

THE VOTE,
SEPT. 21, 1923.
ONE PENNY.

VOTES AND FURNITURE!

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 21, 1923

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

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VOTES AND FURNITURE.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

IN DEFENCE OF THE TRADE BOARDS.

By MADELEINE J. SYMONS.

The publicity given just recently to the complaints of waitresses and workers in the catering trade draws attention once more to the low wages paid to many women workers, and to the way in which certain firms who are allowed to exploit the present industrial situation constitute a menace both to the workers and to employers who desire to maintain a reasonable standard in their trade.

In the 1918 Trade Board Act the Government have in their hands machinery to prevent such exploitation, but instead of continuing the policy adopted immediately after the war, and extending Trade Boards in all trades needing protection, they desisted in face of opposition from certain quarters, and have now introduced a bill designed to weaken the existing machinery and to make its extension to new trades more difficult. Under the present Acts the Minister of Labour is empowered to set up a Trade Board where he is of opinion that no adequate machinery exists for the effective regulation of wages, and that, having regard to the wages paid in the trade or any part of it, it is expedient that the Acts should be applied. The new Bill, however, proposes that, as a condition for setting up a Board, wages must be shown to be "unduly low as compared with those in other employments." The introduction of such a comparison in present circumstances is equivalent to saying that a bad thing, such as underpayment, is permissible, provided it is found to be sufficiently prevalent.

In the second place, the Bill would prevent a Board from protecting all classes of workers in a trade adequately, by limiting the scope of the present rate-fixing powers to the lowest grade of workers. Instead of the existing arrangement under which the Ministry of Labour is charged with the duty of enforcing all rates, individual workers in all classes above the lowest grade would have to sue their employers for the rates due to them. Such a provision in the hands of unorganised workers, constantly menaced by the spectre of unemployment, would clearly prove futile and lead to wholesale evasion of the rates.

These two points are the most dangerous defects of a thoroughly retrograde measure. Any detailed criticism is clearly impossible in the space at our disposal, in view of the technical nature of the Bill, and full use of its complication will, no doubt, be made by its advocates to belittle the disadvantages.

The Trade Unions who have members affected by Trade Boards, and have intimate experience of their working, have, however, declared their uncompromising opposition to the Bill, on the ground that it would have the effect of depriving between two and three million workers of much of the protection gained under the 1918 Act.

We believe that women generally, who are conscious of the deplorable position of the industrial woman to-day, will rally to her support on this occasion. Bouquets were showered upon the woman munition worker during the war by Cabinet Ministers and by the Press—she was even to get the vote as a slight tribute for services rendered. Those who were charged with the task of attempting to translate these pæans of praise into a living wage are in no way surprised at the sequel when the war was over and the munition factories closed down. These same women were obliged to flock to Whitehall in their thousands before even the paltry figure of unemployment benefit was fixed; any constructive training schemes have been negligible, in view of the enormity of the problem. Abuse is poured upon the unemployed woman daily because she does not rush into domestic service, for which she is untrained, and often unsuited; and the vote, which the woman worker was alleged to have won by her services, is still denied to the majority.

Such a situation has naturally weakened organisation, and in consequence facilitated gross underpayment and the exploitation of juvenile labour in unregulated trades. For many thousands of women workers the Trade Boards constitute the last line of defence—they must be preserved intact.

WOMEN'S WORK AS POOR LAW GUARDIANS.

An official Report has recently been issued of the Proceedings of the Forty-seventh Annual Poor Law Conference for Northumberland, Durham, Westmorland and Cumberland, held at Bowness-on-Windermere last July. At that Conference Mrs. Frater, Mayoress of Tynemouth and Guardian of Tynemouth Union, read an excellent paper on "Women's Work as Poor Law Guardians." While she did not dispute the good work which had been done on many other public bodies, she thought that woman's work as a Poor Law Guardian stood out more prominently than all others. She reminded those present that the admission of women to Boards of Guardians was brought about by the passing of the Local Government Act of 1894, which provided that "no person shall be disqualified by sex or marriage for being elected or becoming a Guardian of the Poor." At present there were 640 Poor Law Unions in the country, with 2,323 women Guardians, but there were still 90 Boards minus women Guardians. She considered that a woman's work as a Poor Law Guardian was principally amongst the women and children, a point of view which was afterwards disputed by other men and women Guardians, who thought that women were also needed for other work on the Board. Mrs. Frater stated that 70 years ago the Poor Law child stood at 25.7 per 1,000 of the population of this country, but had since been reduced to as low as 5.7 per 1,000, although the present period of unemployment had put the figure once more on the ascending scale. Seventy years ago there were 400,000 children under the Poor Law, and in recent years they had been reduced to half that number. She had no hesitation in saying that women's work on Boards of Guardians had contributed very largely to that improvement, and Mrs. Frater proceeded to give a most encouraging account of the Scattered Homes in connection with the Tynemouth Board of Guardians.

