the male officers were bitterly opposed. Finally, in April, 1920, the official side announced that the grade would be permanently established, but it was not until May, 1922, more than two years after the promise was made, that any of the women were established. The scale of pay laid down Old Age Pensions (up to then exclusively performed by was, and is, £100-£10-£160, then by £15 to £250 male officers of Customs and Excise) was handed over per annum. The age of entry was to be 25-35 years

for new entrants, other qualifications as set out above. The great hardships to many of the women, who by that time had been engaged continuously on the work for almost five years, was that they were compelled to start at the minimum of £100 a year. The Association is still endeavouring to get this glaring injustice remedied, as well as trying to obtain a better scale of salary more in keeping with the service given.

The work of women pension officers necessitates an accurate knowledge of the Old Age Pensions Acts of 1908 and 1911, as well as the subsequent Acts of 1919 and 1924, which, in many respects, modified the former ones. They are also required to investigate "Need" and "Parents" pensions for the Ministry of Pensions, as well as claims under the Blind Persons Act of 1920. Lately have been added further duties in connection with the Widows', Orphans', and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, so it will be realised that very important humanitarian and social work, affecting the lives of many thousands of our fellow beings, is undertaken by women pension officers.

The size of a standard station allotted to each officer's care consists of 1,000 Old Age or Blind Pensioners, plus the investigation of 50 "Need" and "Parents" Pensions per annum, and whatever number of Widows', etc., pension claims happen to be within her boundary. The station is schemed on an eight-hour day. All claims are investigated at the homes of the claimant, and evidence as to age, residence, means, etc., is elicited by very careful inquiry, great precaution being necessary to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of any of the people concerned, whilst at the same time due regard must be given to the provisions of the various Acts and Many and varied are the types Regulations. encountered, and, as the majority of the claims come from septuagenarians—at which age life's little idiosyncrasies are greatly to the fore-much patience is called for in the fully loaded working day of an official. When the necessary corroboration of evidence has been obtained, claims are reported on a prescribed form, handed to the Surveyor and sent by him to the Local Pensions Committee, who pass them, or not, as the case may be. The officer or the claimant has the right to appeal from the Committee's decision, in which case final adjudication is in the hands of the Central Pensions Authority, i.e., the Ministry of Health. If the claim is allowed, a book of pension orders is prepared by the officer and delivered personally at the pensioner's home. Books last for twelve months, and new ones are then prepared and delivered by the officer, such deliveries being divided into four quarterly periods. Roughly speaking, not far short of 2,000 visits per annum are made by each officer. Added to all this outdoor work, she is responsible, unaided, for all the clerical and office work of her station, the writing of various reports, preparation of quarterly accounts, and the hundred and one things that crop up in a busy day.

The Surveyors of Customs and Excise, mentioned above, are all men; so far there is no avenue of promotion open to the women officers. The creation of a grade of women surveyors, or supervisors, to be recruited from the ranks of women pension officers, is long overdue. The Department agreed in principle to this long ago, but, so far, it has been impossible to get it put into practice. The women themselves consider the present method of supervision uneconomic, the pay of surveyors being based primarily on their knowledge of Customs and Excise work; added to which is the heart-breaking position that however perfect is their knowledge of their duties, and competence in other respects, only men, so far, have the opportunity of promotion.

The Women's Association has to seek adjustment of many minor grievances besides those lightly touched upon in this article.

In conclusion, I might state briefly that all in our ranks were greatly perturbed, in common with women Civil Servants in general, at the methods of recruit- women's conferences will be held all over India.

ment and appointment to the recently advertised vacancies for women assistant-inspectors in the Insurance Department of the Ministry of Health, for work in connection with the Widows', Orphans', and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act. The women in the Customs and Excise are investigating Old Age Pension claims with the means limitation included which inclusion they have always been officially told was the most valuable part of the work, and they are now called in to assist the Ministry of Health Inspectors in the Widows', etc., Act, which excludes a means limit from its provisions; yet to their great astonishment, similarly as it must be to all fair-minded people. the maximum salary of the assistant-inspectors i £300 per annum, and their own only £250!