In the discussion which followed, Miss J. M. Tooke, J.P. (of the Gateshead Union), after expressing appreciation of Mrs. Frater's paper, said that as a suffragist she held that, wherever women were governed there should be half the number of women compared with men on the governing body. She did not think that women should be relegated to side issues in public work, but should take a full share with men in all issues. With regard to visiting outside cases, she had always had her door open to hear the difficulties of people, and if they asked her to see them, she went with pleasure, but she was not so sure that, because men and women were on the Out-Relief List Committee, they had the right to walk into their homes. With regard to children, she urged that they should be taught self-reliance, and taken away from institutionalism. Referring to the class of women they had in the wards who had illegitimate children, who left the care of the Guardians temporarily and then returned with the children and expecting another child, to incur fresh expense, she considered that they were a danger to the community. Many of them were not quite normal, and wanted looking after. There was nothing more painful, however, than hospitals, and the helpless condition of those women made things very difficult. What was their life? They scrubbed floors and worked among dirty clothes in laundries day after day, and had nothing really to interest them. Would it not be possible for several unions to combine and take over a small farm upon which they could work? Nothing was more redemptive than exercising creative power. Instead of giving them dirty clothes, they should give them a few cabbages to grow, chickens to look after, and even a few pigs to deal with. Many of the women were in a hopeless condition, and in many cases it was not entirely their own fault, as they had been led away when they were young. Could they not adopt something like a constructive policy, and not leave them sullen and hopeless?

Mr. Coulson, Clerk to the South Shields Union, did not like to hear a lady Guardian say she was equally

competent to be on any committee with a man. A woman could find ample opportunity in certain directions of the administrative work of any Board of Guardians to take all the time and attention she was willing to give; but he failed to see how any woman was going to do better work, or even equal work, on, say, the Assessment Committee.

Mr. Scanlan, Chairman of the Newcastle Union, thought that a lady, if elected, had a right to sit on any committee, but she had no preferential right. He wished women to realise that they had limitations equal with men.

Mr. A. J. Shaw, Clerk to the Darlington Union, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. Frater, said a great deal more use could be made of female Relieving Officers. A great number of unions did not possess one. They had one in the Darlington Union, and he could assure them she accomplished excellent work, especially among women and children.

Mr. R. Felton, of the Newcastle Union, said he would welcome something being done in regard to the women who came in and out of the institution with children. It was a subject in which they were all interested, and if only some means could be devised to deal with it, it would be a very great help for the future.

In replying to the vote of thanks, Mrs. Frater said she wished men would visit male patients in hospitals more frequently, and give them the sympathy all knew they could give. With regard to the Assessment Committee, she thought it was the work of gentlemen, but if there happened to be a lady like Lady Rhondda in the district, she would certainly be an acquisition to the Committee.

INDIA AND THE SOCIAL EVIL.

A Bill for the Suppression of Immoral Traffic has been introduced by the Calcutta Legislative Council, and referred to a Select Committee without a dissentient. The Bill makes it illegal and a penal offence for anyone to make money through the immorality of others, whether by assistance in solicitation, by letting out houses for brothels, or by procuring girls for immorality. The Bill provides for the deportation of procurers of girls. The Select Committee recommended that, when a girl of under 16 has been rescued from a disorderly house, the Court may detain her under the procedure laid down by the Bengal Children's Act until the age of 18, instead of 16 as at first proposed, and that the punishment of all those who lived on the girl's earnings should be made more severe. It also proposed that whipping should be substituted for fines in the case of men, as fines in their case had not proved sufficiently deterrent. It is stated that there are 38,000 women who live by prostitution in Calcutta, and that 1,200 fresh victims are added yearly.

The Bombay Government has recently passed a Bill to amend the law relating to prostitution in Bombay City. It deals solely with commercialised vice, and aims primarily at making it impossible for procurers (1) to induce any woman whatever to this life, or (2) to induce any woman under 18 to any illicit intercourse whatever. The Bill does not make any mistress or landlord of disorderly houses punishable, and in this way falls far short of the Calcutta Bill and of the wishes of the women who are working against the social evil in Bombay. Another criticism of these women is that the Bill only provides a punishment of two years for persons who detain inmates of a brothel against their will, whereas the general law provides that anyone who confines another person for ten days or more against his will may get a term of imprisonment extending to three years. Although this Bill does not go as far as the Bombay women reformers hoped, they consider that it is better than nothing, and that it is good to see the social conscience waking on this matter. At the same time, they are urging the Bombay Council to amend it in various particulars.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

First National Congress of Women in Cuba.

From the *International Woman Suffrage News* we learn that Cuba held its first national Women's Congress in Havana last April, under the presidency of Señora Pilar Morton de Menendez. Thirty women's organisations and every Province were represented. Woman suffrage, women's legal position, the rights of the illegitimate child, the traffic in women, and protective labour laws, the protection of childhood, sex education, reform of women's education, and many other subjects of social interest were discussed, and resolutions were passed, including those in favour of: (1) Woman suffrage; (2) Educational reform, especially in eugenics; (3) Reform of civil and penal codes, and equal treatment for men and women; (4) Laws for the protection of children; (5) Children's Courts; (6) The suppression of the white-slave traffic; (7) Equality for women with men in industry.

First Woman Doctor of Chemistry in Austria.

Dr. Margarete Garzuly has just received the degree of Doctor of Chemistry in the Vienna University technical department, and is the first woman in Austria to obtain this degree. She has been acting as assistant to Professor Bamberger for the last two years, and was one of 25 students who were granted degrees in the Technical School.

First Woman Councillor in Burma.

Stri-Dharma (the official organ of the Women's Indian Association) says that "the recent reforms gave the Burmese Municipal Councils the right for the first time to elect women as Councillors. With great and commendable public spirit, one of the most popular women in Rangoon stood for election at the first opportunity, and so pleased were the electorate to have this Dr. C. Kingsley, that over 500 signed her candidature form, and no other candidate would oppose her. Miss Kingsley has accordingly been returned unopposed as the first woman Councillor of the Rangoon Corporation, and sets a precedent for all Burma."

British Women Engineers.

The Women's Engineering Society has been officially invited to the big Shipping and Engineering Exhibition at Olympia, and during the visit one of its members, Miss Partridge, read a Paper on Lighting Problems, and another woman, Miss V. Holmes, B.Sc., read a Paper for the Institution of Automobile Engineers on "Reversing Systems of Large Marine Oil Engines." The *Woman Engineer* for September reports that Miss Pearl Swan, the only woman engineering student at Liverpool University, has recently gained a First Class in the examination for the Degree of Bachelor of Engineering, with Honours in Electrical Engineering (University of Liverpool), and has been accepted as a College apprentice at the works of the Metropolitan-Vickers Co., Ltd.; also that Miss C. M. Davis, who has for some time assisted with her father's foundry at Wednesbury, has now joined Miss C. Griff at Birmingham, with a view to enlarging the scope of the Stainless and Non-Corrosive Metal Co. It is reported that Yorkshire alone has 76 women engineers.

Maitre Odette Simone.

Maitre Odette Simone ("Maitre" being a designation applied equally to men and women lawyers in France), who acted as interpreter in the recent Fahmy trial, is a well-known woman barrister practising at the Paris Courts of Justice; and, in an interview with a representative of the *Daily Express* last week, stated that there were now 80 women barristers practising in the French Law Courts, and that there was no prejudice whatever against them on account of their sex. She herself was called to the Bar when she was twenty, and has been practising for four years.

German Women M.P.s.

Women Members of the Reichstag are said to be solidly united in favour of Prohibition and the League of Nations.

Women as Surveyors.

Miss Irene Martin and Miss Evelyn Perry have become members of the Surveyors' Institute, and are working at House Property Management.

A Nurse's Courage.

Probationer Nurse Rosa Langley was presented last week by the Chairman of the Mile End Board of Guardians with the Certificate of the Royal Humane Society for saving a small boy from drowning in the Regent's Canal. Immediately after effecting the rescue, Nurse Langley, refusing the help of the spectators, put on her cloak and hurried away to the Infirmary, where she changed her clothing and resumed her duties without mentioning the incident to anyone.

Girls' Swim from Dover to Deal.

Last Saturday, Miss Ivy Martin, a girl of 14 years of age, swam from the Admiralty Pier, Dover, to Deal Pier in 3 hours and 20 minutes, the distance covered being between 11 and 12 miles. Her only nourishment during the swim was a few grapes, two or three chocolates, and an occasional piece of sugar. Miss Martin hopes to attempt to swim the Channel next year.

A Woman's Advertising Club.

Recently, women occupying important positions in the London advertising world inaugurated a woman's advertising club at a dinner given at the Hotel Cecil by Mr. John Cheshire, President of the Thirty Club, to a number of representative advertising women, when Miss Marion Jean Lyon, advertising manager of *Punch*, was elected President, and a representative committee formed.

A Woman Traveller in Central Australia

Miss Lily Butler, who established the first Soldiers' Club in Paris during the war, has just returned to England, after four years in Australia. She visited parts of that vast continent never before seen by a white woman. She camped near aborigines, and for a long period lived on a vast cattle station, the only woman for hundreds of miles.

LEAGUE AND WHITE SLAVE TRAFFIC.

According to *The Observer*, the Assembly last Saturday took up the debate on the work of the Advisory Committee on the traffic in women and children. Dame Edith Lyttelton, member of the British Delegation, and the first woman to address the Assembly this year, spoke on the suppression of the white-slave traffic. She advocated the use of women police, as women knew as well as men the best ways to suppress the evil.