J. E. S.

NEWS FROM INDIA.

The following items of news are taken from the September issue of Stri-Dharma, the official organ of the Women's Indian Association:-

Age of Consent Bill.

The Government of India, evidently repenting of their former attitude to the Children's Protection Bill, themselves brought up the Age of Consent Bill this Session, the object of which is to raise the age of consent for married girls from 12 to 13, and in all other cases to 14. After a great deal of discussion, the Motion was put to the House and the Bill was passed, the voting being 84 for it and 14 against, a decided improvement on the voting last March.

Woman Suffrage in Bengal.

Last August, the Bengal Legislative Council passed a resolution removing sex disqualification from the electoral rolls. Formerly this suffrage resolution was steadily opposed by the Legislative Council. This time it was passed, 54 voting for it and 38 against it. There is much need for progress in Bengal with regard to matters specially concerning women, such as purda, child marriage, etc., and now women will themselves have the power to deal with such matters.

A Ranee's Rights.

A petition has been drawn up and sent by the leading women of Madras Presidency to His Exalted High ness, the Nizam of Hyderabad. In his State, the Raja of Gadwal, a large landowner, died last year, leaving a widow and two daughters. According to Hindu law and usage and the wishes of the Raja, the widow, an enlightened and cultured lady with two daughters aged 10 and 6 years, is entitled, as the sole heir, to succeed to the Gadi. The Nizam, however, has refused to recognise the title of the Ranee, and himself has taken over the estates with a vague kind of promise that, possibly when the daughters are married and a son is born to either of them, and the son educated under the supervision of the Nizam's Government, and having attained the age of 21 years, the Nizam may then release the property and hand it over to the son. This is quite contrary to the wishes of the late Raja and also to the rights of women to succeed to their husband's estates. It is hoped, therefore, that the Nizam will reconsider his decision and do justice to the landowners in his province.

The All-India Muslim Women's Conference.

Two hundred Muslim women from all parts of India have held a two-day conference at Poona, Bombay. Speeches were made by several of the leading women of the Musalman community, and resolutions were passed supporting the raising of the marriage age for girls to 14, and also expressing sympathy with the Local Option Bill and Prohibition. Other resolutions urged women to avail themselves of opportunities for education, welcomed the Bill giving the right to women to sit in the Legislative Council, and claiming equitable laws of inheritance by women according to the Shariat. It is hoped that before long Muslim

Women's Freedom League.

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

President—Miss ANNA MUNRO. Hon. Treasurer—Dr. E. KNIGHT. Hon. Organising Secretary—Mrs. WHETTON. General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.



Friday, October 9th, at 8.15 p.m. London Members' Meeting at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. Chair: Miss Anna Munro. Speakers: Dr. Knight and Miss Underwood. Subject: "What Headquarters has done since the Conference, April, 1925." DARE TO Saturday, October 10th, at 10 a.m.

National Executive Committee, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. BE FREE.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1925.

Monday, October 12th, at 3 p.m.
Hampstead Branch Meeting at 16, Denning Road.
Wednesday, October 14th, at 3.30 p.m.
"Fair" Committee, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
Friday and Saturday, November 20th and 21st.

Green, White and Gold Fair at Central Hall, Westminster. Openers, November 20th, 3 p.m., Dame Millicent Fawcett, J.P., D.B.E., November 21st, 3 p.m., Miss Lind-af-Hageby. Saturday, December 5th, at 10 a.m.
National Executive Committee, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

SCOTLAND.

Monday, Ootober 19th, at 7.30 p.m.
Public Meeting in the Philosophical Hall, Queen's Street, Edinburgh. Speaker : Miss Anna Munro.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

October 3rd-9th. Church Congress at Eastbourne. League of the Church Militant Campaign. October 8—17, 11 a.m.—10 p.m.