It will be remembered that the following resolution was adopted last May at the Rome Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance:—"The Congress believes that united action on the part of women is essential to the abolition of the Regulation of Prostitution and the suppression of traffic in women and children, and urges women and women's associations all over the world to work for this, on national and international lines." The Women's Freedom League wholeheartedly supports Dame Lyttelton's advocacy of women police in connection with the suppression of this traffic, and we urge that the Home Secretary shall use his powers to secure the establishment of an adequate force of women police in London.

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NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—
To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders,
Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."
Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

EDITORIAL.

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

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

Under the Peace Treaty, a Commission was appointed "to consider the international means necessary to secure common action on matters affecting conditions of employment," and as a result of the findings of this Commission the present International Labour Organisation was established as one of the institutions of the League of Nations under the Treaty of Versailles. There are 54 member-States of the League of Nations, and Article 23 of the Covenant declares that members of the League "will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend." A Labour Charter was drawn up, and among the principles embodied in it were the following: (1) Men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value; (2) each State should make provision for a system of inspection, in which women should take part, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the employed.

The Fifth International Labour Conference will be held at Geneva on October 22nd, when the following item will appear on its Agenda:—"The Determination of the General Principles of Inspection of Labour." Under this heading the proper protection of women workers will be discussed, and it is essential that a woman should be included in the British delegation to this Conference. Each member-State sends two Government delegates, and one person representing employers and workers respectively. Technical advisers, accompanying the delegates, also attend the Conference, and when questions specially affecting women are to be considered, the Treaty has provided that at least one of these should be a woman. We sincerely hope that our Government will send more than one technical adviser, as well as a fully accredited Government delegate, to this Fifth International Labour Conference. The industrial woman worker is part of our national life, and her interests in industry should certainly be looked after by women. Inspection in industry is of the utmost importance for the health and well-being of all workers, whether they are men, women, or children. In India, thousands of women are still working in mines, and children between 12 and 15 years of age are by law allowed to work in them for not more than six hours a day. In China, children of eight years, and sometimes of an earlier age, are working in mills for 12 hours a day, and accidents through lack of safeguards to machinery are frequent. The workers of Japan, China, Persia, and India are experiencing the horrors of the same industrial conditions that the workers of this country suffered less than a hundred years ago. The Government Inspection of Labour in our mines, factories, and mills changed those ghastly conditions in this country; and it is only reasonable to suppose that Inspection of Labour in other

countries, together with the driving force of the International Labour Organisation, will before long greatly improve their conditions of industry. Labour conditions in this country are by no means perfect, and we are in need of a great deal more factory inspection than we have at present; but the Women's Freedom League urges that, while young people of both sexes should have special protective legislation, the protective legislation, so far as adult men and women are concerned, should be as nearly as possible equal. We unhesitatingly call for the best possible conditions for all workers in industry, but we deprecate any special restrictive legislation for women which is not shared by men workers, whether that restrictive legislation be national or international.

WOMEN RAILWAY TRAVELLERS.

Since it became known that the railway companies were considering the possibility of raising the prices of season tickets, the Great British Public in and around London have begun to sit up and take notice of their own interests in the matter not only of fares but in the accommodation afforded them on the railways. We are delighted to see that Miss Olga Nether-sole, Hon. Secretary of the People's League of Health, is concerning herself with the dirty and unsanitary condition of many railway carriages. We wish that more women would become articulate about conditions on the railways. Every morning and evening, year in, year out, hundreds of thousands of women and girls enter and leave the Metropolis, often in scandalously overcrowded carriages, some of which are very far from being clean and sanitary. The question of smoking is an annoying one for the majority of women who travel. Men on the suburban lines frequently complain that women persist in getting into smoking carriages. What else can these women do? On a line we frequently use, there are eight or ten smoking Third Class compartments, and then sometimes several First Class compartments (in which comparatively very few women travel), to two non-smoking Third Class compartments! The majority of women still do not smoke, and many of those women who do smoke at home have a strong objection, which is shared by a fair number of men, to travelling in a smoking carriage. So the smaller number of non-smoking compartments are invariably much more overcrowded than those arranged for smokers. Even then, smokers are apparently not satisfied. It frequently happens that a man will enter a non-smoking compartment, and either with or without leave smoke a cigarette; and when women get into these compartments at any of the termini, the whole carriage reeks with smoke. We have also seen a gang of eight or ten men surround an empty non-smoking compartment as the train comes into the station, and take possession of it in order to play cards on the journey, and any woman who happens to effect an entrance is not made to feel very welcome.

With regard to the long-distance corridor trains, the very few non-smoking compartments are generally sandwiched in between rows of smoking carriages, so that the unhappy non-smokers get the smoke from both directions. Here, again, they are not free from the smoker-intruder. A little while ago, one of our long-distance members was waiting for the train to London, and on the platform heard two well-dressed young men arranging to smoke in one of the non-smoking carriages. They happened to get into the same compartment as our member, and when the train was well started, pulled out their cigarette cases, and one of them, with an ingratiating smile, asked her, "You don't mind if I smoke?" "Well, no," was her reply, "if you don't mind if I am sick!" They did not smoke on that journey.