Note of the state of the state

Hornsey Conservative and Unionist Association (Women's Branch), Social Afternoon at St. Peter's Hall, Frobisher Road, Harringay. eaker · Mrs. Mustard.

Speaker: Mrs. Mustaru.
Thursday, October 15th, at 5 p.m.
Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W.1. Speaker: Mr. A. W.
Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W.1. Speaker: Mr. A. W.
Subject: "Births and Evans ("Penguin," of the Observer). Subject: "Births and Deaths of Books." Chair: Miss Decima Moore (Lady Guggisberg).

Thursday, October 15th, at 6 p.m.
Child Study Society, London, 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.
Subject: "The Future of the Nursery School."

Monday, October 19th, at 5 p.m.
Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W. Miss England on "The Woman's Movement in New Zealand." Chair: Miss Reta Oldham.

, October 21st. Miss Marjorie Gullan's Speech-Training and Verse-Speaking begin at New Education Fellowship, 11, Tavistock Square,

Thursday, October 29th, at 5 p.m. Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W. Speaker: Mr, St. John Ervine. Subject: "The Press as Priest." Chair: Mrs. Archdale. Thursday, October 29th, at 6 p.m. Child Study Society, London, 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. Speaker: Miss Marjorie Gullan, Subject: "The Teaching of Poetry."

WOMEN AND ELECTRICITY.

The Electrical Association for Women are arranging for a pecial display showing Good and Bad Lighting Methods at the orthcoming All-Electric Exhibition at the Junior Training Hall, seicester, October 8-17. The Exhibition fittings have been tranged in co-operation with Mr. Beauchamp, of E.D.A., and will be provided by the E.L.M.A. Lighting Service Bureau. The display will show the history of Lighting the development. The display will show the history of Lighting, the development of the Electric Lamp, proper methods of employing it in use to-day. There will be exhibits of a number of working models showing the evils of glare and how to avoid it. The value of correct and modern artificial lighting in Industry is exhibited in a working model specially designed for this purpose, and a great many optical truths not generally known are brought to the attention of the public by ingenious models designed for the

On the whole of the following week, commencing from Monday, October 12th, until the closing of the Exhibition, Miss Margaret Partridge, B.Sc., will give a lecture each afternoon with demonstrations on the following subjects:—

The Live Wire—Mending fuses, etc.; What Electricity can do; Cooking by Electricity; Electric Radiators; The House without a Servant. Prominent local women councillors and others will take the Chair at these lectures, which have already aroused a

This work is also being done in co-operation with Mr. Smith, the City Electrical Engineer, whose department is giving a good

BRANCH NOTE.

ASHFORD. At a members' meeting, last week, it was decided to hold a Whist Drive at the Hempsted Street Hall on Thursday, October 29th, at 3 p.m.—tickets, 1s. On Thursday, November 26th, there will be a public meeting. Further details later.

There will be two important public meetings held at the Grand Hotel shortly. We are hoping to have Mrs. Miles to speak on the League of Nations early in November.

Miss Margery Dunhill, M.A.O.D.—All those who were interested in little Margery's dancing at the Fair last year will be glad to know that she has just passed the Examination of the Operatic Association. She was the youngest competitor.

M. Espinosa (the examiner) warmly congratulated her on her dancing. (Org.) Miss White, 8, Holmesdale Gardens, Hastings. EDINBURGH.

A public meeting will take place in the Philosophical Hall, Queen's Street, Edinburgh, on Monday, October 19th, at 7.30 p.m. Mr. Easson will preside, Miss Anne Ashley, M.A., will speak, and the "Community Players" will give a one-act play entitled "The Grand Cham's Diamond," by Allan Monkhouse. Miss Anna Munro (President of the Women's Freedom League) will be present, and will speak on the aims and objects of the Women's Freedom League. During the last fortnight seven open-air meetings have been held—some at The Mound, but others at the bottom of Chambers Street and of Charlotte Street, for it was found that the audiences at The Charlotte Street, for it was found that the audiences at The Mound consisted so very largely of men. We are very grateful to all those kind people who are going to help us on October 19th, and to Miss Ross, Miss Jacob, B.Sc., and Miss Spriggs, who have already helped so substantially in the open air, (Org.) LILIAN LENTON, 22, Panmure Place, Edinburgh.