Considering the enormous number of women who now travel and pay equal rates with men for their railway tickets, we certainly think that the railway companies should do a great deal more than at present for the comfort of their women clients.

WOMEN AT WORK IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

WOMEN IN THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY—

MISS HENNI FORCHHAMMER, DR. KRISTINE BONNEVIE, Mlle. HÉLENE VACARESKO.

Miss Henni Forchhammer.

Miss Forchhammer is a noted linguist, and the author of "How to Learn Danish," a book which has been published in English, Dutch, French, and German editions, and enjoys a wide circulation in each of these countries. She has also acted as Lecturer on English Phonetics at the Danish State Holiday Courses in English. She is equally interested in social questions, and was a pioneer in introducing University Extension Lectures and Housewifery Teaching into Denmark.

Miss Forchhammer has always taken an active interest in the international side of the Woman's Movement, more especially in connection with the International Council of Women. She has attended the Congresses of the latter in London (1899), Geneva, Stockholm, Rome (1914), Kristiania (1920), and The Hague, has been President of the National Council of Women since 1913, and Vice-President of the International Council of Women since 1914. She is also Chairman of its Health Committee. Miss Forchhammer is proud of her connection with the International Council of Women, because this was the first organisation to promote peace and good-will between nations by means of its women, and has therefore helped to prepare the ground for the League of Nations itself. She has been connected for many years with the Peace Movement, and was a member of the neutral Conference at Stockholm in 1916. She also attended the Conference of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, at Zurich, in 1919.

Miss Forchhammer has acted as Technical Adviser to the Danish Delegation since 1920, and has been present at each succeeding Assembly. She was the first woman to speak in the Assembly, when, in 1920, she addressed the gathering on the subject of the Traffic in Women and Children. At this Assembly it was resolved that a special Convention should be called on this Traffic, and that all the Governments affiliated to the League should be asked to send representatives. This Conference was held the following year in Geneva, and Miss Forchhammer, who attended as sole representative of the Danish Government, was made Vice-President of the Conference. The delegates to this Conference drew up and adopted a draft Convention, from which for the first time the word "white" was omitted, so that it included all women, and also for the first time the word "children" was inserted. This Convention was afterwards adopted by the Second Assembly and signed by 36 nations. She addressed the Assembly on this subject in 1921. Miss Forchhammer is also deeply interested in the question of the deported women and girls in Asia Minor and other parts of the previous Ottoman Empire.

In connection with her appointment to the Assembly, she is attached as expert on women's questions to the Fifth or Humanitarian Committee, and also sits on the Second or Technical Committee, for Health questions. Since the First Assembly, Miss Forchhammer has been lecturing on the work of the League in various countries, including England, Holland, Norway, and Denmark.

Dr. Kristine Bonnevie.

Dr. Kristine Bonnevie is a noted scientist, and a member of the Academy of Science in Kristiania. She has been connected with the University of Kristiania since 1900. In 1912 she became Professor of Zoology at the University, where she carries out extensive research work in heredity and allied sciences. An interesting feature of her tutorial course is a dredging expedition, which she conducts each June, and which consists of men and women students. Every year different portions of the Norwegian sea-coast are marked out for special scientific investigation, and the dredging party proceeds thither in a small boat.

During the expedition, Dr. Bonnevie and her students are often housed in fishermen's huts, which also serve as primitive laboratories on occasion. These annual expeditions, as well as the whole of the University course itself, is entirely free to students of all classes and both sexes. University education has always been free in the Scandinavian countries, and the sons and daughters of the peasants and other workers take full advantage of these educational privileges. All positions in the University, including pay and promotion, are equally accessible to women as to men.

Dr. Bonnevie is the author of numerous scientific treatises on zoology, embryology, and heredity, and has contributed largely to scientific publications. She is deeply interested in social questions, and was formerly a member of the Municipal Council of Kristiania. This work, however, she has been obliged to relinquish, owing to the pressure of her scientific work.

In connection with her appointment to the Assembly, Dr. Bonnevie has acted as an alternate delegate in the Norwegian Delegation since 1920, and has been present at each succeeding Assembly. In common with most of the other women members, she has been placed on the Fifth or Humanitarian Committee. In 1922 she was elected to the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation, where she and Madame Curie, the noted world scientist, sit as the only women members. The primary business of this Committee is to obtain a general survey of the conditions of intellectual life in Europe during the last ten years, including the post-war period. These conditions include the prevailing standards of University education, degrees, salaries, and general educational statistics for the last ten years in all the different countries. The International Labour Bureau has been helping with this inquiry on behalf of the musicians.

In order to gain information first hand, and preferably from individuals rather than societies, it has been found advisable to divide Europe into groups of countries where the intellectual life is more or less similar, and distribute the work of investigation amongst only a handful of people. Of these, Dr. Bonnevie has undertaken to make an investigation for Norway. It is hoped to publish the results of these inquiries before the next meeting of the Committee, which will probably take place at Geneva in December, 1923, and to which representatives of various international Students' Movements will be invited.

Mlle. Hélène Vacaresco.

Mlle. Vacaresco, the daughter of the late Rumanian Minister to Rome and Brussels, is a descendant of one of the oldest families in Rumania, many of her ancestors having been poets like herself. She was brought up amongst very beautiful surroundings at the family country seat, where she received a careful education, and learnt to speak six languages easily. From her early childhood she was a favourite with the late Queen-Poetess, "Carmen Sylva," at the Rumanian Court, and when in her teens was made her Lady-in-Waiting. A mutual love of literature drew the Queen and her young attendant very closely together, and when, later, Mlle. Vacaresco published a collection of Rumanian folk-songs under the title of "The Bard of the Dimbovitza," gathered from the villages near her country seat, "Carmen Sylva" herself translated them into English and German. These poems have since been translated into practically every language, including Japanese, and have been awarded a special recognition from the French Academy. Mlle. Vacaresco has also written in English a volume of Rumanian tales called "The Songs of the Valiant Voevodi," and a novel entitled "The King's Wife."

Mlle. Vacaresco is a keen suffragist, and is a member of the Rumanian National Council of Women. She

recently spoke at the Sorbonne on behalf of giving Frenchwomen the vote. She is greatly in request in Parisian literary circles, and seats for her winter lectures at the Sorbonne are always booked months in advance. At Paris, where she and her mother now reside, invitations to her *salon* are eagerly sought by both literary and political people. She is a practical woman as well as a poet, and during the war did a great deal of relief work on behalf of her own distressed country, for which she was awarded the French Legion of Honour.

Mlle. Vacaresco has supported the League of Nations from its earliest days, and declares that Lord Robert Cecil is partly responsible for her first interest in this great international ideal. In 1919 she was made Secretary to the Rumanian Delegation at Geneva, and in 1921 was appointed a substitute delegate to the Assembly. She is attached to the Fifth Commission, and is deeply interested in the humanitarian side of the League's activities, especially in the question of the deported women and children from Asia Minor. Her speech in the Assembly on this subject was a memorable affair.

D. M. N.

MRS. CORBETT ASHBY.

(Reprinted from the *Sydney Morning Herald*.)

When I first met Mrs. Corbett Ashby, the new President of the International Alliance of Woman Suffrage, she was a young girl of 13 or 14, in her home near Dane Hill, Sussex. It was soon after the Local Government Bill became law in England, and I was doing in my own county of Sussex, under the auspices of the Women's Local Government Society, some voluntary work among women, telling them of their eligibility under the new Act, both to vote for Local Government candidates and to sit on the newly formed Boards. Among other houses I stayed at was that of the Member for East Grinstead, Mr. Corbett, whose wife was on the Board of Guardians, and who has since done continuous and excellent work on the local Urban District Council.

What, to me, gave the supreme interest to this home of the father, mother, a son of 16, and two daughters of 13 and 11, was that the three children were being entirely educated at home by their parents, and were all preparing for University studies. The only outside teaching came from a governess who travelled down from London once a week to give them lessons in modern languages. Their father, a practising barrister, taught them classics and mathematics; their mother gave the English and history lessons, and the children's recreations were riding and tennis. The whole atmosphere of intimate, cultured family life, with useful work, both public and private, running like a golden thread through the varied details of daily home work, helped to build up memories during my various visits to the family of a little green oasis of simple living and high-thinking.

When all three young people went to the University, only the son could take his degree, as at that time neither Oxford nor Cambridge granted degrees to women; so, after the two daughters had passed the degree examination at Oxford, they went over to Dublin, and took their degree in that more hospitable home of learning. I well remember seeing the two girls wearing their Dublin hoods, and walking in some of our suffragist processions which we organised in London. Inspired by their mother's example, they took up, as soon as they had finished their studies, public work and active agitation for the suffrage; and since Marjory, the elder daughter, became Mrs. Corbett Ashby, and started her own small family, she still finds time to work in the cause of women, which is in reality the cause of men, women, and children. Though still a young woman, she is by no means an untried woman in the field of national and international work, and if prophecy is permissible in such a case, she should, judged by heredity, education, personality, and intelligence, make a wise and efficient President of the International Alliance of Woman Suffrage.

D. B. MONTEFIORE.

VOTES AND FURNITURE.