A Whist Drive will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, October 15th, at 9, Sketty Road. Tickets (single 2/6, double 4/-) may be obtained from members of the Committee. On Saturday, October 24th, we propose to hold a Jumble Sale in aid of the Branch Funds, and we shall be very grateful for any cast-off letting these. clothing, boots, shoes, unwanted ornaments, etc. Parcels may be sent to Mrs. Hutton, 9, Sketty Road; Miss Kirkland, 9, Goat Street; or the Secretary, 14, Carlton Terrace; or if members would prefer to have their parcels fetched, will they kindly notify the Secretary. We should also like to remind our members of the Green, White and Gold Fair in November, and request them to contribute either in goods or morely as in former warrs. them to contribute either in goods or money as in former years. All contributions will be gratefully received.

(Hon. Sec.) Miss Jelley, 14, Carlton Terrace, Swansea.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

To the Editor of THE VOTE. Back to the Land.

Back to the Land.

Dear Editor,—I have every sympathy with either man or woman whose love of country binds them to their native land. Neither depression nor prosperity can do away with this instinctive love of country, but I have not sympathy for those who allow love of living to come before self-respect.

If there are (a statement with which I do not agree) "wide unpeopled spaces in Britain, with its thousands of grassy acres where scarcely a foot treads, much less a sheep feeds," you may be sure that it would be impractical to bring people there. The lot of the woman would indeed be a sorry one. In Scotland, at any rate, neither soil nor climate is suitable for "transforming acres of heatherland into ground suitable for food production." any rate, neither soil nor climate is suitable for "transforming acres of heatherland into ground suitable for food production." In the Glasgow Evening News, September 25th, we read, "Exit from storm-bound homes." The last inhabitant of the lonely island of Bowray has elected to leave nis island home. Life on the island, which formerly supported 10 families, had, under modern requirements, become too difficult. The residents approached the Board of Agriculture to help them get away. So it is in many a Highland home. Poverty of land and climate prevents the crofter from living in the comfort now demanded. If agriculture in this country, even in much more fertile spots, is to pay, then we must have a strong tariff—a remedy I do not desire. In all countries, old or new, the tendency is to forsake country for town. The pull of the city grows intenser each year over the call of the country. Rural population is decreasing, urban population is increasing. The question of our population is engaging the minds of thoughtful people throughout the world. We are fortunate still to have open spaces for our surplus popula-We are fortunate still to have open spaces for our surplus population. A Labour paper, last week, had an article entitled "Starv. or Emigrate." Japan is tackling the subject of birth control other countries are vaguely discussing it, and saying, "If ou populations go on increasing, how are we to live?" This increis not confined to a few nations: it is a world phenomenon. increase during the nineteenth century was unprecedented. 1800, it was estimated that the world's population was, at the outside, 700,000,000. In 1914, it was 1,649,000,000. I do not wish taxpayers to build subsidised dreadnoughts; but even if wish taxpayers to build subsidised dreadnoughts; but even if these were not built, I do not believe the remedy for unemployment is quite so simple as Miss Lambie makes out. No woman can view with equanimity present-day conditions. If conditions are to be easier for the women, then there must be fewer men and women born, or else those born must emigrate to lands where they are wanted. No nation can flourish that allows tens of millions of pounds to be squandered without return. Some of this money would be well count to help require to militaria. of this money would be well spent to help people to emigrate to countries where they are wanted, and to soils and climates that make cultivation profitable.

I am, etc.,

How to Grow Bulbs

be here-but don't let it depress you. Put colour into your heart and home by having a plentiful supply of fragrant and beautiful

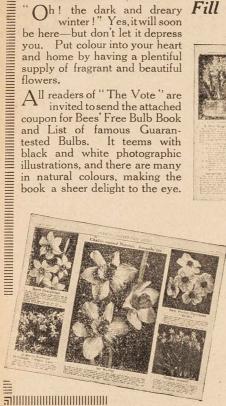
All readers of "The Vote" are invited to send the attached coupon for Bees' Free Bulb Book and List of famous Guarantested Bulbs. It teems with black and white photographic illustrations, and there are many in natural colours, making the book a sheer delight to the eye.

Oh! the dark and dreary winter!" Yes, it will soon for this EPFE Park



crammed full of useful hints and advice, and it is written so that a child can understand. Every point, and every phase of bulb culture, is covered by this book-indoor growing and out ; early and late planting; treatment before and after flowering; temperature; water; soil; fibre, etc.

If you love flowers, it's a treasure book for you. Send off the coupon right-



Any child can follow the simple directions given upon cultivation of bulbs indoors.

COUPON-CUT HERE To BEES LTD.,

175 Mill St., LIVERPOOL. Please send me by

return,quite free, your Bulb Culture Book and Catalogue.

Address..... T.V.9/10'25..... Enclose in open Envelope bearing \$\frac{1}{2}d\$, Stamp.



CLUBS

I SIS 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

PIONEER ONEER CLUB, 12, Cavendish Place, Oxford Circus, W.1. Bedrooms. Dates. Concerts. Town Membership, £5 5s.; Professional and Country, £4 4s.

TO LET.

URNISHED COTTAGE, in Suffolk, Cak beams exposed.—Apply HAYLAND, The Peasant Shop, 41, Devonshire Street, Theobald's Road, W.C.1.

ST. JOHN'S WOOD. Unfurnished Tooms for women occupied daytime.
Delightful house; nice garden; excellent locality. Quiet, but very convenient bus or tube. Electric light; telephone; gas fires and slot meters; geysers in bathrooms.
Meals and service, if required.—Apply Box G.E.F., The Vote Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1,

REST AND HOLIDAYS.

BRIGHTON.—"Sea View," Victoria Broad. Midday dinner. Gas fires in Bedrooms. Wireless. Vegetarians Wireless. catered for .- Hostess: MISS TURNER.

ORNWALL.-Paying Guest received in modern farmhouse. £2 2s. week. Clotted cream 3/- lb., post free.—Selsey St. Stephen's, St. Austell, Cornwall.

RYE, SUSSEX.—OLD HOPE ANCHOR. Ideal Guest House. Modern comforts; good cooking. Separate Vegetarian cooking a speciality. for booklet.

TRESA.-The most delightful spot on Lake Maggiore, Italy, for spending a quiet summer holiday. - MRS. COSTA, Hotel St. Gothard. Terms en pension £3 weekly,

AND BANKS. 3 miles Bournemouth. Board Residence. Winter terms very moderate.—MISS ALLEN, "Cosy Nook," Sand Banks, Dorset.

NOTICES.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED.—Consult Miss H. M. BAKER, 275, High Holborn, W.C.1. Income Tax Returns, Repayment Claims of all Descriptions. Telephone: Holborn 377.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1.
Sunday, October 11th. 3 30 p.m. Music.
Lecture. R. Coppock, Esq. 6.30 p.m.
Miss Maude Royden

BOARD RESIDENCE.

LADY requires Paying Guest, very comfortable modern home, Stoke Newington district. Young business or professional lady preferred. 30/- weekly, partial board.—Write Box K.B.A., The VOTE Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

TRADE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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

SMART CUT, AND :: PERFECT TAILORING

COSTUMES MADE TO ORDER FROM 7 GUINEAS

Melissen,

Hadies' Tailor, PERSONAL ATTENTION.

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

Prepaid Classified Advertisements.

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

Displayed Advertisements

8/- per inch.