Quite recently the Registration Officer at Cupar said that, in regard to the franchise and "unfurnished lodgings," as they had no decision in a Scottish Court, the only guidance they had was from an English County Court Judge, who had said that, in order to qualify in respect of unfurnished lodgings, it was necessary to prove not only that the claimant had the right to use the rooms, but that the rooms were actually let to the claimant in an unfurnished state. The Unionist Organising Secretary agreed that the position of women lodgers was most unfortunate. He could scarcely believe that the clause in the Act which said that the rooms had to be let unfurnished should be taken in the literal sense. If they did, then it was nothing short of a barrier for any woman over 30 years of age, unless she was married or the occupier of a house, to exercise the franchise; and he appealed for authoritative legal advice on the subject in Scotland.

At Torquay, similar difficulties have arisen. A father came into Court and declared that his two daughters had furniture of their own, and could lock up their rooms, if they liked. The opposing political agent asked if they bought it, to which he replied that the question was an impertinence on the part of the man who made it! The Registration Officer pointed out to the irate father that he must not take that view of the questions. It was necessary, in order to get votes, that certain domestic arrangements must be made, and the father owned that he gave them the furniture in 1914. Then the inquisitive agent wanted to know if he gave it to them on their birthday, if the daughters slept with each other, and why the furniture was given them, the reply to the last question being: "Because they deserved it." The agent then asked the father if he was prepared to swear that he gave the furniture to his daughters? He replied that he was not, and that his word should be sufficient. The Registration Officer said that the father seemed to think that by taking an oath there was an insinuation that he was not telling the truth. He could appreciate that attitude, and would accept his statement. The agent, desiring to have the last word, no doubt, remarked: "It would be very interesting to have the daughters here."

We again protest against the unsatisfactory working of the franchise laws in regard to women. Not only do we demand that women should have the vote at the same age as men—at 21 years of age, and not, as at present, at 30—but that there should be a simple residential qualification for the exercise of the vote for both men and women, without any reference to furniture.

WOMEN AND CRIME.

The Calendar of cases for trial at the September Sessions of the Central Criminal Court reveals the fact that out of the 137 accused persons, only 20 are women. The majority of offences with which men are charged are against property, whereas 60 per cent. of the offences of women can be traced directly to sex, and nearly all the remainder, 40 per cent., are indirectly so traceable. In discussing this matter with a representative of the *Westminster Gazette*, Dr. F. S. Toogood said: "Men, on the whole, are decidedly more criminally minded than women. They have also considerably more opportunity for offences. Certain forms of crime, such as shoplifting, are exclusively feminine. As a rule, petty crimes are committed by women."

Dr. Mary Scharlieb is reported as saying: "The average woman has not so many temptations to crime as men. They are not so violent, and not so given to drunkenness, which is one of the greatest causes of crime. Education has played an important part in lessening crime. We need more education for boys and girls."

Women's Freedom League.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, September 21st, at 5 p.m.
Organisation Sub-Committee, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

Friday, September 21st, at 8 p.m. Rally and Re-Union at Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. 1. "Holiday Sketches and Reminiscences." Chairman: Dr. Lewin.

Saturday, September 22nd, at 10 a.m.
National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

Monday, September 24th, at 3 p.m. "Fair" Sub-Committee, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

Monday, October 1st, at 3 p.m. Hampstead Branch Meeting, at 16, Denning Road, N.W. 3. To discuss work for Autumn and Winter.

Monday, October 1st, at 6 p.m. Mid-London Branch Meeting: 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

Thursday, October 18th, at 3.30 p.m. "At Home," at Minerva Club, Brunswick Square (corner of Coram and Hunter Streets). Tea 3.30. Mrs. Jason Kerr will speak on the "Tea and Sugar Boycott Scheme," at 4 p.m. Chairman: Mrs. Mustard.

Monday, October 29th, at 7 p.m. Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations." Chair, Mrs. Dexter.

Friday and Saturday, November 23rd and 24th, Central Hall, Westminster, Green, White and Gold Fair. To be opened on Friday, at 3.30, by The Lady Amherst of Hackney, and on Saturday, at 3.30, by Miss Lilian Barker, C.B.E.

PROVINCES.

Tuesday, October 2nd, at 3.30 p.m. Ashford. A meeting will be held at the Hempsted Street Adult School. Speaker: Mrs. M. W. Nevinston. Subject: "What the Vote has done for Women."

Wednesday, October 10th, 3 p.m. Bournemouth. Public Meeting, Freedom Hall. Miss Minnie Pallister and Miss F. A. Underwood.

Thursday, October 25th, at 3 p.m. Bexhill. A meeting will be held at Glynne Hall Hotel. Speaker to be announced later.

HEADQUARTER NOTES.

We hope to welcome several members of our National Executive Committee, as well as members and friends of the Women's Freedom League, at our Rally at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, this (Friday) evening.

We want to make our Public Meeting at Bournemouth, on Wednesday afternoon, October 10th, at Freedom Hall, Westcliff Gardens, on "The Need for more Women Members of Parliament," a great success. Will readers of THE VOTE advise all their friends in that district of this meeting?

SPEECH CLUB.

Miss Lucy Bell has issued a most comprehensive programme of interesting and topical lectures and debates for the Michaelmas Term, to be held at the Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C., on Saturdays and Mondays. Full particulars can be obtained from Miss Bell, Minerva Club.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

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To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR MADAM,—May I be allowed a comment on the very interesting article appearing under this heading in a recent issue? The cross-voting, which certainly did take place in some cases where a first preference was given to a Government candidate and the second to a Republican, is partly due to the confused issue. One party asked the electors to vote for the Treaty and peace; another offered a tempting programme of reconstruction (drafted, it is said, by one of the remarkable group of Republican women); so, many gave first preference to a candidate who was pledged to peace, and a second or third to Opposition candidates, as it was generally felt the Government had matters too much its own way. The Flogging Act, for instance, is responsible for many preferences going against the Government.

Yours faithfully,
DORA MELLONE.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Women and Unemployment.

A writer in last week's *Sunday School Chronicle* on this subject says: "There are signs that it is going to be a hard and difficult winter for the unfortunate men and women who are out of employment, and in this case it is better to be almost any kind of man—ex-Service, non-Service, married, or single—than a woman. 'Turn them out!' 'Sack the lot!' is heard in many directions."

Equality.

Opportunity (the organ of the Federation of Women Civil Servants) says that "A White Paper of August 20th informs us that the total permanent staff of the Civil Service on July 1st, 1923, was 242,894, of whom nearly one-quarter were women. Amongst the 27 members of the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council, we believe that there are only two women. Does the Staff Side stand for equality? Even the Official Side does better than this."

More about Equality.

The *Westminster Gazette*, referring to the Anderson Committee's Report on conditions of employment among State servants, says that clerical workers of both sexes receive £80 a year at the start. The men's maximum is £250, and the women's £180 for the same class of work. The Committee propose that the beginner's wage for women should be lowered. In an interview the Secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association remarked: "The Committee state that the employment of women in the better classes of work is still in the experimental stage! This is ridiculous. Women who have been employed for 30 years cannot be described as 'experiments.'" Our contemporary adds: "Both men and women are prepared to defend this small measure of equality."

The Consumer Pays.

Mr. Godfrey Cheeseman, Secretary of the National Union of Manufacturers, has been protesting against the exploitation of producers by retailers. He states that blouses sold by a manufacturer at 4s. 11d. were marked in a shop window at 3s. each, and that firebricks sold by the manufacturers for between 6d. and 9d. were retailed at 2s. 6d. each. He also declared that a manufacturer who sent samples to a retailer on sale or return received them back with tickets still attached showing that as much as 130 per cent. had been added for profit.

Husbands and Working Wives.

The *Evening Standard* reports the following descriptions of husbands at Ealing Police Court last week:—

(1) "What is this man?" was the question asked of a witness. Witness: "He is a respectable married man with a wife in work."
(2) "My husband is a cheery soul, and always shows great interest in getting me a new situation when I need one."

More Legislation for Young Workers?

Mr. William Graham, M.P. for Central Edinburgh, is bringing in a Bill to prohibit the employment in offices of persons under the age of 16 years, and to provide that young persons shall not work continuously for more than four hours without an interval of at least one hour.

"Women in Business."

Good Housekeeping for September has an excellent article by Viscountess Rhondda under the above title. Discussing the fact that so many able women continue in subordinate positions in business who are fit for greater responsibility than they hold, Lady Rhondda arrives at the conclusion that until the average man brings his daughter into his office as naturally as he now brings his son, the business woman who desires to work up from the ranks will not get a fair chance.

More to Spend for Education?

A recent number of the *Woman Teacher* draws attention to the fact that in 1921 the nation spent £402,726,000 on liquor, and in 1922 £354,131,000, this expenditure thus being reduced by £48,595,000, and proceeds to suggest that next year we may save enough to: (1) Increase our care for defective children; (2) Re-open day continuation schools; (3) Resume the award of State scholarships to the Universities; (4) Reduce the size of classes, and thus find work for unemployed teachers; (5) Pay qualified teachers instead of women with no qualification except being over 18 and "motherly"; (6) Return to the teachers the 10 per cent. (approximate) which has been surrendered to an impoverished country; (7) Make women teachers' salaries equal to men's.

Maintenance Allowance for Husband!

At Los Angeles, recently, a husband declared that he was incapable of working, and asked for an allowance of 5 dollars a week from his wife, who, he said, earned 150 dollars a month. The Judge made an order for this amount, declaring that, in marriage, the partner who was able to do so should carry a double burden when any such necessity arose.

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NOTICES.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, September 23rd. 3.30. Music, Poetry, Lecture. Dr. Dearmer. 6.30. Dr. Dearmer.

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

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